



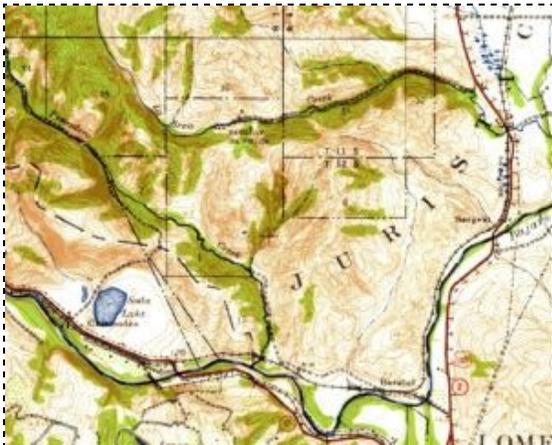
## Discussion Guide: Protect Juristac Speaking Event

### Materials:

- Juristac Panel—Alice Kaufman & Valentin Lopez (38 minutes):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CX6ojSJiQvY>
- Juristac Panel—Stuart Weiss (15 minutes):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cP4VZRkOHRc>
- [Background primer on Juristac](#)

### Summary

These two film clips feature presentations by Valentin Lopez, Chair of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band; Alice Kaufman, Legislative Advocacy Director for the Committee for Green Foothills; and conservation ecologist Dr. Stuart Weiss, Ph.D., Chief Scientist for Creekside Science. The speakers provide an overview of Juristac’s cultural and spiritual significance, conservation and open space values, and the relatively pristine ecology of this critical wildlife corridor and watershed.



In Amah Mutsun tradition, Juristac is a site equivalent in importance to any of the great religious pilgrimage sites of the world. The speakers in the videos present about the proposed sand and gravel mining project that threatens Juristac, and what the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Green Foothills, and other members of the Protect Juristac coalition are doing to stop it.

This Discussion Guide can be paired with the [Intro to the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band’s Campaign to Protect Juristac](#), or other activities and resources available in the Curriculum or Resources sections of the [protectjuristac.org](http://protectjuristac.org) website.

### Brief Timeline of Juristac

- For thousands of years before colonization, Sargent Ranch was known as Huris-tak which means the place of the Big Head. This name is derived from the deity Kuksui.
- 1797- 1835 - Mission San Juan Bautista, located 5 miles away from Juristac, seized control of Mutsun lands and people. It is estimated that by 1823, 19,421 California Indians had died at Mission San Juan Bautista.

- 1835 - Brothers Antonio and Faustino German are granted a 4,540 acre rancho, called Rancho Juristac by the Mexican governor of Alta California. The German brothers falsely claimed that no Indians still lived on the site.
- 1856 - James P. Sargent buys Rancho Juristac from the German family. It later became known as Sargent Ranch.
- 1992 - A proposal to build 4,000 homes, a golf course, and hotel at Juristac fails.
- 2001 - A proposal to build 137 homes and 2 golf courses at Juristac fails.
- 2006 - The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Council officially resolves to return to the path of their ancestors by finding ways to fulfill their responsibilities to protect mother earth and all living things.
- 2010 - The owner of Sargent Ranch goes into bankruptcy and the Debt Acquisition Company of America buys the land at Juristac.
- 2013 - The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band establishes the Amah Mutsun Land Trust.
- 2015 - Plans for a sand and gravel mining operation at Juristac are first announced by the Debt Acquisition Company of America.
- 2019 - The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band conducts the Walk for Juristac, with over 100 tribal members participating in the 5 mile walk from Mission San Juan Bautista to the edge of Juristac.
- 2020- Draft Environmental Impact Report is expected out end of summer 2020.

### Discussion Questions:

1. In the film, Chairman Valentin Lopez states, “Our true history has never been told.” What does he mean by this statement? What have you previously learned about Amah Mutsun or other Native American history and how and where have you learned this? What do you think is needed to improve upon the way local Native American history is taught?

2. How does Chairman Lopez describe the relationships of the tribe’s ancestors to plants and animals of Juristac? He states later about the tribe’s contemporary work,

“Our tribe is trying to relearn what our ancestors learned over those thousands and thousands of years. We say that the destruction and domination of Native Americans never ended. It never ended. It just evolved. It evolved to all those immoral laws, rules, regulations at the city, counties, state, and federal levels. Laws that allow the most sacred sites to be destroyed.”

What do you think he means by sacred site? What are sites that you would consider sacred and why?

3. How does Chairman Lopez describe how the tribe is working to steward land now? Who has the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band partnered with to bring back their traditional stewardship practices to their ancestral territory? What laws do you think may be hindering or supporting the

tribe in these efforts? Do you agree with Chairman Lopez that we all have an obligation to care for mother earth? What steps can you take to fulfill that obligation?

4. In the beginning of the film Alice Kaufman describes that the proposed mine would include 4 separate pits up to 550 feet deep. Sand, gravel and earth would be scraped out of the ground with heavy machinery, creating the pits. She then explains the rock and earth that is not extracted for



sale would be piled up on the side for later use in reclamation efforts. “The reclamation process doesn’t restore it back to the way it looked before. Under California mining law reclamation is just required to return the property to what’s called a usable condition,” Alice states. What is meant by a usable condition—and useful to whom? In looking at this 2018 photograph of a smaller decommissioned mine on another property near Juristac that entered into final stages of reclamation in 2016, do you think the reclamation process is sufficient?

5. Alice Kaufman cites that this is not the first time development projects have been considered for the Sargent Ranch Property. What did Kaufman state was the response of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to previous efforts to develop the property? Why do you think that was their response?

6. Conservation biologist Stuart Weiss describes Juristac as “a really, really important piece of land for the entire Bay Area.” Why does he believe this is true? What studies does he cite in describing the importance of this site?

7. You may have seen the video that went viral in winter 2020 of a coyote and badger playing together. If you are unfamiliar, you can watch it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bICTWNRrGE>



This footage was taken not far from Juristac. What risks does the badger currently face according to Dr. Weiss? How is Juristac positioned geographically and why is this important for wildlife habitat connectivity?