Richard Goshen Geologist/Project Manager

Coronado National Forest

Comments for the Arizona Minerals Inc. Hermosa Taylor Deposit Drilling Project

We oppose the proposed Arizona Minerals Inc. (AMI) Hermosa Taylor Deposit Drilling Project. We believe that the project would result in significant impacts to the environment. Due to the numerous connected actions and cumulative impacts of other events happening in the project area the Forest Service needs to complete and Environmental Impact Statement for this project.

We have concerns regarding the access to this project and the environmental impacts that will result.

1- The use of sections of Forest Road 5521 is not mentioned in the Scoping Notice or the AMI Plan of Operation. It is only shown on the maps provided. It appears that access to this project must utilize this road. It also appears that this road has been used continually since 2007 to access AMI private land. We understand that the only authorization to use and improve this road was granted by Categorical Exclusion in 2007. The Forest Service needs to the analyze the possible unauthorized use of this road private land access since the CE only authorized for less than one year.

2- The removal of of 220 trees (between 4” dbh and 12”dbh) and 14 trees (greater than 12”dbh) needs to analyzed for the impact on soil retention, scenic values, wildlife habitat and climate change. There is no mention of specific tree species and no mention of actual size of trees greater than 12 “ dbh.

3- There is no mention of how many shrubs and succulents that will be removed for access. The amount needs to be determined and the impact of their removal analyzed for the impact on soil retention,scenic values, wildlife habitat and climate change. The impact on pollinators must be considered.

4- The Forest Service needs to analyze the inadequacies of the reclamation plan. The proposed plan is to revegetate with grass seed only. It will take hundreds of years for nature regrowth of the forest. A timeline for regrowth of the vegetation removed needs to be included in the Environmental Assessment for this project.

5- There is no mention of how many trees and other vegetation has been or will be removed from the adjacent AMI private land to make access to project. The impact of vegetation removal for access to the project on the private land is a connected action and the environmental impacts need to be analyzed.

6- A cumulative impact analysis needs to consider the removal of trees and other vegetation from the adjacent AMI private land that has cleared land for over 240 drill pads and access roads during the last 8 years.

7- If the proposed project does not replace the shrubs, succulents and trees removed will the people of the United States be compensated for the loss?