



May 13, 2021

Dear Forest Supervisor Yen,

The Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe (Tribe) has concerns about the proposed Kore gold exploration project. The tribe has issues with the use of a categorical exclusion (CX) as the choice to conduct an environmental analysis because the use of a CX does not allow for an adequate analysis given the environmental concerns and cultural resource concerns there are regarding this project. This lack of adequate analysis, in turn, does not allow for sufficient tribal consultation because there appears to be an assumption/decision by the Inyo National Forest (Forest) that the exploration drilling will have few environmental and cultural impacts.

President Biden in his January 26, 2021 Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships, directed the heads of Executive Departments and Agencies to "submit to the Director of the Office Of Management and Budget (OMB), within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, a detailed plan of actions the agency will take to implement the policies and directives of Executive Order 13175. The plan shall be developed after consultation by the agency with Tribal Nations and Tribal Officials as defined in Executive Order 13175."

As a starting point for this and all current and future projects, the Tribe feels that a meeting is needed with all of the tribes within lands administered by the Forest to hear what the outcome has been regarding President Biden's memorandum and directive, and how the Forest Service will move forward with tribal consultation under the Biden Administration. It is clear from the memorandum and Executive Order 13175 that all executive departments and agencies are charged with engaging tribes with regular, meaningful and robust consultation. The Tribe does not feel that meaningful and robust consultation, as promised by the Biden Administration, has taken place regarding the Kore gold exploration project.

The tribe looks forward to a meeting with your office and the other tribes to learn how the Forest will engage in regular, meaning and robust consultation as the Biden Administration has promised as a precursor to further consultation on the Kore gold exploration project.

Sincerely,


Charlotte Lange

Chair, Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe