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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I, in unity with the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, the Patagonia Mayor's office, and Congressman Raul Grijalva, request the public comment period be extended to a minimum 90 days.

A substantial percentage of county residents prefer Spanish language materials. The South32 Mine Plan of Operation and other information have not been made available to Spanish speakers. The size and scope of the project warrants a longer period of public study and commentary. The plan for multi-decade extraction requires careful and thoughtful consideration. The extreme community opposition to the project suggests extended community input is needed, as requested by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and our congressional representative.

Concerns

1. Water usage, quality, and monitoring:

- a. The mine will use between 1.8 and 3.2 million gallons daily for operational purposes. Then, nearly 6.5 million gallons will be discharged into Harshaw Creek and Alum Gulch in a process called DEWATERING TO ACCESS THE ORE. This water is from an ancient aquifer and can never be replaced;
- b. South 32 will self-monitor and self-report, as is allowed by Arizona and Federal laws;
- c. Erosion and downstream contamination concerns have not been adequately addressed.

2. Air quality:

- a. Continued concerns about air quality;
- b. Data is strictly model based.

3. Traffic:

- a. Increased truck traffic on local roads;
- b. Congestion, danger from spills, accidents, track out.

4. Biodiversity:

- a. Threat to over one hundred endangered species from noise and habitat destruction, including Jaguar, yellow billed cuckoo, and the Mexican spotted owl;

B. The mine is in the heart of the Sky Islands, one of the most unique biodiverse places on earth.

5. Economic threat:

- a. Nature based economy will be compromised. Patagonia has one of the largest gravel mountain biking areas in our county and one of the most unique birdwatching regions in the world.
- b. Nature-based businesses such as campgrounds, hiking, and dude ranches will all be affected.

6. Public health threat:

Lead and manganese are heavy metals and are proven toxic to human health. Lead is regulated by the EPA, but Manganese is not and has been proven to be a neurotoxin in humans. These contaminating heavy metals will end up in our air, water, and soil. Our State Representative, Stephanie Stahl-Hamilton, has submitted a piece of legislation to regulate manganese, as lead is regulated. It is stuck in committee because of bad politics and lack of concern for the citizens of Arizona. The mining lobby is immensely powerful and has no regard for the citizenry.

7. Archeologically sensitive region:

Sites are in real danger of destruction and disappearing.

8. Transmission line Fire danger! Property values

9. Environmental justice:

- a. Worker health and well-being will be compromised;
- b. Resident health and well-being will be compromised;
- c. Wildlife health and well-being will be compromised.