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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Dear Coronado National Forest:

I am opposed to any sale of National Forest Land, under the proposed Small Tracts Act sale of National Forest land to Arizona Minerals, Inc., or any other mechanism. That land is much more valuable to Sky Island ecology, wildlife and the public than it is for the minerals it may hold. The Hermosa mining project has taken advantage of the outdated mining laws to set up shop in this ecologically sensitive area. The ownership of National Forest land would allow the mine to expand their operation and would result in a significant cumulative impact on the area. It should not be approved. The Patagonia Mountains are home to many threatened and endangered species and the Forest Service needs to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the potential sale's impacts on all affected threatened and endangered species and their designated critical habitats.

Further, if this proposed Small Tracts Act sale were to go through, access to, use, and enjoyment of National Forest land by the general public will be unduly impeded and restricted. Birders come from near and far to spend time here viewing new bird species for their life list. It is an international birding destination. Many others come to enjoy the natural beauty, wildlife, hiking, mountain biking, off-roading, and camping that the area has to offer.

The Patagonia Mountains have been home to Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. The Forest Service would betray the trust of these people and the public trust if they were to sell this land for the purposes of mining.

Doris A Rusch