

JAN 06 2014

January 1, 2014  
 1311 East Duke Drive  
 Tucson, Arizona 85719

Regional Forester/Deputy Regional Forester  
 USFS Southwestern Region  
 333 Broadway SE  
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REGIONAL FORESTER'S OFFICE  
 SOUTHWESTERN REGION

Regional Forester: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Deputy Regional Forester: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Dear Mr. Upchurch,

This is a Formal Objection to Final Impact Statement & Draft Record of Decision for the Rosemont Copper Project: A Proposed Mining Operation in the Coronado National Forest, Nogales Ranger District.

I have written on three previous occasions. On 11/07/2011 I stated that the permit for a mine in the Santa Ritas was correctly denied in 2010. I still hold that given the nature of this area, the amount of water that would be polluted, the loss of scenic beauty and the resulting damage to wildlife, human health and tourism, no mining alternative is clean enough for the Santa Ritas.

On 1/04/2012 I pointed out that Rosemont is a Canadian company using an 1872 law to take approx. 3,300 acres of public lands at essentially no cost and turn them into an open pit copper mine and mine waste dump. Augusta Resource, Rosemont's parent company, has disclosed that it has no prior experience with mining. I still do not see how their claims about mine operations can be taken seriously in light of this.

The proposed open pit mine would be a mile wide and half a mile deep. I have seen abandoned pit mines all over the state not nearly as large as this that are permanent scars on the landscape with essentially no natural or even introduced vegetation able to survive. I still see no viable plan to fill in the open pit.

Even with recent compromises, the mine will definitely destroy a significant area of the Santa Rita Mountains, making waste one of the most beautiful areas we have left.

There is no rail access for the mine. All the ore as well as equipment, chemicals and explosives will be transported by truck on a rural highway through areas predicted to be further growth zones for Tucson. The potential for accidents is enormous!

I am also still very much concerned about the impact of the proposed Rosemont Copper Mine on the water quality in the entire Southern AZ area. Unlike others, mines are essentially unregulated water users. There is no legal limit on the amount of water that can be extracted from the aquifer. Regardless of current claims, Rosemont can pump as much water as they wish in the future. Since this company has no actual mining experience, I do not see any way they can reliably predict their future needs.

I am convinced that the proposed mine will use and pollute water that is desperately needed by the Native American populations and the other residents of the area including Green Valley and developing areas of southern Tucson.

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In a third message on 1/10/2012 I raised several issues with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that I still do not see being solved.

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The economic analysis is still flawed. The purported positive economic impacts of the mine simply do not add up. The company has submitted studies that it commissioned showing an inflated economic impact from the mine. These studies have been challenged by independent economists, who point out that if the mine were to cause even a tiny decline in the tourism industry, which dwarfs the economic contribution of mining in the region, the negative effects would outweigh any economic benefits realized from the mine.

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There are many other negative impacts that have not been fully considered, including the severe degradation of state-designated Scenic Highway 83, which is not suited for the heavy truck traffic the mine would generate. It is likely that heavy but well-managed off-road vehicle use in the Rosemont area would be scattered to other areas nearby, including Cienega Creek, which provides habitat for several additional imperiled species. Many of the negative impacts will be exacerbated by mega drought, increased storm intensity and other impacts resulting from ongoing climate change.

For these reasons and many more, this mine is simply not in the public interest of US taxpayers in general and especially the people of southern Arizona. The damage to public health and safety, sustainable economic development, and the unique, vulnerable wildlife and habitat in the area far outweigh any benefits the mine could offer.

I urge you to deny Rosemont Copper's permit application and protect the precious resources of Arizona's Sky Island region for the benefit of current residents and visitors, as well as future generations.

Sincerely,



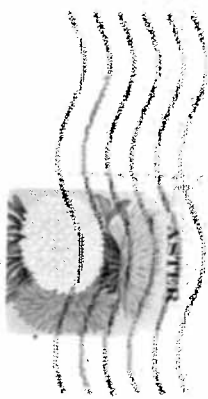
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