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First name: Jose

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear US Forest Service,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Hermosa Critical Minerals Project #65668. As an engineer who immigrated to the United States, I have had the privilege of contributing to the mining industry and promoting sustainable practices through advanced technologies. My experiences, both personal and professional, have reinforced the importance of projects like Hermosa for the community, the environment, and the nation's future.

Coming to the United States with a background in Process Automation and Instrumentation, I have spent my career integrating the latest technologies to improve the efficiency and sustainability of mining operations. I have seen firsthand how advanced instrumentation can play a crucial role in monitoring and maintaining water quality, which is vital in an arid desert environment like the one surrounding the Hermosa Project. Ensuring water quality through state-of-the-art monitoring systems will protect our precious water resources and sustain the local ecosystem.

Having family in the region, I am deeply invested in the well-being and prosperity of the local community. The socioeconomic benefits of the Hermosa Project are significant. The creation of numerous jobs and the generation of tax revenues will support local schools and infrastructure, providing much-needed economic opportunities in an area with high unemployment and low wages. This project represents a chance for stability and growth, offering a better future for many families, including my own.

As a proud US citizen, I am committed to supporting initiatives that enhance our nation's resilience and security. The Hermosa Project will advance the domestic supply chain for critical minerals, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating global warming risks compared to importing these minerals from overseas suppliers. This shift not only reduces the carbon footprint but also ensures adherence to higher environmental standards during extraction and processing.

Securing a domestic supply of critical minerals is essential for reducing our dependence on foreign countries such as China. These materials are crucial for the energy transition, supporting the development of renewable energy technologies and electric vehicles. By fostering a reliable and domestically sourced supply, we can strengthen our national security and economic stability, ensuring that the United States remains at the forefront of technological innovation and environmental stewardship.

The Hermosa Project's commitment to sustainability is evident in its design and operations. The use of renewable line power instead of trucked-in natural gas will significantly reduce carbon emissions, aligning with national decarbonization goals. Additionally, the project's underground mine design and small surface footprint-limited to 750 acres, 400 of which were previously disturbed-demonstrate a conscientious effort to minimize environmental impact.

The project's tailings management strategy, including dry stacking to reduce water intensity and paste backfill to limit surface disturbance and prevent subsidence, represents an environmentally superior alternative to traditional mining methods. These measures are particularly important for conserving water and protecting the ecosystem in the desert environment.

Moreover, the development of road alternatives in collaboration with the community to avoid disturbing the National Forest and residential areas, as well as to reduce traffic in the Town of Patagonia, highlights a commitment to preserving the environment and quality of life for local residents.

In conclusion, the Hermosa Critical Minerals Project presents a unique opportunity to enhance domestic supply chain resilience, promote environmental sustainability, and drive economic growth. As an engineer, a US citizen, and a local community member, I urge the US Forest Service to approve this project, recognizing its myriad benefits for our community and the nation.

Thank you for your consideration.