



Microbes and Heavy Metal Group

Dr Frank Reith

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Concern: Letter in support of John Parsons and his efforts to bring awareness to the mining industry, business sector, government departments and the wider public about the economic and environmental benefits associated with our discoveries.

To whom this may concern,

In my research group we have been studying the geomicrobiological and geochemical cycling of gold in Australian regolith and mining environments for more over 10 years. A main aim of the Microbes and Heavy Metals Research Group is to develop applications for gold exploration and ore processing. Since very early in this research (2007) we have been working closely with John Parsons at the Prophet Gold Mine in Kilkivan, Queensland. The site provides a unique environment for occurrence/study of supergene gold cycling. Through the continuous support by the lease holder and miner John Parsons, the Prophet Gold Mine has become our most important Australian research site. Some of the breakthrough discoveries in my groups' research have been made at this site and/or are based on the samples we collected on John's mining lease. This has led to a number of highly cited research papers in acclaimed international research journals such as *Geology*, *Chemical Geology*, *FEMS Microbiology Ecology*, *Elements* and *Minerals* (list of published papers available on request), and a number of well received presentations domestic and international research conferences, *e.g.*, Goldschmidt Conference for Geochemistry, FEMS Microbial Ecology Conference and the Australian Geological Convention. John's expertise has substantially contributed to the success of this work, he is co-author on two papers published about this site, and with his enthusiastic embrace of print and new media has substantially contributed making this research available to the wider public, as can be seen in a number of recent newspaper articles published, *e.g.*, in The Adelaide Advertiser and The Gympie Times among others.

With the help and expertise of John Parsons we have most recently set up a series of bioreactor mesocosm ore processing experiments at the Prophet Gold Mine with the aim to produce recoverable gold from waste rock and tailings materials, this research will be ongoing at the site in the next years. This will ensure that in the future new breakthrough technology can be developed here in collaboration with John, who through his continuous support and expertise has become an asset not only to our work, but so I believe, to the industry as a whole. Therefore, I wholeheartedly support John's venture and recommend him to you with the warmest regards.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Frank Reith'.

Dr Frank Reith (Ph.D.) ARC Future Fellow, School of Biological Sciences, The University of Adelaide.