

Several months ago, I wrote an opinion letter to the Mountain News expressing my opposition to the Church of the Woods Project. All of the points I made in my January 9, 2020 letter are still of concern to me. The San Bernardino Mountains offer a natural experience not available to many urban dwellers. It comes complete with wildlife, some of it unique to the San Bernardinos. There are birds, plants, creeks, and flowers in the Spring, none of which are told *where* to grow. Years ago, when I worked in Orange and San Bernardino County as a therapist, I learned that most of the children I worked with had never been in a natural setting. They had grown to age 11 or 12 and had never followed a trail to see pines, oaks, cedars, and Sequoias. They had never understood that Nature comes in all those colors of green. They had never had the feeling of freedom that comes from feeling alone with the wind flowing through those trees. This mountain experience carries through to the ambiance of the shops and restaurants along Highway 18. It just doesn't have the look and feel of a planned community.

As our population grows with the many remote work opportunities now occurring, more people will want to work in the peace and quiet of the mountains. More will want to camp with their children. More people will worry about evacuation routes in the event of fire. More will be unhappy with the new traffic signals as they travel from Crestline to Skypark. A project of this size just doesn't make sense in our beloved mountains.

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