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First name: Susan

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Garcia:

Let me add my voice to those of the many who strongly oppose the Long Valley Exploration Drilling Project proposed by Kore USA Ltd. (Kore Mining). The proposed mining project threatens the future of the scenic, economically and ecologically important Long Valley area in Mono County.

I am particularly concerned about the proposed project's proximity to Hot Creek, one of the region's iconic fisheries. Though this project is only exploratory for now, I am all too aware of the grave impacts mining can have on fish and freshwater ecosystems. Mining operations can lead to sulfuric acid and heavy metal contamination when rainwater or surface drainage carries contaminants to nearby streams, rivers, lakes, and groundwater harming species which rely on these water sources. Not only is this proposed project just above Hot Creek, but the water from Hot Creek eventually flows into Owens River and Crowley Lake, putting this entire ecosystem at risk.

Right now, the need to restore ecosystems rather than degrade them is urgent. California is entering into another extreme drought, another extreme fire season, and is aiming to protect 30% of our lands by 2030. As such, it is completely inappropriate to approve projects like this that will only cause further risk to our natural resources. Therefore, I strongly oppose even the first exploratory step of this effort to ultimately mine for gold. At a minimum, a full EIS should be conducted in order to properly assess the full impacts and allow for meaningful public engagement.

Let me conclude by pointing out that my family has been fishing at Hot Creek and in the surrounding area since at least 1948. I am not aware of another publicly accessible place like Hot Creek left in CA. It is unconscionable that this region be needlessly destroyed at this time. It contains an ecosystem that must be preserved to the benefit of all Californians. In addition such exploration may threaten the purity of the drinking water of the Los Angeles region. The loss to Californians will be greater than the profits extracted if this project is to proceed in its proposed format. This project must not go forward.

Sincerely,

Susan Bettelheim Garfin, PhD