

# San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association

## Mid-Summer News

July 2013

Volume 2, Issue 1



- San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association opposes reopening the San Juan Ridge Mine!
- Scoping Comments of the San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association on the Proposed San Juan Ridge Mine available on our website
- Volunteer
- Become a member

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## What Have We Been Up To?

The San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association has been busy, working with environmental professionals and local decision makers to address the threat to our groundwater, property values, schools, and public health posed by the application to re-open the San Juan Ridge Mine, known in the 1990's as the Siskon Mine. The application was submitted to Nevada County in February 2012. Although the mine applicant wished to use the old documents from the failed Siskon Mine, the Nevada County Planning Dept. made a determination that a new Environmental Impact Report was needed. The Siskon Mine caused domestic and public wells to fail and caused changes in the fractured bedrock aquifer in the heart of the Ridge. Last December, during the County's standing room only public scoping meeting for the EIR, many Ridge residents spoke about the physical and emotional damage the mine caused our community when it last operated.

In 1993, the County issued a use permit for the Siskon Mine, supported by an Environmental Impact Report that asserted there was no connection between the groundwater in the diggings gravels and groundwater in the underlying and surrounding bedrock aquifer from which local wells are drawn. This theory proved to be wrong. Siskon started digging its decline tunnel in 1994. Two months later, a nearby domestic well failed. In September 1995, blasting in the mine intercepted a huge underground fracture and by January 1996, the drained fracture had caused approximately 12 more wells to fail, including those of the North Columbia Schoolhouse Cultural Center

and Grizzly Hill School. Millions of gallons of water were pumped out of the mine and discharged into Spring Creek. And our school kids had to drink bottled water for 9 years, while the district spent over a hundred thousand dollars trying to treat water that had become contaminated with an unbearable mineral load as a direct result of mine activities.

It is now 18 years later and the same mine CEO, Tim Callaway, wants to re-open the same mine and start a massive pump dewatering program that will likely cause more damage to the community's water wells and discharge millions of gallons of water into Spring and Shady creeks.

The SJRTA is mounting an aggressive and expensive campaign, recruiting the best scientific and legal professionals we can find to address the claims made by the applicant, and to prepare comments on deficiencies or assumptions that may be found in the Draft Environmental Impact Report that we expect will be released in early fall. When that report is issued, the SJRTA and the general public will have a minimum of 45 days to make comments. Towards the end of this period, the Planning Commission will hold a public meeting to hear testimony from the public on the adequacy of the EIR. This is our chance to fill the Board Chambers at the Rood Center while we carefully examine this critical environmental document and lay out our case for how destructive the mine could be for our community.

## August 17 - Benefit Dinner at Double Oak Winery



*“Fresh-baked wood-fired oven bread and treats”*

After the smash success of last year's dinner under the stars on the cool lawn of Double Oak's outdoor space, we could not help but do it again. Nevada County's own fabulous chef, Amy Klingelhofer, has agreed to come down from Portland, Oregon once again to cook for us.

The wine for the evening is from the award winning Double Oak Winery; the tasting room will also be open with special pricing for those who wish to take a case or two of Double Oak with them.

Fresh-baked wood-fired oven bread and treats will be provided. The vegetables and meats will be locally sourced and table service is provided by smiling and elegant servers.

The evening program starts with hors

d'oeuvres, accompanied by live music. Guests will then be invited to the long, white tables set under the shady oaks for the first of several wonderful courses. The wine will flow, the food will be fantastic, and all the elements for a memorable evening will be present. Will you?

Ticket price is \$138 per person. This includes tastefully paired wines with each course, music, table service, appetizers, main meal, dessert and cheese plates. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.sjrtaxpayers.eventbrite.com](http://www.sjrtaxpayers.eventbrite.com), by mailing a check to SJRTA, PO Box 421, North San Juan CA 95960, or by contacting Jaimie des Tombe at (530) 263-9351. This will again be the place to be for the finest dining experience in Nevada County.

## September 14 - BBQ Dinner & Music at the North Columbia Schoolhouse Cultural Center

This event will be a fun and easy afternoon and evening of food, music and dancing set on the lawn of the Schoolhouse, with a barbecue dinner provided by chef Ethan Hunter. It will be a great way to enjoy the company of friends, meet your neighbors and receive current information on the status of the mine application. Music by Wonderfunk, Jim Bratt and friends and

possibly others.

