

First Unitarian Church of San Jose

Statement in Support of our Moral Positions on
Rights of Nature and Racial Equity

Resolution in support of protecting Juristac

Adopted 19 September 2019

Whereas the Debt Acquisition Company of America/Sargent Ranch Management Company has submitted a permit application to Santa Clara County for a proposed sand and gravel mining operation at Sargent Ranch, and an Environmental Impact Report is yet pending; and

Whereas Tribal Chair of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Valentin Lopez, outlined the threat to Juristac to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, calling on Santa Clara County to deny the mining permit for Juristac, and

Whereas our 7th Unitarian Universalist Principle calls us to respect the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part, and

Whereas our 6th source calls us to live in harmony with the cycles and seasons of nature and respect indigenous wisdom, and

Whereas the First Unitarian Church of San Jose in an official congregation meeting in April of 2013 adopted a Moral Position on the Rights of Nature, and

Whereas the First Unitarian Church of San Jose in an official congregation meeting on January 29, 2017 passed a Moral Position on Racial and Ethnic Equity, and

Whereas the First Unitarian Church of San Jose Rights of Nature group in September of 2019 approved a statement in support of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band's efforts to protect their Sacred Land called Juristac from development of a gravel operation, therefore be it

Resolved that the First Unitarian Church of San Jose **supports the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band in opposing a sand and gravel mining and processing operation on the Amah Mutsun sacred grounds of Juristac** in the drainage of Sargent Creek and the Pajaro River. And be it further

Resolved that we encourage our fellow congregants to urge their district Supervisors to vote against this permit. FUCSJ will follow the lead of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and work with other organizations to broaden the opposition to mining Juristac, including the Sierra Club and the South Bay Indigenous Solidarity Group.

FUCSJ Rights of Nature Group

Statement in Support of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band's efforts to preserve their Sacred Land called Juristac against development of a gravel operation

Adopted September 2019

It has come to the attention of the FUCSJ Rights of Nature Group (RNG) that land known to the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band as Juristac is endangered by a gravel mining operation. Juristac is where, for thousands of years, the Amah Mutsun lived and enacted their most sacred ceremonies. The Debt Acquisition Company of America, doing business as Sargent Ranch Management Company, is applying for a permit to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to develop an extensive gravel quarry and cement processing operation on lands it acquired in a debt sale from Sargent Ranch.

In support of the Amah Mutsun, and in congruence with our Moral Positions of 2013 on the Rights of Nature and of 2017 on Racial and Ethnic Equity:

First Unitarian Church of San Jose's Rights of Nature Group (RNG) supports the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band in opposing the permit application by Debt Acquisition Company of America/Sargent Ranch Management Company before the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors for a sand and gravel mining and processing operation on the Amah Mutsun sacred ground of Juristac in the watershed of Sargent Creek and the Pajaro River. RNG further encourages our fellow congregants to urge their district Supervisors to vote against this permit. RNG will coordinate with other organizations to broaden the opposition to mining Juristac, including the Sierra Club and the South Bay Indigenous Solidarity Group.

Supporting information follows
Page 2 and 3

For Amah Mutsun information see <http://www.protectjuristac.org>

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JURISTAC is located off the south slope of the Santa Cruz mountains near Gilroy. In addition to its cultural values, the Pajaro watershed/Juristac provides critical linkages for imperiled wildlife between the Diablo Range and the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The Environmental Report from Debt Acquisition/Sargent Management has not yet been released by the Santa Clara County planning commission, regarding the proposed Sargent Quarry Project.

We are inspired to join the effort to defeat this quarry proposal by the words of the Amah Mutsun themselves:

On April 17, 2018, Tribal Chair of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Valentin Lopez, outlined the threat to Juristac to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, calling on Santa Clara County to deny the mining permit for Juristac. Lopez stated, "The proposed sand and gravel operation would result in four sacred hills being reduced to an open pit in the ground. Juristac is the most sacred ground of the Amah Mutsun and is the sacred home of our spiritual leader, Kuksui... (and encompasses) four village sites." He goes on to say, "We will not allow our ancestors to be forgotten, ignored or erased from history," further calling upon all governments to "dismantle the systems of oppression and domination" of indigenous peoples, and "recognize that the extractive industries are the number one threat to climate change...and that there must be a globally binding instrument to hold them accountable." You can listen to his entire very moving speech at <http://www.protectjuristac.org>

The Amah Mutsun were never accorded tribal status and given reservation lands. Theirs is a complicated and tragic history of three waves of colonization taking them from their ancestral lands. They now live across central California and are engaged in recovering their lost culture and traditions. It is essential that allies for Indigenous justice support them in calling for protection of their most sacred land called Juristac. Alternatively, an effort to purchase the land for protection is being pursued by Amah Mutsun as well as interested conservation parties.

For the tribe's extensive stewardship efforts see <http://www.amahmutsunlandtrust.org>

As Unitarian Universalists, a Rights of Nature worldview calls us to unite our First and Seventh Principles: We covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every being, including the interdependent web of all existence.

We ask Rights of Nature to remember the history of our congregation:

1) The Moral Position on the Rights of Nature passes in an official congregation meeting in April 2013:

We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of San Jose, in agreement with the above Principles, affirm that Nature, or Mother Earth, which encompasses all natural beings and their interconnected natural systems, has inherent worth and inherent rights to exist, maintain its integrity and perform its natural vital functions. All beings (species, natural communities and ecosystems) have the right to healthy water, land and air. The rights of each being, including humans, are limited by the rights of other beings. Conflicts between their rights are to be resolved in a way that maintains the integrity, balance and health of Mother Earth as a whole.

2) On January 29, 2017, FUCSJ passed the following Moral Position:

We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of San José, do hereby covenant to affirm and promote **this Moral Position on Racial and Ethnic Equity:**

Whereas we affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Whereas we affirm and promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;

Whereas the two Unitarian Universalist Principles stated above compel us to:

* Denounce past injustices, such as slavery, genocide of Native American people and culture, and internment of Japanese Americans; and

* Denounce ongoing injustices, such as profiling, de facto segregation, white supremacy, white privilege and all other forms of racial and ethnic oppression;

Therefore, we commit ourselves to building the Beloved Community of Racial and Ethnic equity and to dismantling systems of racial and ethnic oppression in ourselves, in our congregation, in our community, in our nation, and in our world.