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Organization:

Title:

Comments: The purpose of this letter is to ask for further analysis of the proposed action: Hermosa-Taylor drilling project by Arizona Mining (AMI) in the Patagonia Mountains, Coronado National Forest.

My husband and I relocated from Montana to the town of Patagonia in 2008; I telecommute and my husband opened a health care practice. We chose Patagonia because of its proximity to National Forest lands, and the fact that it's one of the most biodiverse regions in our country. We are avid hikers, cyclist, and bird enthusiasts.

Please consider the following significant impacts that may result from the proposed action: Hermosa-Taylor drilling project:

Traffic and Public Safety:

1. Taylor Avenue in the town of Patagonia, which then turns onto McKeown Avenue and then into Harshaw Road leading to the current drill sites as well as the project area of the proposed action have seen a large increase in traffic from the current AMI exploratory drilling project. Crew trucks run daily trips back and forth with the drilling crews that are working eight to ten rigs which run 24 hours a day in two shifts. There are frequent trips up and down Harshaw road by various sub-contractors, of construction and excavation equipment, and less frequent but not uncommon trips with flatbed semi trucks hauling drill rigs, drill cores, and various other equipment.

Harshaw Road is also part of the Arizona Trail and is popular with hikers and walkers. There is also pedestrian traffic on this road from employees and guests of the Tree of Life Rejuvenation Center, school children, school busses, and Patagonia citizens. It is also a popular cyclist route. The aforementioned increase in traffic has already increased the potential for accidents. THE CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS INCREASED TRAFFIC LOAD (See Table 4. Vehicles and Equipment on the Plan of Operations,) HAS TO BE CAREFULLY ANALYZED AND THERE MUST BE A PLAN PUT IN PLACE TO PROTECT PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS.

2. The Plan of Operations does not state if employees of AMI and any and all sub-contractors are required to submit to random drug tests. For the Public's Safety, as well as for Crew Health and Safety, I REQUEST THAT ALL AMI EMPLOYEES AND ALL SUB-CONTRACTORS BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT AS WELL AS RANDOM DRUG TESTS AND THAT THESE BE CONDUCTED BY A THIRD PARTY AND THAT THIS BE A REQUIREMENT FOR THE PERMIT FOR THIS PROJECT ON FEDERAL LANDS.

Safety and Hazardous Substances: Appendix B in the Plan of Operations lists the Hazardous Substances to be used during the proposed action. It also states that The total estimated volume of fuel contained in the tanks and gear boxes of the equipment on the Project Area at one time will be less than 825 gallons. Appendix C lists Spill Response Procedures. It is obviously in everyone's best interest that spills don't happen. For this reason I again REQUEST THAT ALL AMI EMPLOYEES AND ALL SUB-CONTRACTORS BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT AS WELL AS RANDOM DRUG TESTS AND THAT THESE BE CONDUCTED BY A THIRD PARTY AND THAT THIS BE A REQUIREMENT FOR THE PERMIT FOR THIS PROJECT ON FEDERAL LANDS.

Respectfully,
Kathi Noaker