

Richard Marschner

I am no bleeding-heart liberal; I am an independent (PND) registered voter. But I do have long-standing concerns about water-use issues in Arizona, especially as they related to farming, ranching and industrial operations such as copper mining.

The addition of yet another huge copper-mining project in Arizona may well be inevitable, in the interests of national security and manufacturing competitiveness in a wide variety of finished products.

But there is no question -- with the protection of Arizona's groundwater resources as the proper role for state government -- that the ADEQ must be responsible for monitoring the operation of the new Copper World Project as it relates to ground-water contamination.

Allowing self-monitoring is simply an irresponsible option to ADEQ's own oversight.

This new mining project can be, and should be, operated at the "lowest reasonable pollution level," not at the "highest possible profit level."

These two goals are inevitably at crossed purposes, and no reasonable person would expect that those responsible for shareholder value at Hudbay would be in any position to hold pollution to any less than the absolute maximum allowed by the state.

If long-term monitoring of this project requires additional funding at ADEQ, the governor should be asked to provide it.

Thank you for offering public comment in this important matter now before ADEQ.