

To whom it may concern:

The South32 mining operation in the Coronado National Forest southeast of the town of Patagonia, Arizona, is disgraceful. As an Arizona resident of nearly 10 years, I moved to this state to enjoy its bountiful outdoors and recreation opportunities. Through my experience, I have realized that the outdoors is more than just a place to play. In Arizona, any piece of land has indigenous ties. The Small Tracts Act Sale to Arizona Minerals, Inc. foments an operation surely considered in defiance of the Hohokam, Apache, and O'Odham ways. All tribes have called the Coronado National Forest home in the past.

I have also realized that the Coronado National Forest, like any piece of land in our great state, is extremely fragile. A mining operation will expose precious (largely unrennewable) groundwater to increased evaporation in a time of unprecedented drought in Arizona. The contaminants from the drilling process will also threaten water quality across the entire Santa Cruz River watershed, including the Tucson metropolitan area home to over one million people.

It is no secret that Santa Cruz County, Arizona is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world. Any extinction of one species can create a chain-reaction feedback that could collapse an entire ecosystem. A mining operation smack-dab in the middle of this ecological paradise might be just enough for this to start happening.

While I would like to see the entire mining operation suspended, I stand firm in this letter demanding that no piece of land, patented or unpatented, be sold to Arizona Minerals, Inc. Any land already delivered to the company should be reacquired and permanently protected under eminent domain. This mine is clearly not in the best interests of the people of Patagonia, Arizona and Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,
Daniel Casanova