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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Living a mile from the Sandia Ranger District and accessing every national forest in New Mexico every year, I am filing this comment in opposition to the Roca Honda Mine Project on the Cibola National Forest.

My position is straightforward: I oppose uranium mining on public lands. I oppose extraction of resources of any kind, including minerals, grazing, oil, gas, and logging. I want my public lands conserved and managed for native plants and animals. I hike, photograph, and use these forests, and I care deeply about how my tax money is spent on managing them. The proposal before the agency is precisely the kind of extractive use I believe public forests should be protected against, and the project record as it stands raises additional procedural concerns that the agency must address.

The agency has designated an Environmental Impact Statement as the expected analysis type for this project, yet the Project Milestones section carries no dates: "Milestone Date NEPA Start Date Finding/Decision Date." Those fields are blank. With no scoping start date and no finding or decision date published, the public has no way to plan meaningful participation. Tribal governments, nearby residents, and stakeholders cannot calendar comment periods or review draft documents if the agency has not committed to a schedule. The agency must publish firm milestone dates and explain when each stage of public participation will open.

The project description raises a second concern about scope. The Project Overview states that "These activities will support the underground uranium mine and water treatment plant proposed on adjacent state and private lands." The Cibola National Forest is leading an EIS, but the mine and water treatment plant driving the entire proposal sit off NFS land entirely. The notice does not identify which federal, state, or tribal agencies will serve as cooperating agencies, and it does not explain whether the EIS will analyze impacts from the mine itself as a connected action or limit its review to surface disturbance on NFS acres. If the analysis stops at the forest boundary, the environmental review will be fundamentally incomplete. I want a full accounting of cooperating agencies and a clear statement of whether the mine and water treatment plant will be evaluated as connected actions within the EIS scope.

The project description also provides almost nothing concrete. The Project Overview states only that the proposal was "submitted by Roca Honda Resources LLC on and near Jesus Mesa to conduct developmental drilling, develop infrastructure and construct access roads on NFS lands," yet no acreage, no drilling depth or volume, and no description of what the infrastructure consists of accompanies that summary. I cannot assess what native plants and animals are at risk, what water resources may be affected, or what trails and recreational areas may be disrupted without knowing the basic dimensions of the proposed disturbance. The agency should release a detailed project description, including disturbance footprint and infrastructure specifics, before any scoping comment period closes.

I ask the agency to address each of these points and to enter its responses into the administrative record for this project.