

Mine ... Continued from A-1

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identified the metal mining industry as the nation's largest toxic polluter.

The EPA's proposed rule for hazardous air pollutants specific to the now-closed Glenbrook Nickel smelter, near Riddle, Oregon, stated: "Nickel compounds such as nickel carbonyl and nickel subsulfate are some of the most toxic compounds of nickel. They can affect the lungs and the kidneys. Symptoms such as headaches, vomiting, chest pains, dry coughing, and visual disturbances have been reported from short-term exposure in humans. Additionally, human and animal studies reveal an increased risk of lung and nasal cancers from exposure to nickel refinery dusts and nickel subsulfate."

Mining opponents also voice concerns about potential storage of nickel smelter slag, an issue raised in a BLM mineral report, which they say could contain toxic levels of hexavalent chromium - a highly carcinogenic compound made famous by the movie, Erin Brokovich.

Closer to the Illinois Valley, RNR Resources, formerly

Nicore, submitted a plan to the USFS for full-scale nickel mining at Rough & Ready Creek that includes smelting operations. The agency returned the plan to the mining proponent, asking for additional information. The proponent declined to speak with the Illinois Valley News about the mining plan.

In the 1990's there was overwhelming opposition to large-scale nickel mining at Rough & Ready Creek and during the official comment period for the proposed Nicore Mine, out of approximately 5,000 letters, fewer than 10 expressed support for mining.

According to USFS analysis of the Nicore project, "Southwestern Oregon is among the most botanically diverse areas within the continental United States, and the Rough and Ready Creek Watershed is critical for many endangered, threatened, sensitive and rare species of plants and fish. The area contains resources that are highly valued by the public and these values are relatively scarce, particularly when compared to the availability of nickel bearing ore world-wide."

"Over the past few months I've been speaking to hundreds

of Illinois Valley residents about all three mining proposals," said O'Brien resident and Illinois Valley Outreach Coordinator for the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Regina Castellon. "It's clear that we love where we live and are proud of the rugged wilderness that surrounds us. And I have yet to hear someone supporting grand-scale nickel strip mining in the Illinois Valley."

"Nickel mining leaves lifetime environmental scars," Castellon added. "And we don't know all the toxic materials that may be leached from soils near places we love like Bald Face Creek and Rough and Ready Creek."

"Mining leaves nothing for future generations," said Valley resident Roger Brandt. "Our clean rivers, healthy salmon habitats and unique landscapes all represent valuable assets that contribute to the quality of life in this community and helps attract new families, retirees and entrepreneurs who'll start businesses. Everyone's future is at stake."

Radio ... Continued from A-1

People were saying "Here's some of my hard-earned money to make this happen." I was humbled and grateful that so many people turned out and said "We're going to make this happen together." It was electric!"

The radio station is a project of the Spiral Living Center (SLC), a registered not-for-profit organization based in Takilma. Last year the group applied for and received an FCC license for a low-power community radio station. The license restricts the station to 100 watts.

"We're still working on placement for the antenna. There are two cell phone towers on city-owned land near the river. We're in conversation with the city to explore the possibility to situate a mast there," Keeeth explained. "We might erect our own mast on that city property."

The steering committee includes long time community builder Dave Maize and Deb Lukas, SLC founder and executive director. Other committee members are Carolyn Taormina, Deborah Carroll, Emily Fabbri and Keeeth's partner, Nellie Barrera.

The couple moved here from

San Francisco about 18 months ago. Barrera worked in the costume shop for the San Francisco Opera and Keeeth worked as a bicycle messenger and mechanic.

"San Francisco just got too expensive," Keeeth explained. "Several high-tech companies built new headquarters there and the city seemed to fill up with too many people making too much money. Our previous survival strategies, that allowed us to eat and live cheaply, got tiresome for us. We really wanted to change gears and do something different."

They had friends in Takilma and had visited several times, so they decided to move here. Keeeth now works with fellow BikeSpace coordinator, Sara Krueger, at the C.J. Farmers' Market every Friday. They repair bicycles and offer their expertise at the weekly venue located at the corner of Redwood and Caves Highways.

"There's no bike shop in town, so we offer this service so folks don't have to drive into Grants Pass to get their bikes fixed." The repairs are offered free of charge, but payment is gladly accepted. "Whatever it's worth

to you and whatever you can afford," he said.

Keeeth would prefer that the new radio station not have to pay hundreds of dollars a month to rent space on one of the three towers on Eight Dollar Mountain. "That signal could reach Grants Pass and maybe Brookings, but that's not what we need," he opined.

"We want to do things as economically as possible," he continued. "Our community has come through in a multitude of ways and we're hoping to continue that. There are skilled people in this valley who can do the work we'll need and much less expensively than hiring outside contractors. We can throw money at the problem or take a little more time and build relationships."

FM transmission requires "line of sight" capability and the Illinois Valley has quite a few mountains so it's important to the steering committee to find the highest ground possible. The group has used a computer simulation to evaluate the potential footprint and the signal is projected to reach from Cave Junction to O'Brien and Takilma. Some Selma residents

will also be able to receive the signal.

The group is planning to be on the air late spring or early summer and has already rented studio space in the I.V. Medical Center on Caves Highway in Dr. Patton's former dental office. They're in the process of removing several sinks and renovating various rooms toward their new functions.

"The reception area will stay the same. One room will be a music library, one will be the air room and one will be used for live performances. We want to take FM radio back to its roots," he enthused.

"We plan on having a lot of live music. There are not a lot of venues in the valley. One answer to that problem will be the capability to air live performances, and offer our guests the chance to talk about their new CD and where you can get it, or their next tour dates."

"We also want to encourage youth involvement and have youth created programming from the get-go," he continued. "We've already distributed an open letter to faculty and staff at I.V. High School stat-

ing that we want students to be involved."

"We'll have programming that comes out of the community and we'll make a big push for volunteer programmers. What folks might hear will be roughly analogous to a college radio station, but with a broader range including news and interviews from left, right and center. There might be shows that you'll dearly love and some that you'll hate with a passion. We want it to be an engaging station. Hopefully you'll hear something funny, educational, or informational or maybe all three at the same time."

Those interested in learning more are encouraged to go to www.kxcj.org. Financial donations can be sent to KXCJ-LP 105.7 FM, PO Box 2518, Cave Junction, 97523. It's requested that checks be made out to Spiral Living Center with "KXCJ" on the memo line.

The group wants to make KXCJ a source of civic pride. "We want it to be located in CJ and sound like CJ with programs that are relevant to people living in this valley," Keeeth concluded.

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