

January 12, 2024

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Water Quality Division, Surface Water Protection
Attn: Rachel Heinz
1110 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

**Re: Draft AZPDES renewal permit for South32 Hermosa Project
(AZ0026387); LTF No. 95353**

Dear Ms. Heinz:

The Tucson Metro Chamber supports the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality's proposal to renew the AZPDES permit for the South32 Hermosa Project south of Patagonia. We believe the permit complies with the federal Clean Water Act, in addition to parallel Arizona state law, and will protect the quality of the permitted receiving waters.

South32 has proven itself to be a responsible permit holder and good corporate citizen. The Hermosa project also offers the prospect of much needed economic development and quality jobs within the region. If the mine is ultimately developed, it will also provide the only domestic source of manganese and a key additional domestic source of zinc. Manganese and zinc are critical minerals of substantial strategic importance to the American economy and the clean energy transition.

According to research completed by the University of Arizona School of Mining and Brad Ross, interim director for the University of Arizona's School of Mining and Mineral Resources, "Mineral demands are expected to grow as much as 1,000% by 2050. Much of this demand will come from automakers, which plan to spend \$300 billion globally to produce new electric vehicles over the next decade. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act makes mining even more critical to Arizona's economy."

We urge the agency to approve the proposed permit renewal as written.

Respectfully,



Michael Guymon
President & CEO