

Proposal for Reclaim the Fields Camp 2011 Romania

Dear Friends / Carrots,

We are an activist group from Romania, working together since 2001 on environmental issues. One of the most visible campaign on which we work together is the Save Rosia Montana Campaign. It is an anti-mining with focus on Rosia Montana, an amazing mountain village from the Apuseni Mountains where since 10 years a gold mining project is threatening the existence of Rosia Montana and large mountain areas around it.

This is the location where our team wishes to propose the organization of the Reclaim the Fields Camp 2011.

The idea of organizing this activist event in Rosia Montana came from 3 members of the Reclaim the Field movement which visited the village at the end of November, 2010. Following that, our team had a planning meeting at the beginning of December 2010 in which we concluded unanimously that we are willing to partner in organizing the camp in Rosia Montana. In the attachment of this message you will find our proposal which describes location, it's political context (the Save Rosia Montana Campaign), the logistical resources and the organizational capacity of our team and of the locals.

We realize that there are numerous details to discuss in the very near future with regards to how will we work together, in case you guys will decide for this location.

In the hope that you will strongly consider our proposal, we wish you good luck in choosing the location and in all of your activities.

Rosia Montana – the perfect location

Short description of the location: Rosia Montana is a village placed in the Central – Western part of Romania, in the Apuseni Mountains. The closest small towns are Abrud (11 km away) and Campeni (15 km away) and the closest large cities are Alba Iulia (76 km away) and Cluj Napoca (135 km away). There is public transport (bus) towards Rosia Montana from various towns and cities from Romania. The road towards Rosia Montana is in acceptable condition – practicable in all seasons, especially summer and autumn.

History: Rosia Montana is the oldest documented mining settlement in Romania (about 1,870 years old). The village of Rosia Montana contains hundreds of households, a historical center with beautiful architecture, various administrative and social-cultural buildings, memorial houses, a mining museum with a unique collection of ancient artifacts, an archaeological reservation with kilometers of roman and pre-roman underground galleries, mausoleums and many geological wonders. Rosia Montana is of industrial interest especially for it's gold and silver resources. Mining activities have been conducted since pre-roman times (more than 2000 years), leaving behind archaeological proves uniques in the world. During communist times, the gold was exploited in Rosia Montana using “modern” technologies in the form of open cast mining, with the use of cyanide and other dangerous substances, violating people's rights to a healthy environment and culture heritage and in the given conditions at the time with complete ignorance of people's rights to property.

The struggle of Rosia Montana. Rosia Montana finds itself at the moment in the most difficult time in it's history. Since 10 years Rosia Montana is threatened to be destroyed by the largest mining project proposal in Europe. The mining proposal belongs to a foreign investor Gabriel Resources. Also, some of the most important players in this industry bought shares in Gabriel Resources in the last years

(example – Newmont Mining – the largest mining company in the world owns over 20% in Gabriel's shares). Needless to say that the mining project is planned to destroy the life in the Apuseni Mountains. It involves an unprecedented use of cyanide, destruction of 4 mountains, forests, pastures, houses, churches, archaeological vestiges, relocation of people, cemeteries, animals.

The village is very large and has a contradictory appearance with inhabited households, houses that were sold to the mining company and are deserted at the moment and buildings transformed in offices for the mining company. When U arrive in Rosia Montana you see the struggle at every step. The inhabited valleys are surrounded by mountains, pastures and forests of an amazing beauty which give travelers a moment of peace. Autumn is the best moment in the year to observe the various colors of the nature in Rosia Montana.

The people of Rosia Montana. The local population consists mostly of former miners and people that work exclusively in agriculture. A few work for public services or small private business. The mining company, even though is not operational employs seasonal workers for seasonal PR jobs and they also have a few permanent jobs as car drivers and pro-mining NGOs. Nevertheless, whatever the jobs in Rosia Montana might be, people are strongly connected to their land and animals. Being a mountain area, the peasants in Rosia Montana are focused more on animal growing – mostly cows, sheep and horses. Traditionally they also have small vegetables gardens and orchards. The food processing is very traditional, non mechanized due to the poverty in the area and also to strong traditional customs. Rosienii people preserve vegetables and fruits for winter in various delicious ways such as zacusca, pickles, gems, syrups. Also, the men from the village make a famous brandy from plums or apples or the best combination – brandy with sour cherries – highly appreciated by activists when engaged in philosophical discussions with locals. The rosienii peasants love their tradition and to share their practices and they are very curious and enthusiastic to work with young people. The work is very hard but very rewarding.

