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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for considering the following comments related to the Hermosa Critical Minerals Project EIS.

ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Ecosystems services include clean and available water, clean air, and a whole ecosystem of biodiverse wildlife population. The total ecosystem within the area of this mining project is vulnerable to destruction.

Water Resources:

Totally draining a large tract of mountain land will have a disastrous effect on all of the natural resources in this area. The millions of gallons of treated water may cause pollution and flooding problems for the local communities. For the Forest Service to allow this to happen demands that all aspects of this extreme water movement must be analyzed.

Airshed:

Currently our local air quality in the Town of Patagonia has worsened with the addition of mining traffic. This will only get much worse when the mine is in full operation. How will the Forest Service protect our Town from dangerous levels of pollution caused by the mine?

Biological Resources:

Habitat loss is a very foreseeable problem for the area around the mine. Patagonia is well known for its scenic beauty and excellent wildlife. This is all going to change for the worse as the mine continues its destruction within the forest.

Ecosystem Services Mitigation:

Our local mountains are a rare occurrence and need to have the highest protection that the Forest Service can provide. This mining effort will cause regional degradation of our natural resources.

ROADS, TRAFFIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Patagonia has only one road in and out of Town. Highway 82 is a narrow, curvy two-lane road that is currently used as a major truck route from Mexico to the Eastern USA. The proposed dramatic increase in traffic will cause many more deaths on our local roads. Has the Forest Service calculated the number of increased accidents and deaths based on the tremendous increase of large truck and commuter traffic?

COMMUNITY HEALTH/QUALITY OF LIFE

Our small Town is in the bullseye of death and destruction caused by the large industrial mining operation at Hermosa Project. Our air and water has already gotten worse with the startup of mining along with much more traffic, noise and light pollution. The two shift changes cause a plume of dust and exhaust to settle over our narrow valley location.

This is a very big deal for a VERY SMALL Town. How can the Forest Service help us to survive?

FIRE RISK AND CLIMATE CHANGE

As our local temperatures continue to set historic records and the rain patterns continue to change there is an ever-increasing chance of catastrophic fires in our area. No one can now predict what the changes will be during the proposed lifetime of this mining project. We can assume that these worsening trends will continue if not accelerate. The Forest Service must consider the current trends of worsening fire danger to our community and the forest where we live.

RECREATION

After the previous mining operations closed and left the Town a new economy has slowly been building until there is now a vibrant ECO Tourism that depends on keeping our mountains clean, quiet and cared for. The mine operations will have a very detrimental effect on this important part of the area's economy. We will lose a clean industry that will be replaced by one of the worst possible industries that will destroy our local sustainable way of living.

