

## **Objection to the Opening of the Leadville Mill to Process Tailings Using Cyanide**

Our family resides in Colorado Springs and recently, we became owners of a house in Lake County. We have come to Leadville over the last seventeen years because of its unique outdoor environment. There is not another place like Leadville in Colorado. Mike was born in Colorado and is a lifelong resident and found coming to the mountains and enjoying the peace and hikes to be one of Colorado's best features. Lindsay has been living in Colorado for the last 24 years and has been coming to Leadville over 20 years and we have two children that have experienced the best of Leadville for all of their lives. We come to Leadville year after year in the winters and summers and cannot tell you how sad our family would be if the Leadville Mill operation ruins this outdoor environment and culture. That is why we are requesting that you not approve this application.

My specific concerns are:

- The use of cyanide in processing tailings has a high likelihood of soil and aquifer contamination. (<https://www.cc4lc.org/reference-library>)
- The disturbance of and transport of tailings from the East Side Mining District to the Leadville Mill site will both disturb the stability of tailings containing toxic materials AND cause major congestion in Leadville from the trucking. This could impact the wear and tear of Leadville's infrastructure and potentially impact the safety of pedestrians as a result of this increased usage.
- The storage areas planned for the tailings pose a threat if there is no detailed and planned strategy for the storage infrastructure in perpetuity. At this time, no such detailed plan has been identified.
- The probability of a mining accident is not 0%. There is no foolproof method to guarantee that there is no leakage of cyanide and other chemicals from the proposed dry stack storage of processed material if an accident does occur, posing a real threat of leakage of cyanide or other toxic chemicals into groundwater, affecting wells, the fishing/rafting industries, and irrigation water.
- The destruction of wildlife habitats and death of wildlife and fish in Lake County and beyond, along the length of the Arkansas River is also possible from the processing, the transportation, and/or an accident.
- Finally, opening the mill brings the very contentious issue of water rights and potential water storage to the forefront of this mountain community. The large water consumption associated with mill operations is likely to disrupt the balance of utilization in the Leadville area for residential and other uses, if not immediately then in the foreseeable future. Water rights has been and will continue to be an issue that has plagued the Front Range and could easily find its way to the top of the list of issues that divide communities that once worked well together.

It is my belief that the negative impact on the upper Arkansas River basin and particularly the Lake County/Leadville area would be significant. Cyanide and other chemical contamination of soil and groundwater is highly likely. The mill waste piles will be a potential source of water contamination risks for the foreseeable future, yet the mill plan does not address perpetual monitoring and management of the waste piles. Water contamination and shortages alone are so significant that the mill should not be permitted to begin operations.

As a long-time visitor to and new owner of property in Lake County, I urge you to deny the CJK application to open the Leadville Mill and to deny the use of cyanide in ore processing. I see a

very high likelihood that the outdoor environment that is so special here will be negatively altered permanently,

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Samora and Lindsay Samora  
Homeowners Lake County CO