Due to various procedures that the mining project had to fulfill in the last 10 years, the people from Rosia Montana faced great pressure and manipulation coming from the mining company, the Romanian and European authorities and the media. But they have also experienced generosity, love, unconditioned help coming from fellow Romanians and people around the world. You might say they have seen it all.

Due to the manipulations tactics used by the mining company in the area, the social context is divided. The rosienii people are either pro or against the mining project and their positions are tremendously influencing their social relationships. If you are not from the village rosienii people will see that instantly and their first question will be: “are you pro or against”. Since 2001, hundreds of families sold their houses to the mining companies and left the village. Some of their stories are dramatic. Thus, the nucleus of the opposition against the mining project is stronger than ever as it consists of people that if they wanted to leave, they would have done it by now. They are people for which Rosia Montana is now their life and will be the future for their children.

Our team

Who we are and actually who makes this proposal to the Reclaim the Fields Movement? Our team consists at the moment of 30 active people, but the volunteers that we can mobilize is much larger, in fact when we organize a large event we have to to a selection, due to the very high demand. Our team has an old core of 10 young people (still young at heart after all this time) that answered the call from the local people and got involved in the Save Rosia Montana Campaign back in 2002. The others joined the team in time. Our team closely works with local people from Rosia Montana which are organized in an association named Alburnus Maior (the Latin name of Rosia Montana).

Past activities together. The activities that we organized together in the last almost 9 years are extremely various, managing to influence decision makers, investors, scientific forums, the public opinion and the media. We shall mention a few of the types of the activities that we carried together: direct legal and illegal actions (demonstrations, marches in the cities and in the country – 135 km, bike

tours in the country, vigils, poster actions in the entire country), bureaucratic actions (hundreds of thousands of petitions signed, open letters, press releases, calls, research, etc.) cultural events (documentary movies, charity movie projections, concerts and poetry recitals etc.), cyber activism (support letters, petitions, photo calls, opinion polls, websites etc.), tourism projects, mobilization of independent personalities, boycotts of people or businesses affiliated with the mining company, lobby meetings, calls, court actions (over 50 court cases since 2003 either initiated by us, or by the “others”).

Relevant Experience - FanFest.

The event organized by our team that has the best relevance for the Reclaim the Fields Movement is the FanFest Festival (in English is “the Hay festival”) from Rosia Montana. Up to date we organized 5 editions starting with 2004 and taking a break in 2008 and 2009. The goal of this festival is to awaken the activist spirit in Romanians across the country and to celebrate the cultural heritage and the life of Rosia Montana which resists every year to oppression. FanFest brought to Rosia Montana thousands of people at every edition. The highest participation was in 2006 – with 15000 people and the lowest in 2010 – with over 2000 people. People are drawn into this event because of its political message, and because of the beauty of Rosia Montana. The festival is a 3 days event and the program of the festival slightly differs from one edition to the other, but at large it includes: an NGO fair with green initiatives, political and cultural debates, tourism activities, movie projections, various workshops of crafting, usual and extreme sports, theater, poetry, music and prose representations, a peasant market. With all the activities that we organized we tried to transmit a message, to involve the public in political debates, to get them to understand the Save Rosia Montana perspective and to know the people and the beauty of the village on one hand and to make the people of Rosia Montana feel the solidarity that exists, to contribute to the local economy, to create the premises of alternatives to mining on the other hand.

As you can imagine, the program of the festival has behind it huge efforts of organization.

Fundraising experience. In order to make FanFest happen, we always worked with very little financial resources so everything we do is based on personal abilities to obtain services / logistics for free or with significant costs reductions, personal contributions and connections, local support. In terms of fundraising, we are proud to say that we are very selective with where we take money from. Until 2007 we received money on project proposals from international independent foundations, private donations from people and very small businesses and refused lots of money from Coca Cola, a cement factory, a steel factory and surprise – the mining company. We don't take money from the Romanian Government. In 2010 the fundraising was extremely difficult, managing to raise only 6500 Euro from personal donations from Romanians.

Location experience.