All ages are welcome to spend a cool evening on the cultural center lawn getting informed and entertained, while we eat and make merry.

Put the date on your calendars and look for more details as the date draws closer. Please contact SJRTA if you can volunteer!



Wonderfunk



## August 7 to 11 - Tabling at the Nevada County Fair

Come by our booth at the Fair this year and meet some of our partners. SJRTA, South Yuba River Citizens League, Wolf Creek Community Alliance, Sierra Streams Institute, and CLAIM-GV will all be tabling together. This is a great

opportunity to connect with other folks facing the same kinds of issues we here on the Ridge are facing. Come on by and get a bumper sticker or a button and hear the latest news.

### Call to Action!

We need your help. If you are a Nevada County resident, you can contact your planning commissioner or supervisor to voice your concerns (contact info can be found at our website.)

**We estimate that we will need to raise at least \$30,000 to hire the experts that are needed to best make our case.**

Many of you have not renewed your membership for 2013. Please join or renew now (it's only \$5), and consider making an additional contribution. We gain our strength from an organized

response backed by a strong membership.

**We need volunteers for fundraising and organizing activities.**

We are planning two fundraising events, in August and September, as well as tabling a booth at the County Fair, August 7-11. If you can help in any capacity with the fundraisers, or have some experience with tabling for SJRTA in the past, please email [info@sjrtaxpayers.org](mailto:info@sjrtaxpayers.org) or call the office at (530) 292-3592 to volunteer.



**We Need You!**



### SJRTA NOTES:

Please renew your membership. Our strength is in our membership and numbers speak loudly. Individual memberships are only \$5. Use the form below, or contact us via website or email to join or renew.

The SJRTA is putting together a database of impacts on the Ridge from the Siskon era of the mine. If you were an affected well owner during Siskon's operations in the mid 90's, gather up all your notes and receipts about what happened and give us a call, (530) 292-3592. We can use these numbers to help make the case of the complete picture of how extensive the impacts were to the Ridge.

The SJRTA is engaged in a public speaking campaign and would love to come and speak to your group or board. If you have any ideas of a group who would like to hear from a Steering Committee member about the current mine application, please give a call or send an email and we can follow up with you.

If you have any questions, ideas, or general concerns, please give us a call, the machine picks up at all hours and we will get back to you, (530) 292-3592.

Thanks for your membership, and thanks for your support,

### RENEW OR JOIN THE SJRTA, help make our voice strong!

Voting membership in the San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association is open to San Juan Ridge landowners, residents, and non-resident landowners. All others may lend support by becoming a member of Friends of San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association. **Annual membership: \$5 per person. Please consider an additional donation of \$25, \$50 or more.**

Name

Address

Email

Phone #

*"We are here, we are here, we are here! Help make our voice strong!"*

**Please Respond:** Are you a San Juan Ridge landowner, resident, non-resident landowner, or a Friend of SJRTA?

Mail payment and membership form to SJRTA, PO Box 421, North San Juan CA 95960

**San Juan Ridge  
Taxpayers Association**

*Serving the Greater  
San Juan Ridge  
Since 1975*

PO Box 421  
North San Juan CA 95960

PHONE:  
(530) 292-3592

E-MAIL:  
info@sjrtaxpayers.org

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**We're on the Web!**  
See us at:  
[www.sjrtaxpayers.org](http://www.sjrtaxpayers.org)

## **Elected Steering Committee**

**Gary Parsons – President**

**Kurt Lorenz – Vice President**

**Nancy Lorenz – Treasurer**

**Sara Greensfelder – Secretary**

**Sol Henson**

**Alexa Wondergem**

**Lars Ortegren**

### ***About Us...***

The San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association (SJRTA) is a membership organization representing taxpayer interests on the San Juan Ridge of Nevada County, CA since 1975. The SJRTA membership includes taxpaying residents and non-resident landowners of the San Juan Ridge and other local concerned citizens.

The SJRTA is committed to the maintenance of a rural environment on the San Juan Ridge, wishing to keep it mostly low-density general forest and agriculture. Our current focus is the proposed reopening of the San Juan Ridge Mine.



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