

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church – Hayward

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Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

Santa Clara County Planning Commission planning.commission@pln.sccgov.org

Cc: info@protectjuristac.org

Re: Protect Juristac sacred site/ Opposition to the Sargent Quarry Project on the Sargent Ranch Parcel

Supervisor Mike Wasserman, District 1

Supervisor Cindy Chavez, District 2

Supervisor Dave Cortese, District 3

Supervisor Susan Ellenberg, District 4

Supervisor Joe Simitian, District 5

October 2, 2020

Dear Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and Santa Clara County Planning Commission:

We are writing to express serious concerns about the Sargent Quarry Project which is proposed for land that is known as Juristac and sacred to the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. For the reasons outlined below, we respectfully request that you reject this proposal.

This project – a 320-acre open pit sand and gravel project— is proposed on land sacred to the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. The proposed project threatens the cultural and spiritual integrity of the sacred site known as Juristac. Spiritual ceremonies and dances have been conducted in this area for millennia and the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band hold this site sacred for their cultural and spiritual expression. As a spiritual community, Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church stands in solidarity with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band in requesting that this project be rejected. It would be desecration of this site, both ecologically and spiritually, should it be destroyed for an open-pit mine.

As Unitarian Universalists, we understand that we are all stewards of our Mother Earth and we affirm and uphold the principle of the interconnected web of Life. As such, we understand that we preserve ourselves by preserving the land, by preserving sacred places, and by preserving long-threatened cultures — and that it is our moral responsibility to do so. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band have a long and successful history of successfully caring for the land with ecological sustenance as a priority. Their land management methods used over thousands of years have protected and preserved critical ecological habitat. The proposed gravel mine would disrupt a critical passageway for wildlife migration and would permanently break a critical element in the Juristac ecosystem causing a multitude of negative impacts by doing so. Knowing that we and future generations will benefit from preserving this land and its important ecosystems, critical wildlife corridors, and the federally-listed threatened species that make their home there, we therefore support preserving Juristac and returning it to the care of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band.

Additionally, we also uphold and live out the principles of the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the acceptance of one another and support for our spiritual growth. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band is advocating for preserving their sacred site which is so very integral to sustaining their sacred cultural heritage. Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church of Hayward stands in solidarity with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and encourages you to reject the application for this project. Instead, we must protect and preserve Juristac, their sacred site, and recognize that Amah Mutsun spirituality is equal to other religions of the world.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa
Minister
Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church, Hayward

Jennifer J. Koney
President
on behalf of the Board of Trustees
Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church, Hayward