

Anita Conner

Good evening. My name is Dr. Anita Conner. I am the Chief Medical Advisor of the Calabasas Alliance and I live in Rio Rico. Our organization is a relatively new but active grassroots advocacy group with the mission of preserving and protecting the natural environment of biodiverse flora and fauna, water resources, air quality, and the health and safety of all residents of Santa Cruz county. Through active advocacy, in cooperation with like minded groups and legal counsel, the Alliance seeks to mitigate the negative effects of major industrial development, especially mining, ore processing and accompanying transport in Santa Cruz county.

First and foremost, speaking for myself and the Calabasas Alliance, I want to express my strongest possible support for the Patagonia Area Resource Alliance's (PARA's) legal team's document of their specific comments on the proposed renewal of the Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination Permit for South32 Hermosa. I am including that document as an addendum to my comments which I will be submitting to you online. Each one of their points is critically important but I personally want to emphasize the need to revise the Draft Permit to require monitoring for manganese.

The health risks associated with too much exposure to manganese are well documented and would be of greatest risk to our very young and our older populations. Imagine the possibility of a young family unknowingly using contaminated well water to make their baby's formula, unaware that they could be contributing to permanent neurotoxic effects for their child. Or an elderly family member potentially developing manganism which may look like Parkinson's disease, but for which anti Parkinson's disease medications do not help, and no other treatments are currently available to effectively treat the symptoms. I also fully support the recommendations to increase the frequency of monitoring.

All the comments relating to the needed Total Maximum Daily Load studies in PARA's document must be carefully and consciously incorporated into any revised or new permit that might be approved for South32 Hermosa. Furthermore, the need to identify this as a new mine is well described in the same document. The consequences of not taking all these points seriously are far-reaching and potentially devastating to our county. The classification of Santa Cruz county as being in an extreme drought state (in the 5% worst category for the state) as per the Arizona Department of Water Resources at their meeting yesterday makes the situation all the more dire. Your role with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality is one which will shape the destiny of this area for many years to come. Thank you for your time.

addendum from PARA:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IORWyXodessLAM42cUYuJwkkIpn-V_xY/view?mc_cid=b110432405