



# SAVE THE SCENIC SANTA RITAS ASSOCIATION

## Media Release

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### SSSR: Rosemont Mine Would Violate Clean Water, Clean Air and Other Key Laws

(TUCSON, Ariz.) Today, a group of citizens, businesses, ranchers and conservation groups filed comprehensive Objections to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and draft Record of Decision (ROD) for the proposed Rosemont Copper Mine.

The 284-page filing details the Forest Service's failure to "fully comply with numerous federal and state laws, regulations, policies and other requirements" in its analysis of the environmental and economic impacts of this massive mine. The Objections follow other federal and local government agencies that similarly concluded the Rosemont Mine would violate numerous state and federal environmental protection laws. The Forest Service cannot approve any mining proposal that violates clean water, air or other safeguards.

"The Rosemont Copper mine is required to comply with ALL federal and state laws and regulations", said Gayle Hartmann, President of Save the Scenic Santa Ritas, one of the objecting groups. "But it's clear the Forest Service has shirked its responsibility to require that Rosemont obey those laws and protect our water, air, communities, and economy."

Major issues identified in the filing include:

- **Rosemont would create a toxic pit lake that won't be mitigated.** The Forest Service admits that Rosemont will leave behind a toxic pit lake that would be deadly to migratory birds and other wildlife - a violation of multiple laws - yet the agency refused to consider any mitigation measures.
- **The Forest Service claims - incorrectly - it does not have the "responsibility or jurisdiction" to protect regional water supplies from mine pollution.** The FEIS acknowledges that the mine will violate both state and federal water quality standards, yet the agency illegally abdicates its responsibility for ensuring that the mine complies with those standards.

- **The FEIS includes a previously unannounced transportation plan that threatens southern Arizona communities with serious health and safety risks from the mine's heavy truck traffic.** It's a clear violation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to include this kind of significant new information at the last minute without providing an opportunity for public review or comment.
- **The Forest Service failed to include information about how Rosemont will meet its post-mining cleanup obligations.** The agency's refusal to specify the details and amount of Rosemont's reclamation bond violates NEPA's disclosure requirements.

These are just a few examples of the dozens of objections included in today's filing. A team of scientists, engineers, lawyers and other experts provided the detailed technical analyses included in the filing.

The Forest Service has at most 75 days to respond to each objection and issue a final decision. Depending on the outcome of that process, litigation may be the next step.

"In many ways, we're entering the most important part of this process," said Randy Serraglio, conservation advocate at the Center for Biological Diversity. "It's time for the Forest Service to take more seriously its responsibility to protect our air, water, wildlife and economy."

[Click here](#) for more about *Save the Scenic Santa Ritas*.