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## Mining Accountability Conference Asserts “We Can’t Mine our Way out of Climate Change”

Reno, Nevada – Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples from international frontline communities affected by mining, and mining accountability NGOs, will converge in Reno. The purpose of the conference is to share their experiences, to develop a vision for a future with a truly just transition to renewable energy sources, without the need for destructive and disruptive mining.

The October 13 through 16 convergence is the biennial conference organized by the [Western Mining Action Network \(WMAN\)](#). Established in 1997, the Western Mining Action Network is a strong, diverse alliance of communities who work to protect water, air, land, wildlife, and human beings from the adverse effects of mining.

*The Conference will call attention to the proposed local lithium mine that threatens the cultural and spiritual site, Peehee Mu’huh, Thacker Pass.*

### **Journalists are welcome to join:**

- the media roundtable/conference Friday, Oct 14, 6:30 to 7:30 AM at the Grand Sierra Resort
- Peehee Mu’huh (Thacker Pass) site visit Sunday, Oct. 16

The proposed Thacker Pass lithium mine at the cultural and spiritual site, Peehee Mu’huh, stands front and center at the conference. WMAN stands in solidarity with the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, People of Red Mountain, and Burns Paiute Tribe to protect Peehee Mu’huh - Thacker Pass.

“The RSIC is honored to co-host the Mining Accountability Conference with WMAN in the traditional homelands of the Paiute, Washoe and Shoshone peoples,” Arlan Melendez, Tribal Chairman of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony says.

“We welcome our Indigenous relatives from around the World that are in the front lines to make sure that mining extraction is not adversely affecting their communities,” Melendez says. “We must be committed to assisting one another to make sure our communities are not negatively impacted by the new shift in energy production.”

The theme of the conference will focus on the energy transition and the role of mining. A clear consequence is the disproportionate effects to communities adjacent to mining operations. These frontline communities are under increased pressure to acquiesce to fast tracked mining proposals. For decades, mining communities have been used as sacrifice zones, enduring destruction to their land, water, and life ways.

According to the UN International Resource Panel:

- 90 percent of biodiversity loss and water stress are caused by resource extraction and processing.
- Annually, the extraction of metals and minerals has risen significantly, from 11.6 billion tons in 1970 to 53.1 billion tons in 2017, accounting for 20% of climate impacts.

According Forbes, "[Dig This: The Shift To EVs Requires A Massive Expansion Of Battery Metal Mining](#)," September 19, 2022:

"Adding new mines will take time and can create environmental damage, including groundwater pollution, excessive water use, destruction of wildlife habitats, damage to topsoil, harmful runoff from chemicals used in some mining operations and pollution from tailings, the residual materials left after valuable metals have been removed"

A recent [Morgan Stanley Capital International article](#) revealed that:

"Indigenous Communities are threatened by mineral extraction for the green energy transition. 97% of America's nickel reserves, 89% of copper, 79% of lithium and 68% of cobalt are found within 35 miles of Native American reservations."

Excerpted from the "[DECLARATION OF THE INDIGENOUS CAUCUS of WMAN](#)"

"We continue to affirm, with one voice, that it is a critical time for all of humanity to address centuries of extraction, predation, pollution, colonialism, the violation of rights, and genocide. It is time to assume the responsibilities towards our future generations. ***It is time to choose life.***"

"We continue to fight for our ***"Right-To-Say-NO!"*** to Mining, rejecting responsible mining and mining reform. We cannot mine our way out of climate change if so called renewables are based on mining."

"The IC affirms our work with WMAN to address mining impacts and calling for the remediation, reclamation and clean up of abandoned mines, mining waste and ***protecting our water, communities, habitat and sacred areas and landscapes.***"

"The IC supports a ***"Circular Economy"*** based on recycling, reuse and remanufacturing (taking back products by manufacturers) in order to recover the metals that have already been mined. This includes re-tooling renewables to be less dependent on mining, re-thinking infrastructure for conservation and renewable energy based mass transit benefiting both rural and town populations. Important note: This supplement provides an important suggestion to reduce and eliminate mining because it destroys sacred sites, water and Mother Earth."

*"Just like fossil fuels have poisoned our planet in the past, money and now electric cars aren't worth the destruction of my community's water, food, health and land." - Angel Stickman, Inupiaq from*

Shungnak, Alaska

*"People of Red Mountain would like to thank WMAN for hosting the Western Mining Action Network - 2022 Biennial Conference. It is important to protect sacred places like Peehee Mu'huh and the next Seven Generations." -D. Hinkey, People of Red Mountain Committee Member, Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribal Descendant*

*"Modern large-scale mining is very destructive to the natural ecosystems and often disruptive to hosting communities. It is essential therefore that the citing of mining operations be done carefully, judiciously, and in a manner that allows for the full range of consequences of the proposed mine to be fully explored and addressed. Never is there a time to fast-track or "expedite" mine permitting even for lithium and other "energy transition" metals. If anything we should be even more careful, since each mine further erodes the ability of the planet to regulate climate. Expediting is a step backward, which will accept incompletely analyzed mine plans that unnecessarily allow environmental damage and run over concerns of the directly affected communities. We only need to look at the permitting process for the proposed Thacker Pass Lithium mine that has so far triggered two lawsuits and highly disgruntled frontline communities." - John Hadder, Great Basin Resource Watch*