



**SAVE THE SCENIC  
SANTA RITAS  
ASSOCIATION**

**Media Release**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Coalition Files Suit to Protect Southern Arizona's Air Quality  
Challenges "Illegal" State Approval of Rosemont Copper's air pollution permit**

(Tucson, Ariz.) Save the Scenic Santa Ritas (SSSR), a broad-based coalition of southern Arizona small businesses, farmers, ranchers and conservationists today filed a lawsuit to overturn the state's air pollution permit for the proposed Rosemont Mine in the Santa Rita Mountains south of Tucson.

The lawsuit contends that the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) illegally approved Rosemont's air pollution permit application. The permit, the lawsuit alleges, is based on data manipulated by Rosemont to hide potential air pollution violations at the proposed mine.

SSSR provided expert testimony during administrative hearings prior to filing the lawsuit that revealed pollutant concentrations emitted from the Rosemont mine would likely cause Pima County to violate health-based air quality standards. If that were to happen, Pima County would have to impose new restrictions on all air pollution sources in the county, with some companies being required to install expensive pollution controls.

"Air pollution from the proposed Rosemont Mine would threaten the health and safety of southern Arizonans," said SSSR President Gayle Hartmann. "We are committed to fighting this mine in every venue to stop this terribly misguided project."

Dr. Tom Purdon, a Green Valley physician, criticized ADEQ for "approving the air pollution permit without a thorough analysis of the flaws in Rosemont's modeling evaluation and the mine's potential impacts on the environment. The burden then falls on citizens to go to court to get these permit approvals reversed."

The lawsuit was filed in Maricopa County Superior Court. Last year, SSSR filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn ADEQ's approval of an aquifer pollution permit for the proposed mile-wide, half-mile deep mine planned near the northeastern ridgeline of the Santa Rita Mountains on the Coronado National Forest. An initial ruling on the water pollution permit lawsuit is expected later this summer.

Today's legal action is the latest in a series of setbacks for Vancouver, B.C.-based Augusta Resource Corporation and its subsidiary Rosemont Copper Company that is seeking regulatory approvals to build a massive open-pit copper mine. Last month, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers notified Rosemont that its plan to mitigate the mine's unavoidable destruction of critical regional water resources was insufficient. As a result, the possibility that the Army Corps will deny Rosemont's Clean Water Act Sec. 404 permit application has significantly increased. The mine cannot be built without the 404 permit.

Also, an endangered ocelot was recently photographed near the proposed mine site. The presence of the ocelot, combined with new information regarding effects of the mine on springs and streams indicating increased adverse impacts to other endangered species, caused the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Forest Service to initiate a new round of formal endangered species act consultation. The additional consultation is expected to last for several months which delays the Forest Service's decision on the project.

Editors Note: The court filing can be downloaded [here](#).

*Save the Scenic Santa Ritas is a non-profit, community organization working to protect the Santa Rita and Patagonia Mountains from environmental degradation caused by mining and mineral exploration activities. For more information, go to [ScenicSantaRitas.org](http://ScenicSantaRitas.org) or [RosemontMineTruth.com](http://RosemontMineTruth.com).*