There are 2 main locations where we have experience in organizing the Festival. One is on a high Plateau at 1100 m altitude from where you can see the valleys around, and a big part of the Rosia Montana village. We and the locals call this plateau the FanFest Plateau since we organized the 2004 – 2007 FanFest editions there. This location is public, it has 5-6 usable hectares land and it has the advantage of having there the household of a local family which would welcome there for very cheap the headquarter of a festival or a camp. The household has many facilities for storage, a house with 4 beds, an attic which can become bedroom, a little kitchen in the house and a big kitchen outside, a hay storage facility which can become bedroom, lots of space behind for lots of tents. The rental of the plateau can be done at the local council.

The other location where we have experience is the Brazi Lake, amazing nature, amazing view, less space than on the Plateau. The location where we organized concerts, the NGO Fair and other things at Brazi Lake belongs to a private person. It can be rented for very cheap and it has about 1 hectare.

Logistical experience. Most of the activities in the FanFest programme take place in open air, in large tents or other facilities. We shall list below the most important aspects of this section:

- Access – public transportation towards the village– the program is listed below; access to Brazi Lake

– by private car is possible, by foot is enjoyable; access to the FanFest Plateau – by private car is possible; a bit challenging for extremely big trucks; the road on the plateau was built by our team from rocks. By foot the Plateau can be accessed through the forest on a little mountain path – it is very very enjoyable.

- Electricity – there is three-phase connection from public electricity wires in most of the locations where you could possible organize an activity that involves heavy use of electricity; authorization is needed and the consumption has to be payed to the electricity company – we know the procedure and the location where the bureaucratic work has to be done is in the town of Campeni – 15 km from Rosia Montana; big generators can be rented from the electricity company from Alba Iulia (75 km away) at reasonable prices; smaller generators can be rented from the electricity company in Campeni.

- Large tents for presentations / movie projections etc. - one solution is the Army which rents big tents at reasonable prices; other solutions – friends.

- Kitchen for hundreds of people: a wonderful location is the FanFest Plateau, at Eugen David's farm where our team practically built a summer kitchen from wood, with walls and a roof were with a bit of imagination 100 people can eat at once; behind the kitchen there is a great space for cooking for as many people you can – in this location our team cooked for more than 300 people; the other kitchen location is down in the center of the village at a young local's cabana – in this kitchen our team cooked for 120 people. What we usually do is that we don't serve all the people at once, but in an determined schedule – let's say breakfast between 07:00 to 09:30 and so on. Kitchen tools – from friends, we buy some, locals help for others.

- Access to water – for the kitchen from the FanFest Plateau – the water comes from a source nearby; our team organized a big plastic baril in which we stored water. Water for shower – same thing with storing water from the source improvised by a hay stack; shower bags if existing – can be easily installed by hay stacks. For the kitchen from the cabana in the village – there is current water in the house both for the kitchen and for 1 shower. An improvised shower can be organized outside the house using water from the cabana.

- Waste management – we usually rent special services for bins and portable toilets including transport and compaction of waste. We payed 600 euros for waste management for 2000 people for FanFest 2010, without considering the plastic garbage bags that we used to collect the waste 3 times a day for 3 days. Garbage collection points can be installed everywhere. On the FanFest Plateau we also built 2 permanent toilets from wood.

Media experience

FanFest has been traditionally mediatized via alternative communication channels, mostly the internet. The event has a website www.fanfest.ro, with only a Romanian version. The website's design changes at every edition, at the same time maintaining link to the previous edition's content. The website's sections display the event's program, presentation of all it's activities (cultural, environmental, music, arts and crafts, outdoor activities), presentation of all artists performing at Fanfest, of all the event's partners, practical information for participants such as accessing the area, transport routs and public transport means's schedules, accommodation and food offers in Rosia Montana and the surrounding areas, contact details, etc. Each new Fanfest edition is announced together with the launch of the event's new website, usually some 3 months in advance the event takes place. After the launch of the event and it's website, regular press releases are sent to Fanfest's press list, both in English and in Romanian, containing all relevant news about activities, artists announcing their performances, practical information for participants, etc. Internet promotion is also complemented with a Facebook page of the event.

In addition to promotion on the internet, Fanfest has also been promoted via media partnerships agreed with independent and well-respected Romanian central newspapers and magazines. Fanfest's media partners agree to give Fanfest free publicity space and in return have their logos exposed on the event's website and main banners on the stage. Their journalists also have privileged access for interviews with artists, organizers, special guest and usually publish pre-event or post-event advertorials.

