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First name: Celinas
Last name: Ruth
Organization:
Title:
Comments: June 10, 2024

Kerwin S. Dewberry, Forest Supervisor
Coronado National Forest
ATTN: Hermosa Critical Minerals Project
200 West Congress Street
Tucson, AZ 85701

Re: Comments on May 10, 2024 scoping letter for proposed draft EIS

Dear Supervisor Dewberry:

Please research and/or study the following questions and concerns regarding the impacts from the Hermosa Mine Plan of Operations (MPO).

The MPO plans to dewater their mine daily by 6.84 million gallons per day. This does not include their daily water usage. Once water is removed from the ground and soil, the ground will naturally move and compact.

Arizona has over 10,000 natural springs. Which natural springs will be affected and potentially go dry in the region by the water drawdown?

Land areas will lose the ability to absorb water in the future. In essence, dewatering destroys the land's natural recovery. Permanent damage results.

Please study how this damage affects:
All the live organisms and animals living in the soil, i.e., earthworms, snakes, ground squirrels, gophers, etc.
The movement of the earth, e.g., areas sinking or caving in.
The ability of the land to absorb rainwater, form ponds, and/or create erosion areas.
The change to any water ph level becoming more acidic due to cement and waste rock.
The animals and birds who would frequent the area for food and water.
The possibility of mine shafts or wells collapsing when the pressure from the land without water and vegetation causes shifts and changes.

Are there any plans in process to protect the public from possible storm runoff or dust from the tailings, which will be stacked before it goes through the process of armoring? How will the tailings be transported and put in place without a lot of air born dust resulting?

How will the areas along the transportation routes be monitored to prevent and curtail any impact from the roads (dust, water runoff) and to the air quality?

Please request a study of placement of air monitors along transportation routes and wherever the conveyance or processing of ore is exposed to the air.

Please require the mine to reveal the location of its manganese processing facility, which has been published as intended for Santa Cruz County. This location will generate tailings contributing to dangerous environmental exposure and health hazards.

Please study the impact of the extra pollution generated by the coal used by Unisource to provide power to the Hermosa mine.

What emergency plans and personnel will the mine have in place and ready for quick actions when various needs arise, e.g., transport spills, equipment breakdowns, torrential rain, wind damages, and human health accidents?

When the mine is in full operation with an extension of 481 acres (.75 sq. mile) of Forest Service land, even greater changes to all the surrounding areas will result. This will cause damage, e.g., subsidence in the land, wells drying up or becoming contaminated, the night skies being lit up, contaminants being added into the environment, not only locally, but also to areas touched by the impacted watersheds miles away.

Using a cost-benefit analysis how does the production of these minerals - lead, zinc, silver and manganese - outweigh the permanent impact on the environment, to human life, to wildlife, and to our earth as well as the atmosphere? Or does it?

Some costs are just too great to humankind and our Mother Earth. We must know why and when to say STOP.

Thank you for engaging in a serious study of impacts considering everyone's concerns and questions in this NEPA process. We need to be informed prior to the Australian South 32 Hermosa mine using any NFS public property to expand their mine for monetary gain.