



THE EXPANDING LIGHT

Ananda's Spiritual Retreat for Yoga, Meditation & Health

August 22, 2014

Nevada County Supervisors, Planning Commissioners and Planning staff
950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 200
Nevada City, CA 95959

Re: The potential reopening of the San Juan Ridge Mine

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This letter is to strongly request that the proposed gold mine not be allowed to reopen on the San Juan Ridge.

I am the General Manager of The Expanding Light Retreat at Ananda Village. Ananda has hosted retreats on the San Juan Ridge since 1968 and our Retreat currently attracts over 2000 people a year to stay in our guest cabins and participate in our programs. We employ 28 people and gross \$1.5 Million per year. Most of the money that passes through the Retreat circulates through the Nevada County economy. The EL is a major contributor to the San Juan Ridge Economy and also significantly contributes to Nevada County economy. Our Retreat guests pass through Grass Valley and Nevada City on their way to and from here and avail themselves of the gas stations, restaurants and stores in greater Nevada County.

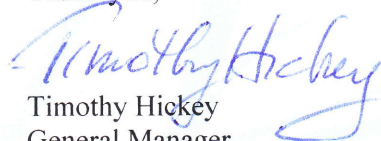
I have learned enough about the potential impacts of the gold mine on our local water supplies to be terrified. Please do not allow this mine to reopen. It is well known that the gold mine damaged several wells of properties in this area, some permanently. It seems clear to me that the risks of mining and the known dewatering of our underground water resources on the Ridge far outweigh the prospective value of reopening the mine. Water is the most precious resource. Water, once gone or tainted, cannot be replaced by anything else. Many agree that access to water is a human right, and we simply can't jeopardize that basic right for our San Juan Ridge residents.

If the water supplies of The Expanding Light were damaged – and there is no way to ensure this would not happen if the mine were to reopen – the very existence of this Retreat will be put at risk. Besides requiring water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and very basic landscaping, our organic gardens at Ananda Village also supply much of the produce we serve at our Retreat facility, which means the quality of our guest food services would suffer as well.

Beyond the unacceptable risks to our water supply we are also concerned about the negative impacts to the air and the possibility of intrusive noises from mining activities and from truck traffic. Our retreat is a place of quiet where people come to get away from the hustle of their busy lives. We are quite close to the proposed mine. Air pollution and loud noises are another serious risk to our business. We are not the only business of our kind in this area. Let's not risk changing the character of this beautiful region.

We are very grateful for you taking our comments into consideration as you review this situation. I believe that allowing the mine to reopen would pose a high possibility of damage to this area, for both ecology and commerce, and not just for businesses such as ours at Ananda – which is quite close to the mine – but also to many other local businesses. We ask that you put the wellbeing of the long-term residents and organizations in the area above the short-term profits of a mining operation.

Thank you,



Timothy Hickey
General Manager

The Expanding Light Retreat