

TO: Reviewing Officer  
USFS Southwest Region  
333 Broadway SE  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

FROM: Nancy McCoy  
PO Box 162  
Patagonia, AZ 85624  
520-394-2732

FROM: Wendy Russell  
PO Box 62  
Patagonia, AZ 85624  
520-403-9949

RE: Rosemont Copper Project FEIS Objection

We hereby submit a formal objection to the proposed Rosemont Copper project in the Coronado National Forest, Nogales Ranger District. The responsible official is Jim Upchurch.

As a qualified parties that commented on the Draft EIS, we are submitting our objections to information that is incorrect or inadequate in the FEIS for the proposed Rosemont mine. These objections concern the reasonably foreseeable actions listed in the Socioeconomic Chapter, page 1126, of the FEIS.

The FEIS states that there are seven proposed mining projects in Santa Cruz County that, along with the proposed Rosemont mine, may contribute to cumulative impacts to socioeconomic resources in the area. Omitted from this list is the proposed CH project in the Patagonia Mountains, a 5 hole exploratory drilling operation.

All of these Santa Cruz drilling operations were described as having "the same cumulative impacts as the Heliz Margarita exploration activities." The Heliz Margarita activities are described as having the same cumulative impacts as the Andrada Mine Limestone quarry, but that the Heliz Marguerita impacts "would likely be of a smaller magnitude, as these exploration activities are generally small-scale, temporary actions and are not typically visually evident."

Six of the seven listed proposed mining activities in Santa Cruz County are located in the Patagonia Mountains. These proposed activities are: Arizona Minerals, Inc.; Regal Resources; the Moore and Moore No. 4 Placer Mine; the Dice No. 8 Placer Mine; Javelina Minerals; and OZ Exploration; as well as the CH project which was not included in the FEIS list of foreseeable actions. The Patagonia Mountains are an important socioeconomic resource for the surrounding communities. This area is internationally known as a premier birding destination. The Arizona National Scenic Trail goes through the Patagonia Mountains offering opportunities for birding, hiking, mountain biking, cycling, and equestrian activities. Other recreational activities include, camping, hunting, stargazing, geo-caching, motorcycle touring, OHV travel, shooting, backpacking, wildlife watching and tracking, and peak bagging. Visitors who participate in these activities bring a significant amount of revenue to the tourist oriented businesses in the surrounding communities. Impacts to tourism from the proposed Rosemont project, along with the six proposed mining operations in the Patagonia Mountains, would have significant and permanent adverse impacts on the economic well-being of the Sonoita, Elgin and Patagonia area.

The proposed Regal Resources project will block access to Humboldt Canyon during their one year exploratory drilling project. Humboldt Canyon is a very popular birding, hiking, and hunting area. These recreationists will no longer have access to this unique canyon. Additionally, the noise from the 24 hour a day, 7 day a week drilling operation will discourage other quiet recreation in areas nearby in the National Forest. It will also frighten away wildlife, discouraging hunting and wildlife viewing nearby. The wildlife track monitoring project that occurs every eight weeks in Humboldt Canyon will also be discontinued by the drilling activities and road closure

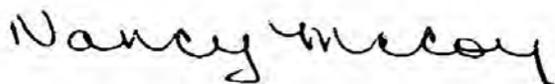
Arizona Minerals, Inc. has 48 separate sites slated for exploratory drilling, geotechnical drilling, test pits, and/or hydrogeologic drilling/monitoring wells spread out over 2 square miles of the Patagonia Mountains in the Coronado National Forest. Drilling would occur for 2 years with well monitoring happening for up to 15 years as stated in the AMI MPO, not 10 years, as stated on page 1126 of the Rosemont FEIS. Anyone traveling on Harshaw Road, Harshaw Creek Road, Meadow Valley or in the San Rafael Valley will be visually impacted by this project. Many recreational motorists and mountain bikers travel on these roads. Also, traffic on Forest Road 49 and Forest Road 58 will be greatly increased by the commuting mine workers and mine traffic, given that the 48 sites are spread so far apart. Cumulative traffic effects must also take into consideration the activities of the Department of Homeland Security. The 24 hour, 7 day a week noise, traffic, lights and dust from the AMI exploration will discourage recreational activities and tourism, significantly impacting the economics of the area. These exploration activities can hardly be described as "small-scale, temporary actions and not typically visually evident."

The proposed Rosemont Mine project, along with the cumulative effects of these six mining proposals in the Patagonia Mountains, will have a significant impact on the traffic traveling on Highway 82 and Highway 83. After years of claiming that the Rosemont truck traffic would only go north to Tucson, now the Sonoita and Patagonia area are faced with the prospect of Rosemont's haul trucks traveling back and forth to Nogales via Highways 83 and 82. The cumulative effects of the traffic from all of the proposed mining activities will clog Highways 82 and 83, discouraging visitors and therefore, negatively affecting the area's tourist based economy.

The USFS must explain, clarify, correct, and quantify the cumulative effects of these six proposed mining projects and the increased traffic they will produce, along with the proposed Rosemont project, on the Sonoita, Elgin and Patagonia economies, and this information should be presented for public review and comment in a revised DEIS.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy McCoy

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy McCoy".

Wendy Russell

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "WRussell".

