

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/11/2024 6:57:35 AM

First name: Sally

Last name: Gonzales

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to request that the MPO for the Hermosa Critical Minerals Project #65668 not be approved and that Coronado National Forest be mandated to research and write a more detailed Environmental Impact Statement because of potentially significant impact have yet to be addressed.

This proposed mining area is of biodiversity exists in an arid landscape where every drop of water counts and the mine would significantly impact water.

This area, is also part of ancestral Tohono O'odham lands, and home to more than 100 imperiled species, from jaguars to yellow-billed cuckoos. It's also a hub for a thriving eco-tourism industry, which the mine threatens to bury in noise, traffic, and light pollution.

Also at risk is the area's precious groundwater: The mine proposes to pump and discharge 6.84 million gallons per day, wreaking havoc on nearby springs and creeks, as well as wildlife that depend on them.

There are many things wrong with 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' three strategic plans are to create a wildfire crisis plan, a tribal action plan, and equity action plan. Your stated objectives are to strengthen 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. This is a mistake as indigenous approaches to the earth 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. These include the Mexican spotted owl, ocelots, jaguars among the 100 endangered, threatened, and sensitive species of plants and animals that will be affected by the destruction of their habitat.

Failure to adequately surveys and consult with the two local Indigenous Nations the Tohono O'odham and New Pascua Yaqui regarding sacred plants and sacred sites whose public access is guaranteed by the US Constitutions' protection of the freedom to Constitutionally-guaranteed right to practice religious freedom for worshippers of all faiths, not just for those Indigenous people whose rights are also protected by AIRFA. Because of the known presence practice one's religion or spiritual tradition. There has been a lack of effort by the Forest Service and the mine's environmental consultants to identify, survey and provide access to specific populations of sacred plants and sites in the affected area of Coronado National Forest. Access to such plants and sites is a of at least two rare plants with a history of ethnographically-documented or archaeologically-inferred spiritual use- Amsonia grandiflora 'Corona de Cristo' and Agave parviflora 'the Santa Cruz striped agave'-the Forest Service is mandated by MOUs to give special attention to such plants. There has no cultural consultations about them to date. The Forest Service must substantially demonstrate is protecting such cultural resources from harm as required by federal law. Both Sobaipuri O'odham and Yaqui have place names and historic sites between the Nogales-Tumacacori corridor and the Nogales- Sonia corridor, but the impact of this project on their heritage has not been adequately assessed and this is a significant disaster.