

Nepa Scoping Comments

My name is Emma Simonson. I live in Patagonia, AZ. Patagonia is one of the most biologically diverse regions in the country, with a vast abundance in Flora, a variety of birds and wildlife, and sacred water sources. Patagonia has five overlapping eco-zones which makes up the Sky Islands.

I am deeply concerned for our Community, our diverse ecosystem here and the immediate, as well as long term aftermath of the Mining activities proposed by the South32 Hermosa Project. This mining project will be irreversible as far as the harm, and negative impact it has already brought and will continue to bring to this region. This community and this land stands in harms way and the damage we are about to undergo is severe.

There are many many concerns about the South32 Hermosa Project and I will speak on behalf of a few from the impact on Water, Air Quality, Noise, Safety, Wildlife and the overall Habitat here...

The proposed dewatering of the aquifer will cause harm to the mountain itself as well as the wildlife. Our ground water is at high risk and at Jeopardy. The permanent harm that the Town of Patagonia is facing will be irrevocable.

South32 has a history and has failed to contain Manganese dust in South Africa where they have operated in the past, resulting in poisoning, leading to symptoms like Parkinson's Disease and Neurological damage. These are real people, with real lives that matter. We can not be faced with the potential of Manganese Dust or exposure in Patagonia. We have now learned about and know what is possible with the exposure of Manganese dust.

The impact and concern about our health is high risk. This cascades into concern around our Mental Health and Physical Health.

This Community does NOT trust South32. Let alone should we. We all know this is NOT a safe endeavor. And we all know this place is now a high risk zone because of South32.

There are a number of direct and indirect concerns that South32 and this mining project will effect, from the water, air, wildlife, land and our health to more truck and car accidents, cyclists getting hit on Harshaw , noise pollution, light

pollution, potential of toxic spills, the impact of housing and forcing residents and locals with their families and children to move out of town where they no longer feel safe to be, mental health... the list goes on.

I ask with hope, that the Coronado National Forest take all measures to preserve and protect the land, the waters, the wildlife. This community needs all the support and protection it can get. It is not just the current generation that is at risk, it is the future generations.

PLEASE do whatever you can to protect this Unique sanctuary. The Bio Diversity here, this Eco Sanctuary is part of what makes the Sky Islands and we as Patagonia residents need your help and support.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. Thank you for doing all that you can to help Protect us and Protect this place. Now more than ever we need to rise, and really be honest about what is most important in this Life. We need to do the Right thing. We need to be part of the SOLUTION not the problem.

Thank you again for your care and concern.

Sincerely,

Emma Simonson
roots2radiance@gmail.com