

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/27/2021 6:40:21 PM

First name: Danielle

Last name: Hargett

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a resident of Tucson, mountain biker and avid hiker, I have visited and cycled in the Patagonia area - specifically along Harshaw Road - and enjoyed the rich biodiversity this region consists of. I am concerned to hear that the US Forest Service is considering selling additional land in this area to Arizona Minerals Incorporated/South32, especially without consulting with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and with Native tribes who live on this land and have deep ties to the area's rich history.

This is an ecologically sensitive area with habitat that supports many endangered and threatened wildlife, including jaguar and ocelots, so consulting with the Fish and Wildlife Service is critical in order to understand how South32's presence and activity will affect them.

Mining activity in this area will certainly have a major impact on the watershed. The dumping and pumping of water (which will amount to 1.6 billion gallons per year) will require drawing from groundwater in an already water-scarce region. It will also lead to the pollution of this precious water. As a Tucsonan, I'm especially concerned for the impacts this will have on Sonoita Creek, a major tributary to the Santa Cruz River, which flows north to Tucson.

So before selling this land to a subsidiary of an international corporation that has no stake or interest in the health and wellbeing of this fragile ecosystem, please consider at least consulting with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Native tribes to fully understand both the effects of Arizona Minerals Incorporated's potential activity and whether or not this sale is truly "in the public interest."