

**From:** Rewa Bush  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2020 12:27 AM  
**To:** Santa Cruz City Council  
**Subject:** No Sargent Quarry Project

**Dear Santa Cruz City Council,**

As a third generation Santa Clara County resident and current Santa Cruz resident, I implore you to support the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band by rejecting the proposed sand and gravel mine at Juristac. Juristac, also known as Sargent Ranch, is a wildlife corridor and sacred site that was recently purchased by the Debt Acquisition Company of America / Sargent Management Company. It is located outside Gilroy, CA on occupied Amah Mutsun territory.

In my years working in environmental education at private and public parks and ranches across Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo counties, I have dedicated myself to preserving the unmatched biodiversity of the California coastal region and protecting the most valued cultural resources of our area. Juristac is a key example of both and deserves utmost protection.

In less than 300 years, the majority of ancestral Amah Mutsun land has been covered over by urban and commercial agricultural "development," but Juristac remains one of the last relatively undisturbed vestiges of their homeland. It is the location where their deity Kuksui resides, and where their sacred ceremonies have taken place continuously for tens of thousands of years. Juristac is a church, one of an age nearly unfathomable to most United States citizens today. The Amah Mutsun are U.S. citizens, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz County residents, members of our community, our neighbors, classmates, coworkers and friends. The construction of a gravel mine at Juristac would be a decisive blow to the continuity of Mutsun culture and curtail their ability to perform the rituals and ceremonies necessary for the functioning of their cosmology and community wellbeing. We cannot stand by and allow this to happen to members of our community.

It is not a coincidence that indigenous sacred sites tend to lie at locations that are key to the health of the bioregion they are a part of. Juristac is essential to the ability of surrounding communities to have clean water to drink, healthy soil in which diverse plants can thrive, sustenance for human and non-human animals, access to recreation, and access to beauty. Protecting Juristac supports environmental health for the entire county, which is why it is supported by Committee for Greener Foothills, Center for Biological Diversity, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, Open Space Authority, Bay Area Critical Linkages Project and others.

The 4 open pit mines proposed by the Sargent Management Company would cause irreparable harm to a host of federally protected species, including the California condor, California red-legged frog, and

California tiger salamander. The mines would endanger the majestic California live oak woodlands and sweeping grasslands that draw locals and tourists alike to this area to live, study, and recreate, in addition to providing vital habitat for birds, deer, bobcat, mountain lion, fox, and more. The proposed mines would drain and pollute the local aquifer and Sargent Creek watershed by an estimated 76,000 gallons of groundwater a day. The mines would span approximately 320 acres, eliminating the crucial Sargent Creek north-south wildlife corridor that links the Santa Cruz Mountains with the Diablo and Galiban mountain ranges. Why hand in thousands of years of stewardship and relationship built by the Amah Mutsun for a mere 30 years of resource extraction? This proposed quarry would leave our community greatly impoverished.

Juristac lies at the intersection of Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties. I ask you to consider what these counties would be like today without the natural and cultural sites that we hold so dear? Consider Santa Cruz without Natural Bridges State Beach, without its migrating monarch butterfly sanctuary and teeming tide pools; without the harbor seal refuge and shell midden of Wilder Ranch; without the eucalyptus forests of Lighthouse Field, the burial grounds of Branciforte Knoll, the greenway of San Lorenzo Riverwalk Park, the Glenwood Open Space Preserve; without the Marine Protected Area along the Santa Cruz coastline that was fought for by citizens and commercial fisheries alike, and which has resulted in thriving offshore marine life that will continue providing food, research opportunities and enjoyment for generations to come.

Picture instead the lifeless, yellow pools of the unprotected Bean Hollow tide pools just north of Pigeon Point, which in the past decade have dried up into desiccated basins of matted, brittle seaweed and filled with brown soap suds due to runoff. It is apparent that we cannot take these beautiful natural and cultural spaces for granted. The ones that exist today are still here only thanks to community-led advocacy that stopped unnecessary development projects. All of the beauty of this region will be lost to “development” unless we know when to set limits.

Listen to the upwelling of community support for protecting Juristac; we are telling you what we value and what is important to us. It is your mandate to wield your power to protect this priceless place on our behalf. Stop the Sargent Quarry Project.

With gratitude,

Rewa Bush