

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/10/2024 6:03:23 PM

First name: Lee

Last name: Stanfield

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Australian company South 32, plans to discharge 6.5 million gallons of the ancient water below the Patagonia Mountains to operate their drills and extract the minerals manganese and zinc. This will destroy the water table in the Patagonia area, causing wells to dry up, decimating the plant and animal life there, and making it impossible for the tourism that allows people who currently live there to remain.

This proposed expansion is in direct contradiction to the mission of the US Forest Service which is "caring for the land and serving people." The Forest Service is supposed to create a wildfire crisis plan, a tribal action plan, and equity action plan with the stated objectives of strengthening tribal consultations and nation to nation relationships. This has not happened. The Pascua Yaqui Nation and the Tohono O'odham Nation have not been consulted about this proposed mining operation.

Indigenous approaches focus on stewardship and reciprocity not exploitation or domination of every aspect of the animal, plant and human kingdoms. Many endangered species native to this area will become extinct, as light pollution and high noise levels will disorient animals and birds in the mining footprint.

The current "Dark Skies" area will lose the natural darkness, which will impact the Harvard/Smithsonian observatory and the astronomers who work there. Astronomical research the University of Arizona excels on an international level will be lost, since the mine plans to operate 24 hours a day seven days a week.

The mine's daily movement of trucks, the operation of heavy equipment run by diesel fuel, and an electricity transmission line to be built above ground through the national forest threatens to recreate in AZ the same circumstances that caused the PG&E wildfires in California.

The area is populated largely by Hispanics. Environmental justice cannot be achieved by sacrificing the rights, health and well-being of communities under distress for lack of access to societal opportunities for the perceived benefit of others.

In short... DO NOT EXPAND THIS FOREIGN INTEREST MINE ONTO PUBLIC LAND OR ALLOW IT TO USE UP OUR WATER OR DESTROY OUR ENVIRONMENT!