



PO Box 972, Cedar Ridge, CA 95924-0972
www.cea-nc.org / email: info@cea-nc.org

MINEWATCH

For Immediate Release: December 5, 2023

Contacts:

Traci Sheehan
Community Environmental Advocates Foundation
traci@cea-nc.org

PRESS RELEASE

Mine Opponents Urge County: "Let's Finish This"

Community Coalition Presents Letter to Supervisors Before Long-Awaited Hearing

Nevada City, CA -- The collective voice of Nevada County residents resounded as a community coalition delivered a powerful statement to the Board of Supervisors at their meeting on Tuesday. Community Environmental Advocates Foundation (CEA Foundation) presented a letter signed by over 1,100 residents urging the Board of Supervisors to say NO to Rise Gold's Petition for vested rights at the upcoming hearing on December 13th and schedule a final vote on the Idaho-Maryland Mine project as quickly as possible.

In May 2023, the County Planning Commission unanimously recommended rejection of the environmental impact report and use permit for the project. Facing a likely NO vote from the Board of Supervisors, Rise Gold tried an alternative approach that delayed the final vote, claiming they have a "vested right" to reopen the mine without a use permit.

A vested right is a right to continue a business use that existed at the time a zoning regulation changed. But vested rights are not permanent. The Idaho-Maryland Mine shut down in 1956, sold off its assets, and tunnels were allowed to flood. To claim vested rights, the burden of proof is on the applicant to establish that mining continued without significant changes for the following 67 years.

A staff report issued by the County last week concluded that Rise did not provide that proof, saying "1) Mining operations were abandoned at the Subject Property commencing as early as 1956;" and "2) Neither the Petitioner nor any other party has a vested right to mine at the Subject Property."

"Let's finish this!" said Grass CEA Foundation volunteer, Christy Hubbard. "Our community's future depends on a definitive rejection of mining in residential areas. It is with a sense of urgency and unity that we implore the Board to reject this ridiculous vested rights claim and proceed with a final vote."

"It's obvious that Rise is trying to pull a fast one on our community." wrote one community member as part of the letter. "Please put these shenanigans to bed. Vote No ASAP and get this over with."

The presentation of the community group letter to the Board came on the heels of an advertisement Rise Gold ran in the local newspaper asserting the company's readiness to pursue legal recourse should their vested rights claim not be approved.

Grass Valley Homeowner John Vaughan took issue with the ad. "The community and County shouldn't be held hostage by legal threats", he said.

CEA Foundation is urging community members to attend the hearing on December 13 to show their opposition. The County has announced that the hearing will be strictly focused on the Vested Rights Petition. Hubbard provided this guidance. "If history isn't your thing, it's OK to take a pass on public comment this time. Your attendance is what really matters."

If the Board denies the Petition, the County will resume processing Rise's application to open the Idaho-Maryland Mine and schedule a public hearing before the Board of Supervisors early in 2024 for the final vote on the Environmental Impact Report and Use Permit.

To learn more about the public hearing on December 13, go to www.minewatchnc.org/post/attend-the-county-s-vested-rights-hearing. For more information about the potential re-opening of the Idaho-Maryland Mine visit www.MineWatchNC.org.

Community Environmental Advocates Foundation (CEA Foundation) performs research, education, and advocacy to promote responsible land use and environmental protection policies in Nevada County. www.cea-nc.org. CEA Foundation is the leader of MineWatch, a campaign that brings together a coalition of nonprofit organizations, residents, and businesses opposed to the mine. www.MineWatchNC.org.