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Title:

Comments: I am 100% opposed to the Hermosa Mine's proposal. There are too many negatives to come close to the benefits it would provide.

My concerns begin with the willful waste daily of millions of gallons of water. We live in the desert and water is worth more than any amount of manganese. The loss of this aquifer has the potential to not only displace residents of Santa Cruz county but also affect the population of Nogales Sonora. The Patagonia Mountains have created a natural reservoir that should not be disturbed.

Environmentally, the Hermosa Mine has the makings of a manmade environmental disaster to the ecosystems surrounding the Patagonia Mountains. Who knows what the effects of draining an aquifer or the extraction processes will have on the flora and fauna long term. We also do not know what environmental damage will be caused by the chemicals used for extraction or the minerals being mined. This easily has the potential of being a health risk to residents of Santa Cruz county and its visitors.

Third, the insane increase in the amount of truck traffic on our county roads. Who will maintain and repair the damage to our 2 lane highway caused by these trucks? Presently, semis are discouraged to use the route through Patagonia in an attempt to prolonging the lifespan of the roadway. The increased traffic will also affect commuters and emergency service within this rural part of the state. Only one paved road goes through the area and if there is an accident the route can be shut down for hours.

Where and how will the raw materials be transported and stored? Nogales Arizona is already a major hub for Mexican produce. The streets and highways are already congested by the many trucks that haul the food that feeds our country. The roads and bridges in Nogales can not handle nor support 200+ heavy trucks a day. For a community that struggles when trains block street access, these heavy trucks will impact residents' ability to move about. Storage is another issue as no community wants to store materials that are known to be a health risk. The residents of Nogales and Rio Rico have spoken and do not want storage transfer stations within their communities.

Finally, the loss of trust in the mine operators and county officials in regards to the Hermosa Mine. Initial granting of the mine was for Hermosa to be a small mining operation for a set duration but now its range and scope has grown exponentially. The appearance of backdoor negotiations and deals that indicate a lack in transparency of Hermosa Mine's true intentions. I as a citizen of Santa Cruz County have little faith in the Hermosa Mine's ability to protect and be stewards of my home.

The only benefits I can see, a few jobs for local residents and some tax revenues (though negotiated down), do not supersede the losses that we residences will have to endure.

A worried citizen