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Comments: I am writing to express my support for the South 32 project in southern Arizona for the following reasons:

*Ways that an enhanced domestic supply chain for critical minerals might reduce greenhouse gas emissions and global warming risks, especially compared to importing those minerals from overseas suppliers

*Advancing critical mineral supply chain security and reduction of dependence on foreign adversaries including China for these materials that are key to the energy transition

*Positive socioeconomic impacts (jobs, taxes, schools) created by the project in an area of high unemployment, low wages, and limited economic opportunities

*Benefits of renewable line power - as opposed to trucked-in natural gas -- for reducing carbon emissions and achieving national decarbonization goals

*Underground mine design and small surface footprint (only 750 acres, 400 of which were already disturbed by previous mining in the mid-1900s) - reduced environmental footprint

*Advantages of tailings management (dry stack to reduce water intensity; paste backfill to limit surface disturbance and prevent subsidence) as compared to other alternative mining methods

*Low water use intensity, especially important in an arid desert environment

*Road alternatives that were developed in concert with the community to avoid environmental disturbance of the National Forest, residents, and further distance traffic from the Town of Patagonia

*Appreciation for the quality and quantity of materials available in Spanish given the large number of primarily Spanish-speaking residents in Santa Cruz County, AZ.

Regards,

Arlene Helt