

**From:** [Graham, Jim](#)  
**To:** [Ferguson, Tracey](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Vested Rights-public comments  
**Date:** Sunday, November 19, 2023 8:20:42 AM  
**Attachments:** [By the beginning of the 20th century.docx](#)

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For your files.

Jim Graham (he/his)  
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**From:** Chris Woods <[propondless7@gmail.com](mailto:propondless7@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 18, 2023 1:11 PM  
**To:** Graham, Jim <[JimGraham@countyofplumas.com](mailto:JimGraham@countyofplumas.com)>  
**Subject:** Vested Rights-public comments

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Please see attached document  
Best regards

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Sent from my iPad

### Determination of Vested Rights-Apposed

By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, mining was developing a process to make mining low grade ore profitable. For years, the gravity method of separating waste rock from minerals was used. The flotation method, perfected in Australia, allowed miners to separate certain minerals from crushed waste rock by adding chemicals, frothing the material and skimming the ore from the surface of the bath. By adding different chemicals, additionally, different types of minerals would be frothed to the surface and skimmed. Gold, copper, etc., was removed from low grade material and the waste from this process was kept in tailing ponds. No longer were miners hamstrung by the cost of looking for high grade ore and the results of tons and tons of overburden and waste. Open pit mines became more popular, as a result.

The California Engles mining operation has acres and acres of gravel overburden. It is currently being removed by Turner Excavation, an active vestee. As long as I have lived in Indian Valley, the Turner Excavation trucks have hauled the overburden past my house on Diamond Mountain Rd. It makes you wonder how much overburden is actually up there? The Engel mine supposedly has 3 miles of tunnels. The tailing remains are still in abundance. Nothing grows in this portion of the property, not even weeds. And the tailings are located directly above Lower Lights creek. Anecdotally, land owners, directly in the shadow of these tailings, report arsenic in the surface water. I've seen with my own eyes, globules of mercury, floating in the creek. When I was a boy, we called this stuff, quicksilver. But we have to remember, mercury is prevalent around the runoff from burn offs and forest fires. And there have been many fires in and around the Engels/Superior mine. We would pray the Zoning administrator would take the lack of rehabilitation of the land by the vestor, CEMCO, into account before adding additional vestees into the mix.

The applicant, known as US Copper, is considered applicable and whole, in this vestment application. In doing the due diligence, we find the applicant unable to adequately deliver on their promises, due to lack of resources. The applicant has, according to public records, lost \$2M, each of the last 4 years. Currently, the applicant has asked their lenders for a 6-month extension for their warrants. We conclude, after study, the applicant is a land speculator and will, once gaining vestment, negotiate an agreement with a "real" mining operation, like Rio Tinto, to cash in on their leases with CEMCO. We find no grievances with this, but would ask the administrator not recommend vestment to US Copper.

Furthermore, the administrator must be aware of the fact, the proposed vestment of the 2 parcels in question, Engels and Superior, are a part of a larger mining interest. In the applicant's investment documents, they mention a "15-mile square operation", to which "they are in control of". This illuminates the intention of the applicant and must, in our estimation, be taken into consideration by the administrator. We do not insist on "reading the tee leaves", but a 15

square mile, open pit mine, would be near to the size of the Kennecott mine, in Utah. The Kennecott mine is the largest copper mine in the US. So, the applicants' true intentions are revealed to be much more than the 1,400 acres proposed in the application for vestment.

Why is this of concern to the administrator? If the 3 mines, Engel, Superior and Moonlight, were combined in an open pit, which we believe is the intention of the applicant, the Upper and Lower Moonlight creek would have to be dammed up, as the "pit would go across the creeks. Additionally, the ingress/egress point to and from the North Arm valley would be shut down. This is important because during the Dixie fire, many people used this road to evacuate. This road is a USFS road and the Engel/Superior mines sit on Federal land. I wonder if the USFS is on board with the proposed damning of the Upper and Lower Lights creeks and the closing of the road? We have noticed the USFS had just resurfaced the road from Taylorsville to Antelope Lake. Finally, what should the administrator make of the proposed damning of the creeks and the downstream landowner's water rights?

As we draw more and more conclusions, the true intentions of the applicant are exposed. First of all, the applicants, in their public filings, report a find of 2 billion pounds of copper, not tons but pounds. At today's copper price, the find would be worth around \$7.3B. Seems like a lot, but the Kennecott mine had produced 20 times this amount. What makes this "small" find attractive. The answer is water. It takes millions of gallons of water, each day, to keep the silica and dust under control, in an open pit, at this scale. And it just so happens, the proposed mine sits right over the Keddie Ridge aquifer. Known up in Lake Almanor as the "Big Springs". This aquifer starts at Dyer Mountain and traverses to Keddie Point. All throughout this range, there are fresh water springs. It is fed from the alluvial valleys like, Mountain Meadows. How long does the ground water last when the mine is pumping millions of gallons of water, each day?

We appreciate the administrator giving the citizens an opportunity to voice our concerns. We won't get too much into the weeds concerning the poisoning of the land and water supply downstream from a copper mine, except to point out because of the "new" leaching process, everything 20 miles downstream, from the Kennecott mine, is dead. Kennecott has 3 water treatment plants and the water still can't be used by Salt Lake City, as drinking water. California feeds most of the US and the World. It is unimaginable to see the Feather River watershed ruined for a few pounds of copper. There is a reason Engeltown is gone, as well as the old railroad. It is boom or bust, in mining. The CEO of BHP recently commented, "we will need 50% more copper, in the next 30 years". I admire his ability to see into the future. I believe we will innovate our way to energy independence, without copper. Afterall, 30 years ago, I made a phone call from a phone, on the wall and had to get up from my chair, to change the channel on the TV.

Best regards

C L Woods  
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