

## **Kohlmoos Objection Statement to DRMS**

3/16/24

Two decades ago when my wife and I were considering investing in property in Lake County we were inspired not only by the beauty of this high mountain enclave but also by state and federal clean up efforts to return the county to its near-natural, safe condition. We, of course, were deeply concerned by the toxic damage that had been done by successive periods of high intensity mining, milling, and processing since the 1860's. But, through extensive research and testing of our prospective property's soil and water, we were convinced that the local, state, and federal remediation efforts had been successful and, in fact, transformative for this special mountain community. We saw that a new era of responsible economic development and smart environmental stewardship had arrived. In 2005, we bought our property with great enthusiasm and high expectations!

Since then we have witnessed Lake County grow and prosper into an outdoor recreation and wildlife paradise with a respected, rich mining heritage and forward-thinking sustainability culture. It is a precious place to live, work, and play!

We have carefully monitored and studied CJK's multiple attempts to re-open the Leadville Mill, significantly expand its operations and use cyanide in its processing. We followed closely their attempts to address the many questions that have been raised about the safety of this project, including the 49 issues raised by DRMS in CJK's second permit application. Unfortunately, CJK's answers have been either incomplete or shrouded in the rather dubious veneer of "innovative remediation". The use of cyanide and the undeniable risk of water contamination, either by user mishandling, systems failure or long-term tailings leachate, certainly outweigh the purported benefits to our community or to the towns south of us along the Arkansas River.

I have tried to keep an open mind to the more detailed plans in their third proposal submitted last month. Frankly, I see no benefits to the economy, environment and culture of this transformed region but do see great dangers. CJK's latest flawed plan has done little to inspire confidence in their capability to avoid catastrophic accidents or to clean up inevitable tailings storage and operational mishaps. This out-of-town company is stuck in an endless cycle of denial about the negative, possibly catastrophic, impacts on our community and region.

I urge the DRMS to deny CJK's third attempt to win your approval. Our special community's future depends on it.