

January 27, 2026

Attention Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety

The plan by CJK Milling to “remediate” a plot within the Historic Eastside Mining District of Leadville is flawed with only dollar signs in their eyes and by no means is in the best interests of the community of Leadville. Allowing CJK Milling to proceed with their “Innovative Mine Waste Remediation” would undo years of Mother Nature’s own comeback.

Since the EPA cleanup life has found a way with trees and shrubs growing in the tailings piles; aspen, spruce, fir and sage. Critters of all manner cross throughout the landscape which 120 years ago was void of any life. Recreation year-round is abundant. The quiet which permeates in the early morning, broken only by the numerous birds which call the trees home, is one of the best things about living here.

Over the many years we have lived in Leadville we have enjoyed the scent of bear having walked through the woods unseen. There are moose tracks in the snow in winter and in the mud in spring. There is a coyote family which calls one of the many old mine sites their den. Pine marten, ermine, deer, chipmunks, squirrels, chickadees, eagles, hawks, fox, and many other creatures have made their home in the mining district. Every year the water runs clearer and clearer. Where there were once barren fields, native grasses and wildflowers grow high in July and August.

The beauty of the Eastside would be lost if the CJK Milling mining permit is approved. The path the trucks would drive would go right through the heart of this landscape. The pollution from the trucks alone would deter the wildlife, not to mention the noise they would generate. Dead animals would litter the roadway as they scurry to and fro, the trucks not being able or caring to stop or slow down to avoid them. County Road 1 from the Adelaide junction at County Road 2A is used all year round by dog walkers, runners, cyclists, hikers, locals and visitors alike. OHV, motocross, and snowmobiles enjoy the trails and generate income and taxes for Lake County. Again, the path of the CJK Milling trucks would ruin this experience and recreational businesses and incomes would be lost.

During winter, Lake County plows CR 1 to CR 2A allowing snowmobiles and other winter recreation users to park at this area to be able to access the surrounding terrain. The plan by CJK Milling to access at least ½ mile more of CR 1 and all of CR 2A all year, but in particular during the winter is ridiculous. The resources of the County during winter storms are already stretched. To think they would be able to plow sufficient to allow massive trucks to drive these roads is a dangerous thought. Currently, no part of CR 2A is maintained other than grading after the mud season which can be late May into early July depending on the Spring melt.

CR 2A is steep. It is narrow. It has blind curves. The thought of industrial trucks carrying waste on unpaved dirt roads with ice and snow, mud or even when they are dry is devastating to think about. These trucks will not be able to stop or brake in an emergency or to avoid traffic. On a good day, ruts abound on CR 2A. It is not a road meant for any type of heavy use. A spill or accident on any part of the route would be another huge environmental impact on the community at large. Everything in Leadville is downhill from the proposed CJK Milling mining site and truck route. Any damage or accident would be devastating to our community and water supply.

County Road 2 is a pothole filled road, again not meant for heavy traffic. The Mineral Belt Trail traverses and runs along CR 2 for several miles. Will the CJK Milling trucks yield for the groups of tourists and locals who cross the road all day long during the summer and fall? The pollution from truck exhaust and their noise will ruin what is a wonderful day for all these users. Visitors driving on Highway 24 will no doubt notice all the heavy truck traffic. Road maintenance issues for all the roadways will increase exponentially; these roads were not built for this type of use. CJK Milling will cause the damage, but will not be responsible for the repairs-that will fall on an already stressed community.

CJK Milling is not a local company. They do not understand the history of the region and how important it is today that we have a huge bounty of recreation, wildlife, and history within walking or biking distance for many. Our Historic Mining District is no longer a burden, but a thriving investment for our Leadville/Lake County community. It is disheartening to think all of what Nature has accomplished over the years could be taken away by a company with no real interest or investment in our Leadville lifestyle.

Please reject Mining Permit M1990057 submitted by CJK Milling.

Respectfully,

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