

June 3, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Regarding the re-opening of the Kirkland Tufa Mine, I am very excited to think there will be some industry once again in our valley.

I grew up in Kirkland playing on all of the tufa formations throughout the valley. The huge stone steps behind my home were the quarry for the stone used to build the capital building in Phoenix.

The Kirkland School, I attended was quarried from the land belonging to Harold Rhinerson, which was the site of the old Maverick Mining Company. Kirkland and Skull Valley are populated by little tufa buildings and fences cut from that quarry.

Bob Unzicker saw use for multi-purpose tufa stone when he first developed the mine. Who would have thought stone from our valley would ship all over the world for oil sweep and cat litter! The extraordinary process in which tufa absorbs and breaks down oil outweighs any negative environmental aspects of mining it. Pour some oil on your sidewalk, shovel some fines from the tufa mine and let it set a couple of days, sweep it up and you'll see what I'm talking about. I've always thought it would be a wonderful product for ocean oil spills.

I know from living in a tufa house, that it provides natural insulation. It is such a soft stone, it can be cut to form all kinds of building configurations. You can still see the beautiful fire place my father cut for our home.

When I graduated from high school, I worked at the tufa mine, bagging material. My grandfather worked there in many capacities for many years. My father-in-law worked there at age 80 plus. My husband worked the mine from development to end. I have friends who began their mining careers there and continue mining in Bagdad today. I know at one time the mine employed 50 plus people. They were local folks. They fed their families. They bought and improved properties. They contributed to business' that are no longer in operation, because there is no industry to support them. Wouldn't you like to see some of those local business's come back?

I can't see anything but good coming from a rock formation that can be used in so many ways for good. I hope the mine will be an active part of our community again.

Sharon Shafer
Kirkland Resident