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Title:

Comments: I am opposed to the Hermosa Project in the Patagonia Mountains for many reasons. This comment will be focused on the impact on our air quality that concerns me.

I am concerned about the dry stack tailings that will be exposed to wind and dispersed into the air. I do not believe that, as South 32 claims, there won't be any exposure to the dust from the extracted minerals. I am also very concerned that South 32 is going to monitor themselves? With their history around the world? How is this a good idea? No mine should be allowed to monitor themselves but especially not South 32. I do not trust them to be honest about their data.

What happens when people get sick? Will they be shut down? How many people need to get sick before they are held accountable? How will they be held accountable? They have had problems with people getting sick at their other mines and they have not been held accountable. Why should we believe this time will be different?

I am really concerned that we will have medical issues that South 32 will claim are unrelated to the mine and people will be left in the lurch. We do not have the infrastructure or the expertise to deal with complex medical issues in Santa Cruz

I am also concerned about the additional traffic and the air pollution that will be created. I know that South 32 claims that the mine will use electric trucks, but, those trucks do not exist yet, right? How are you going to complete the scoping process with this unknown?

Even if S32 does manage to get a fleet of electric powered trucks, not all of the traffic to and from the mine - trucks as well as other vehicles - will be electric. The increase in vehicle emissions and dust is very concerning to me. What if there is no fleet of electric trucks? What if this is just another lie from this mining company? Will you shut down the mine? Santa Cruz County does not have the infrastructure to fight lithium battery fires. How will that work? How will this fleet of electric trucks be charged?

How can we allow this company to extract, process and transport manganese when it isn't even regulated? Do they get to make up their own rules? How are you studying the effects of manganese dust in the air? Are you taking their other mines and the health issues that have occurred with employees and residents into account?

I am also concerned about transporting these toxic substances and, undoubtedly, having accidents occur. Truck and / or train accidents while hauling these dangerous substances would be a huge disaster.

As a former elementary teacher, I read *The Lorax* to my students. I feel like the residents of Santa Cruz county are going through the same thing. South 32 is the Onceler and they are only concerned with making as much money as they can. The residents of the county are trying to warn everyone about the dangers of the mine but no one cares. The last scene of the book, where *The Lorax* is disappearing through the last bit of unpolluted sky, has always haunted me and now I know why. How could I have known when I read that book to my students that, many years later, I would be living through that depressing destruction in my own community? How are you going to keep that destruction from happening here? Can you promise us that our county won't be destroyed?

This process needs to be slowed down and we need more time to look at the Hermosa Project POO before we are required to comment. At the very least, the POO needs to be in Spanish. This comment period needs to be extended to 90 days. There is too much at stake here to rush this through.

