

# Pat French

Dear Arizona Department of Environmental Quality,

I'm writing to urge you to deny South32's Hermosa permit (#AZ0026387) for discharge of mine water into Harshaw and Alum creeks. The proposed impacts are unacceptable and fall into two main categories: 1) dewatering due to the "cone of depression" that would be created around the mine and 2) disturbances that would come from dramatically increased flow rates in nearby creeks.

Dropping the groundwater level in an area like this would be highly destructive. The change in hydraulic gradients around the mine would change the "paths of least resistance," where current springs emerge, permanently drying natural springs. It would also lead to significant loss of upland trees.

The anticipated volumes of water discharge into these two drainages are significantly higher than current, intermittent, base flows. This will lead to severe erosion in the upstream reaches, excessive sediment loads in the downstream reaches, and the burial of several important water sources for wildlife and the riparian ecosystems needed by wildlife such as the seven rheocrene seeps and springs known in Harshaw Creek and the nine rheocrene seeps and springs known in Alum Creek. A change in flow regime this drastic will permanently alter the character and species composition of these areas. With the border wall so close, causing significant damage to the ability of wildlife to migrate; thereby reducing genetic viability, please do not add these additional impediments to their survival.

For these reasons, I urge you and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to deny the permit for this project. Please take action for the benefit of Arizona's environment and the people of Arizona, now and in the future, rather than deciding in favor of commercial mining interests.

Sincerely,

Patricia French

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