



ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95064

May 24, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

We write to express our concern over the proposed development of the Sargent Quarry Project in the area now known as Sargent Ranch. Prior to Euro-American contact this place was known as *Juristac*, and was a significant site of cultural and spiritual importance to the ancestors of the present-day Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. *Juristac* retains that cultural and spiritual significance to the Amah Mutsun still today. Collectively, we are scholars from UCSC with expertise in California history and archaeology, Indigenous studies, and cultural heritage law. We urge you to reconsider the proposed development and to work closely and carefully with the Amah Mutsun to make sure that this place of importance is preserved.

The proposed development of 320 acres of the present-day Sargent Ranch property into an extractive sand and gravel mining operation will likely destroy *Juristac*, a sacred place that is integral to the history and traditions of the Amah Mutsun. *Juristac* was the site – and in fact, the only site – of the Big Head Dance, perhaps the most significant ceremony of the Mutsun. The Amah Mutsun continue to have a relationship with and responsibilities to *Juristac*. But development of this site will forever affect this relationship and irreparably sever their access to this place of importance. The proposed project is also likely to have a detrimental impact on the local environment, including water quality, wildlife, and plant communities that make up the cultural landscape and livelihood that supported the Amah Mutsun people and their ancestors. In addition to these adverse impacts, we urge you to consider that there are very few places remaining within the ancestral lands of the Amah Mutsun that still provide such powerful visible and tangible testimony to the persistence of Awaswas, Calendaruc, Humontwas, and Mutsun identities throughout subsequent phases of Spanish, Mexican, and American colonization. As a sacred place of memory and learning for present-day and future generations of Amah Mutsun people, a long history of resilience, cultural sustenance, and responsibility will end should *Juristac* be stricken from the landscape.

It is for these reasons that we urge you to follow both ethical and legal mandates and work directly and collaboratively with the Amah Mutsun to find ways to preserve *Juristac* and to provide avenues for them to access and care for this most sacred site, both now and into the future. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact anyone of us.

Sincerely,

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