Volunteers coordination

The entire Fanfest team works on a volunteer basis, in the sense that they are not remunerated for their work. The team is made of approximately 30 organizers (who's work start some 6 month in advance) and 60 volunteers (who's work start some 10 days prior to the event and continue for some of them for another 5 days after the event). Tasks and responsibilities are divided in several fields of organization (fundraising, media, promotion, transport, logistics, cooking, waste management, artists and guests, program, etc). Each year one or two organizers are responsible for volunteers' coordination. Fanfest has a stable traditional team of volunteers build over several editions. In addition to those, each year the event opens its door to new people, inviting them to submit a short electronic letter of intention, pointing out their intention to become volunteers, the field in which they want to volunteer and their experience and talents that qualify them as a Fanfest volunteer. A very open and non-discriminative selection process follows, after which all new volunteers are contacted and explain all practicalities necessary to reach the place and start their role. Most Fanfest volunteers are students or young parents, aged between 18 and 30, and nurture a deep passion for ecology, traditions' preservation, traditional agricultural work, mountaineering, etc.

Proposals for the Reclaim the Fields camp

For the Reclaim the Fields Camp we can contribute with organizing logistical aspects, the program – artistic – underground groups of music, theater, poetry; activist – Romanian environmental and farming speakers / trainers, the communication with locals in order to organize farming works in the community – September is the month for the last hay, fruits and vegetables preserving, and other permanent works – taking care of animals, cheese making, bread making, tours in the area and many others. This might not be a very structured proposal of activities but we feel that the specifics of the location and the experience of our team show what we can do together. The fact that we know what the local conditions are and that you guys are organizing the Reclaim the Fields in unconventional locations since many years should blend our experiences together in a great Reclaim the Fields Camp. Organizing this Camp in Rosia Montana could bring more eastern activists and now, more than ever to have East-West solidarity, to better connect with each other. It is definitely the time for people like the ones from the Reclaim the Fields Movement to come to East to learn and share. In East some of the mistakes done in West haven't been completely done and here peasant farming still exists as a way of life. Romania has 50% of the peasants from Europe and our neighbor Bulgaria also counts a significant number. Also at the moment, the most important decision maker on agriculture from Europe – the Agriculture Commissioner is Romanian. Members of our group have done already lobbying at the Commission to promote small peasants in the frame of the CAP debate.

For sure we have different ways of working in a team. This is why, in case you choose Rosia Montana we need to act soon and together on how to be efficient.

Our team decided to organize again this year a new FanFest edition. In function of the final date that you guys wish to establish for the Camp, we will organize the Festival just before in the opening for 3 days. This will give us the chance to share resources and logistics.

Rosia Montana is the most media covered village in Romania. If you ask any Romanian if he/she ever heard of Rosia Montana, they will be able to say where it is and what is the problem there. The Save Rosia Montana Campaign is the largest grassroots movement in the country.

Links (we didn't wanted to insert links in the description above so that you can read it cursively so here they are – please check them as they are very important, each of them):

●Routes map Transylvania:

http://www.fanfest.ro/img_upload/1d064d99efcec9104f95ec355a4fdbb7/harta_mare.gif

●Map locations for FanFest Festival 2010:

http://fanfest.ro/img_upload/1d064d99efcec9104f95ec355a4fdbb7/hartaRM_ultima.jpg

●Relevant picture FanFest Plateau: <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?>

[fbid=137392086272751&set=a.137391289606164.23590.137108306301129](http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n32)

- Public transport schedule – direction towards Rosia Montana from various cities in Romania (available only in Romanian): <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n32>
- Organization of accommodation for participants at FanFest 2010 in tents, at people's houses, gardens etc. (available only in Romanian): <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n39>
- The Save Rosia Montana Campaign www.rosiamontana.org – english section
- The FanFest Festival 2010 – www.fanfest.ro – available only in Romanian
- Other initiatives of our team: The Ban Cyanide Campaign – www.faracianura.ro – english section
- Photo Galleries:
 - FanFest editions '04, '05, '06, '07 : <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n31> and <http://www.facebook.com/#!/album.php?aid=23590&id=137108306301129>
 - FanFest 2010 : <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n160>

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* This is not the full list of our team, just people that are willing to take part to the communication.