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First name: Brent

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Brent Raymond and I am a local Santa Cruz County citizen. Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns of the Hermosa Mine expansion request onto National Forest Service land. I wanted to write in my concerns for this project and its possible effects on the health of the region, both short term and long term effects.

Regarding the water reclamation proposal, I would appreciate a solid study on how this would affect the natural surroundings including native plant and animal life. While there is the claim that it would be purified and then recharge the area, I wonder if in the short term, this would dry up the desert and the area would become even more arid, thereby creating a domino effect that may not be able to be recovered in the long term.

I am also concerned about contamination of the water that could have unforeseen effects on the local towns surrounding the mine, from Patagonia to Nogales and Rio Rico. Other local mines have already contaminated water in Tubac and Pena Blanca Lake. With the requested expansion into forest service land, would this have potential to reach populated areas and have short and long term health consequences.

Regarding the proposed road to run along the power lines for direct access to Nogales, could this negatively affect the wildlife in the area as this has been a natural corridor of travel for many species. Also, is there an option for running the power lines underground?

Regarding the national forest service land itself, I am concerned that the area would become like a wasteland where hiking, biking, horseback riding or camping would be obviously disturbed. This is what National Forest land is meant to be for, a preservation for the benefit of all peoples in this country. Would this expansion negatively affect the use, as my understanding is that it would be blocked off to public access for the duration of the mining operation.

I have concern about how this national forest service land would be "repaired" after the mine has been depleted. While there are promises that restoration is in the plan, I would like to know what guarantees are in place and if there could be a detailed outline and study on this restoration.

Air quality is also a concern, and would like a study on the impact the expansion of this mine would have on our wonderful air quality in Santa Cruz County and especially on Patagonia, who would suffer the most from air borne contamination.

Since this land has much historical significance, could there be a study on the impact of the artifacts that would no longer be accessible or even destroyed on this land by this expansion. A study on the decrease in tourism to this area and how this area would no longer attractive for people to come explore this land.

Thank you for considering these points in this decision making process.

Sincerely,

Brent Raymond