

Dear _____,

My name is Kaitlin Ruppert, I would like to provide a bit of background information about myself so you can understand my perspective on the Sargent Ranch Quarry project. I have been lucky in life, in the fact that I have been to numerous sacred sites worldwide. I have been to St. Nino's Tomb in the Republic of Georgia. The revered St. Nino brought Christianity to Georgia. I have been inside Notre Dame Cathedral located in France and witness the beauty of her stain glass firsthand. I have been on top of Notre Dame amongst the gargoyles when the church bells started to ring. I have been to the Hagia Sophia located in Turkey, when she was a museum, and experienced the amazing preservation of the breathtaking Christian frescos and awe inspiring Islamic geometric pattern tiles. I have been inside of the Blue Mosque and the New Mosque, both located in Istanbul, and experienced moments of peace.

I have been to Strasbourg Cathedral located in France and saw a large crucifixion and beneath Jesus' feet was skull and crossbones with what appeared to be real human skeletal remains. I have celebrated Church of England services at Durham Cathedral located in England. The harmonious voices of the choir seem to surround you in a comforting embrace. I have attended the Advent service at Durham Cathedral where at the beginning of the service all the lights were shut off. Till the procession walked down the aisle holding candles that pierce the darkness while the choir's hymns echoed upon the stone walls. I have celebrated Evening Song at York Minster located in England. There is something profound and humbling when entering such sacred locations. You can feel the love and devotion of those who hold these locations close to their hearts.

The ages of these sacred sites are the following:

The Hagia Sophia is 1,485 years old.

York Minster is 1,385 years old.

The resting place of St. Nino approximately 1,122 years old.

Durham Cathedral is 889 years old.

Notre Dame Cathedral is 859 years old.

Strasbourg Cathedral is 583 years old.

The Blue Mosque is 413 years old.

The New Mosque is 357 years old.

Now imagine someone wanting to destroy these sacred locations to build an open-pit sand and gravel mine for a profit. Now imagine someone wanting to tear down Notre Dame Cathedral in order mine the resources which are beneath her foundation for money. Can you imagine the despair all those who worship at Notre Dame Cathedral would suffer from hearing that someone wants to demolish their sacred site for financial gain? Can you imagine their horror at the thought of their sacred site, a site where they have deep generational ties to, a site of reverence, love, and faith, being razed for someone's bottom line? Now imagine your sacred site, maybe it is your place of worship or maybe it is a place in nature. Now imagine you hear that someone wants to put an open-pit sand and gravel on your sacred location. Can you image the emotions that would rage within you at such harrowing news?

The Juristac is the most sacred site of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and one of the few remaining sacred sites of the Amah Mutsun left. The Amah Mustun people have lived here for thousands of years. Making Juristac, a sacred site, older than any of sacred sites, I have visited.

The desecration of Juristac for the Sargent Ranch Quarry Project is not only morally and ethically abhorred it is a human rights violation, a constitutional right violation, is against Federal law, and is against several California Public Resource Codes.

The Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948. Article 18 states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

In addition the 1981 Declaration of the General Assembly states this:

Art. 6 (a): The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief includes the freedom, "To worship or assemble in connection with a religion or belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;"

Human Rights Council resolution 6/37

9 (e): The Human Rights Council urges States, "To exert the utmost efforts, in accordance with their national legislation and in conformity with international human rights and humanitarian law, to ensure that religious places, sites, shrines and symbols are fully respected and protected and to take additional measures in cases where they are vulnerable to desecration or destruction;"

9 (g): The Human Rights Council urges States, "To ensure, in particular, the right of all persons to worship or assemble in connection with a religion or belief and to establish and maintain places for these purposes [...];"

Human Rights Committee general comment 22

Para . 4: "The concept of worship extends to [...] the building of places of worship."

The United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Resolution adopted by General Assembly on September 13, 2007 states:

Article 11 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

2. States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.

Article 12 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and

have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.

Article 26

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution states:

- Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Federal Law:

Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 states that it shall be the “policy of the United States to protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of the American Indian ... including but not limited to access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects and freedom to worship through ceremonials and traditional rites.”

California Public Resource Codes:

§ 5097.9: Non-interference with Native American religious expression

Establishes that public agencies, or private entities using, occupying or operating on public property under public permit, shall not interfere with free expression or exercise of Native American religion and shall not cause severe or irreparable damage to Native American sacred sites, except under special determined circumstances of public interest and necessity.

§ 5097.96: The NAHC inventory of Native American sacred places

Authorizes the Native American Heritage Commission to prepare an inventory of sacred places located on public lands and to review the administrative and statutory protections accorded to such places. Directs the commission to submit a report to the Legislature recommending actions, as the commission deems necessary, to preserve such sacred places and to protect the free exercise of Native American religions.

§ 65560, 65562.5: Consultation with Native Americans on Open Space

Includes protection of Native American cultural places as an acceptable designation of open space. Requires local governments to conduct meaningful consultation with California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purpose of protecting cultural places located within open space.

I ask you as a fellow human being, not to violate the Amah Mutsun's human rights or their constitutional rights. I ask you as a fellow human being not to break federal and state laws for someone's profit. As a fellow human being I ask you, do not allow the destruction of another human being's sacred site. We both know that if Juristac was a religious building sacred to Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and or Hinduism (just to list a few religions) there would not be a discussion as to whether a permit for an open-pit sand and gravel mine would be granted, because such sacred sites would not be demolished for a company to turn a profit. So, why is the Juristac different? Why is it ok to degrade and desecrate the Amah Mutsun's sacred site for money? As a fellow human being, I ask you to please protect Juristac.

Best Regards,

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