

Press Release June 3, 2015

The local community group W.A.T.E.R. (We Advocate Thorough Environmental Review) has hired land use and water attorney Donald B. Mooney, to represent it in demanding that Crystal Geysers and the County government follow County law before allowing Crystal Geysers to start their plastic bottle manufacturing/tea brewing/juice bottling operation just outside the northern border of Mt. Shasta City. On behalf of W.A.T.E.R., Mr. Mooney sent a letter today to the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors and Crystal Geysers pointing out that the land in question has long been designated by the County's General Plan as a "Woodland Productivity" zone which specifically forbids heavy industrial uses (such as plastic manufacturing, and non-spring water beverage brewing and mixing, all of which are planned by Crystal Geysers). According to the letter, the General Plan clearly specifies that Woodland Productivity land can only be permitted for "Single-family residential, light industrial, light commercial, open space, non-profit and non-organizational in nature recreational uses, commercial/recreational uses, and public or quasi-public uses..." After a lengthy and detailed citation of the relevant County ordinances that the Crystal Geysers project appears to violate because it is heavy industry, the letter concludes with the following summary and prospect if no action is taken: "Based upon the foregoing, W.A.T.E.R. requests that the County cease from issuing any permits for the Crystal Geysers facility. W.A.T.E.R. further requests that the Crystal Geysers refrain from taking any further action that would result in a violation of the County's General Plan and/or Zoning Ordinance. To this end, W.A.T.E.R. requests that the County and Crystal Geysers inform W.A.T.E.R. that all future activities will be comply with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. More specifically, that such future activities at Crystal Geysers's Mt. Shasta facility will not include the manufacture of plastic bottles and will not involve the brewing of tea, nor the bottling of tea and juices. If W.A.T.E.R. does not obtain such assurances from the both the County and Crystal Geysers within two weeks of this letter, W.A.T.E.R. reserves the right to file an action in Siskiyou County Superior Court seeking declaratory judgment and injunctive relief."

The County has steadfastly claimed that all the permits for the Crystal Geysers operation (many of which have not yet been applied for) are "ministerial". W.A.T.E.R. claims this is incorrect and, in fact, many of those permits are, and will be, "discretionary". Prior to granting discretionary permits the County must comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. Such compliance would entail a complete environmental review of Crystal Geysers proposed operation, including evaluation of all potential environmental hazards of the Crystal Geysers project, groundwater depletion and consequent threats to neighboring residential and city wells, noise, nighttime lighting, plastics fumes, toxic waste disposal, and truck traffic. Such an independent environmental review is necessary to protect the community against these hazards, to preserve the character and livability of this community, and to impose mandatory monitoring and regulation of the facility if and when it begins operation.

We Advocate Thorough Environmental Review (W.A.T.E.R.)