

Dr. Patricia Watrous  
Post Box 1141  
Patagonia, Arizona 85624  
September 19, 2016

Coronado National Forest  
ATTN: Minerals and Geology Staff  
Re: Hermosa – Taylor  
300 W. Congress St. 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear Celeste Kinsey, District Ranger Coronado National Forest

I write to you as a homeowner and resident of Patagonia, Arizona who has extreme concerns about the proposed Hermosa-Taylor drilling on public lands nearby. As a resident in the Red Rock Acres neighborhood I wish to point out that the entire neighborhood is dependent on the watershed from Harshaw Canyon. Our well is situated at the edge of town before the bridge over Harshaw Creek and the entrance to our homes. The well depth and pumping rate is already trending down because of the extended drought and there have been several times in recent years when the well does not produce enough water for the 15-18 residents currently living within our boundaries. This drilling will have a negative impact on our homes. My concern does not limit itself to the amount of water. We Patagonians have been dealing with excessive levels of lead, alum, copper, cadmium and arsenic to name some of the big polluters that have washed out of the canyons south of us in recent years. The sources of these chemicals are hundred year old mining operations which have been abandoned but continue to pollute. The owners cannot be found and the taxpayer assumes the cost. The Forest Service has not "remediated" these old mines sufficiently to keep the overflow of caustic chemicals out of our watershed. There is either no way to undo the original sin, so to speak, or the Forest Service does not have the money to do the job correctly. I notice in last week's NOGALES INTERNATIONAL newspaper that one junior high school in town has such high levels of lead and copper in its water system that all the water fountains had to be closed and bottled water supplied to the children in the school. These mines are irremediable and continue polluting for decades and centuries.

I have been a home owner in Patagonia since 1986 and I came to the region because of its beauty and the recreational outlets. This summer the truck traffic on Harshaw Road was so extreme that both biking and running became unpleasant. The frequency of the water trucks alone that come barreling down this small county road is nearly every 15 minutes, along with perhaps 40 driller's trucks driving back and forth on their eight hour shifts. The National Forest is supposed to offer the American public recreational resources, not traffic jams on the small county roads leading into the Forest.

Not only does this industrial traffic make recreation along the road unsafe but it is noisy and raises levels of dust and exhaust fumes. I can hear these trucks all night long bouncing over the roads and cattle guards, whereas before I appreciated the clean quiet of rural living.

Please consider these and other environmental concerns before granting carte blanche status to a corporation which is not composed of local workers, nor is it a sustainable business. We will lose the current clean commercial concerns which we already have established in Patagonia, and the town will no longer be a tourist destination for outdoor recreation and bird watching. Currently Patagonia is arguably the most diverse birding destination in the country and the Forest Service should recognize this fact and protect the wildlife and the residents who draw their livelihoods from this interest.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Patricia Watrous*  
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