

Gold miners want to see what's left in Virginia City area

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

In a place defined by its mining history, ambitious plans to pull new riches of gold and silver from the ground stand to shape the future of the Comstock.

Representatives of Comstock Mining Inc., plan to “revitalize the Comstock” through mining during the next 30 years, a long-term project they say will not only make them big bucks but provide a needed boost to the economy of the Virginia City area.

Organized opponents are afraid of what they don't know, worrying that plans to mine the Comstock with open pits could destroy a quiet rural lifestyle and forever alter one of the West's most historic places.

Since 2003, Comstock Mining, formerly Goldspring Inc., has acquired property and mining claims in what company officials call an “unprecedented consolidation” of Comstock resources encompassing some 6,100 acres. The area stretches from the south end of Virginia City, through Gold Hill and Silver City to U.S. 50 East.

Test drilling has identified deposits of gold and silver, many of them highly pure and at relatively shallow depths, worth more than \$2 billion and there's more out there, said Corrado De Gasperis, Comstock's president and chief executive officer. The value of gold this spring reached a record of roughly \$1,500 per ounce. Silver prices are at a 30-year high.

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