

Molly Skousen

I am writing this letter to those individuals of ADEQ who are responsible for the permitting process for Copper World. I have many concerns regarding the general air quality permit that was issued for the mine. They are as follows:

1. Mining is a dirty business and should be held to the most stringent standards possible. Mining is considered by many scientists to be one of the worst industries for polluting and general degradation of land, water and the air around them. This mine is located near a large metropolitan area with schools, towns, businesses, homes and recreation areas. Copper World has the potential to impact the quality of air for hundreds of thousands of people. The particulate will cover towns and everything around them with dust visible to the naked eye. This dust is very dangerous and can cause a multitude of serious health issues that can last for generations. Sulfuric acid is a chemical that is extremely caustic and quite literally kills people, plants and animals and degrades the soil around it. Remember "acid rain" a mixture of rain and sulfuric acid; all nearby forests, lakes, streams, fish, amphibians and birds will be negatively impacted by this. There is no return to a healthy ecosystem for years after an assault from mining operations like the one I am describing here.

2. The Rosemont and Copper World mining operations threaten one of the most precious, pristine and ecologically diverse regions not just here in Arizona, but in the world. The Santa Rita Sky Island region is home to dozens of bee species, endangered animals like the ocelot, wolves and the mighty jaguar. What are we going to tell our children and their children when they ask us-- the people of Arizona, why we allowed the destruction of such an important ecosystem when we had the opportunity to speak up on its behalf and be the guardians of this amazing resource?

3. Even quite frankly, the arguments for the current permitting fall extremely short when the conversation mentions the economics of mining in this region. The economic impact of the Copper World Complex will only add tenths of 1% of growth to the local economy of Tucson and Pima County. The mine will damage much larger financial sectors of our economy such as the housing market, education, recreation, tourism, wineries, ranching, native cultural sites and other cultural amenities. Studies of mining impact on almost all mining communities has shown that those communities suffer economic losses because of the destruction and degradation of natural resources used by these mines. One only has to look at Hudbay Minerals' terrible track record for bringing so called prosperity to regions like Flin Flon Manitoba, Canada to see the wake of destruction the mine has left behind there.

4. I grew up in Montana and have been living in Arizona for the past 27 years. I have witnessed the horrors of mining in Montana and Arizona by companies like the Anaconda Copper Mining Company in Butte, Montana and Phelps Dodge in Morencie and Ajo, Arizona. Not only have these mines desecrated the landscapes but they have left the communities and the federal government holding the bag of cleanup costs that range in the hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars.

I would like to make an appeal to ADEQ to do the right thing and to work like the sincere stewards of the land, water and sky that they were chosen to protect.

Sincerely,

Molly Skousen