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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am a resident of Rio Rico, Arizona, writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Hermosa Project and mining in the Patagonia Mountains by South32. My main concern is the severe impact on groundwater. It is crucial to thoroughly study these impacts before any approval is given. Our water sources are essential to the delicate balance of life for people, plants, and animals, and any pollution or depletion would be catastrophic. The mine plans to use 1.8 to 3.2 million gallons of water daily and discharge nearly 6.5 million gallons into Harshaw Creek and Alum Gulch. Given the company's track record, I urge you to carefully assess the threats this project poses. In our desert region, water is scarce and irreplaceable once contaminated or depleted. Thank you for considering this critical issue.

The displacement of soil, vegetation, and wildlife in this unique bioregion is a major concern. Once disturbed, it will take considerable time to restore the soil and vegetation, and the disruption will negatively affect wildlife.

Additionally, the risk of fire in our drought-stricken desert, exacerbated by mining equipment, must be addressed. Fires could devastate Forest Service land and potentially spread for miles, impacting many people. Recent wildfires highlight the fragility of our environment.

As you evaluate this proposal, please consider the long-term and short-term negative impacts on present and future generations.