

# Alberto Bennett

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:

I support the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality's proposal to renew the AZPDES permit for the South32 Hermosa Project south of Patagonia. I believe the permit complies with the federal Clean Water Act and parallel Arizona state law and will protect the quality of the permitted receiving waters.

This project is important to my business because we are a local engineering firm with over 300 employees in Arizona and over 700 worldwide, and we works mainly on the mining industry and the local Arizona mining companies are a big part of our client basis.

South32 has proven itself to be a responsible permit holder and good corporate citizen. The Hermosa project also offers the prospect of badly needed economic development in a community that needs more. 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.

I urge ADEQ to approve the proposed permit renewal as written.

Sincerely,

M3 ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY CORP.

Alberto Bennett, P.E.  
President