

Coronado National Forest
Attn: Minerals and Geology Staff Re: Hermosa-Taylor
300 W. Congress St., 6th Floor
Tucson, AZ 85701

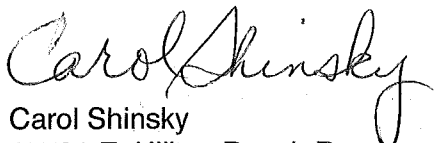
Dear Sir:

I have many concerns regarding the Hermosa-Taylor drilling project in the Patagonia Mountains.

1. The US Forest Service must be required to complete an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed AMI exploratory drilling project. The cumulative impact of the 200+ holes already drilled, along with the 130+ abandoned mines in the area must be studied in detail in order to predict long-term damage to the Patagonia municipal watershed. Will these drill holes connect with any existing drainages, drill holes, or mine shafts? Will the drilling cause already-existing problems of acid mine drainage to become more prevalent and extend the problems to this area?
2. As a Global Biodiversity Hotspot, the Patagonia Mountains are an important part of the migratory route for many threatened and endangered species, including the ocelot, jaguar, yellow-billed cuckoo, Mexican spotted owl and lesser long-nosed bat. How will the cumulative effects of mining in the Patagonia Mountains in Arizona and mining projects in Mexico affect the breeding and migratory patterns of these species? An Environmental Impact Statement must be completed in order to have a thorough study to prevent a violation of the Endangered Species Act.
3. Patagonia is a thriving, cohesive community with an eco-tourism economic base that draws birders, hunters, hikers, artists and campers. The significant impacts on the socio-economics of the community must be thoroughly studied so that the boom and bust reality of mining does not negatively impact the economy of the region.
4. Air quality deterioration because of the cumulative impact of all current operations, along with the 120 gallons of diesel fuel burned daily by each drill rig will have a negative impact on the health and well-being of residents. These impacts must be thoroughly analyzed to protect the health of the community.

The failure of clean-up operations for the abandoned Lead Queen Mine shows just how difficult it is to prevent environmental damage after the mining is done, and the U.S. taxpayer is left to pay for remediation. If the US Forest Service can't learn from the continuing legacy of abandoned mines then why do we even pretend to allow citizens to have a voice in this process?

Sincerely,


Carol Shinsky
15791 E. Hillton Ranch Road
Vail, Arizona 85641
cashinsky@gmail.com