

Concepcion Romero

I strongly urge you to reject the proposed air-pollution permit for Hudbay Minerals' Copper World mine. As it stands, the current draft of the permit lacks the necessary safeguards to ensure the mine will effectively protect both our air quality and the surrounding environment. The proposed permit appears to prioritize the mining company's interests over the health and well-being of local communities, ecosystems, and future generations.

This operation will be a massive industrial complex, with activities such as ore crushing, blasting, and the construction of a sulfuric acid plant. These processes carry a high risk of releasing large quantities of dangerous pollutants into the air, including sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and other toxic substances. The air we breathe in southern Arizona will be directly impacted by these emissions, potentially endangering public health and the natural beauty that defines this region.

It is particularly alarming that the current draft permit allows the mine to bypass emission standards during critical times, such as malfunctions, startups, and shutdowns. This essentially gives Copper World free rein to pollute during these periods, putting our community at risk without any accountability. A mine that cannot adhere to strict environmental standards at all times should not be granted permission to operate.

Furthermore, the permit lacks sufficient provisions for real-time, comprehensive monitoring of emissions from all sources at the mine. Without robust, continuous monitoring, there is no way to ensure that Copper World will consistently comply with emissions limits. This lack of oversight opens the door to unregulated pollution and risks to air quality for residents and wildlife alike.

For these reasons, I firmly believe that at a minimum, the Copper World mine must be required to obtain a Class I permit under the Clean Air Act. A Class I permit would impose more stringent regulatory requirements, including rigorous emissions control, continuous monitoring, and increased public transparency. This is the only way to ensure that the mine is held fully accountable for its environmental impact, with no exceptions. We cannot afford to cut corners when it comes to protecting our air and the health of our communities.

The Santa Rita Mountains and surrounding areas are home to rich biodiversity and hold significant cultural importance for indigenous communities. The mine's potential pollution could destroy fragile ecosystems and irreversibly harm habitats critical to endangered species. Additionally, tourism, recreation, and the local economy, which rely on the pristine beauty of the Santa Ritas, could suffer immensely.

By rejecting this inadequate air-pollution permit and requiring Hudbay to meet the higher standards of a Class I permit, you will be standing up for the community you serve. This is an opportunity to demonstrate that public health and environmental protection are non-negotiable and to hold Copper World accountable for any and all pollution it may cause.

I respectfully urge you to take decisive action and reject this permit as currently drafted. Protect the air we breathe, the health of future generations, and the ecosystems that make Arizona unique. Do not allow the Copper World mine to proceed under conditions that fail to safeguard the

environment and public health.