

## Kelvin Murray

As a Professional Ecologist certified by the Ecological Society of America, I object to ADEQ's plan to renew the AZPDES No. AZ0026387 for South32's Hermosa Project mine. My reading of the project description suggests that the project would require draining an aquifer upon which the flow of several vital springs depends, alter the hydrology of several other streams in such a way that their ecological relationships would be damaged, and discharge harmful chemicals from the mines into the water supply upon which the area's human and animal populations depend. It's likely that both federal and Arizona water quality laws would be violated by this action. The issuance of the Permit is also contrary to ADEQ's own rules which require that ADEQ "act to protect the environment", promote "the protection and enhancement of the quality of water resources", provide for the "prevention and abatement of all water and air pollution"; and "[e]nsure the preservation and enhancement of natural beauty" in our state.

You need to do your job to enforce the discharge provisions of the Clean Water Act to protect human health and the environment as required by law. You cannot issue the permit until ADEQ complies with Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) rules required by the Clean Water Act so that the contaminated waters of Harshaw Creek, Alum Gulch, and Sonoita Creek can finally be returned to good health. ADEQ's concerted efforts to avoid or trivialize its TMDL obligations in the Permit is astonishing.

Please do not issue this permit and please keep me updated on all aspects of this permit process.