



Media Release
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Key elements of Rosemont water mitigation plan “commonly fail”

Noted expert reviews Rosemont habitat mitigation plan for essential water permit

(Tucson, Ariz.) Save the Scenic Santa Ritas (SSSR) today released a new [report](#) debunking claims by Toronto-based Hudbay Minerals, Inc. that the water resource impacts of its proposed Rosemont Mine can be mitigated.

Internationally recognized water expert Dr. Mathias Kondolf was retained by SSSR to analyze Hudbay’s proposed Sonoita Creek restoration plan that is part of Hudbay's Final Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for the proposed open-pit copper mine planned for the Santa Rita Mountains on the Coronado National Forest in southeastern Arizona.

The Habitat Mitigation plan is an essential component of Hudbay’s Sec. 404 permit application for the Rosemont project. Hudbay must demonstrate that its mitigation plan will satisfactorily mitigate the extensive impacts of its proposed mine to affected regional water resources. SSSR submitted Kondolf’s report to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for its review prior to the Corps’ pending decision on whether to issue the 404 permit.

Dr. Kondolf is a Professor of Environmental Planning at the University of California, Berkeley and is a noted expert on wetlands and river restoration. Kondolf [previously reviewed](#) Hudbay’s earlier Sonoita Creek mitigation plan and found that plan to be inadequate as well.

Hudbay subsequently modified its Sonoita Creek plan, which Kondolf analyzed for SSSR.

Kondolf's key findings include:

- The type of project Hudbay proposes for Sonoita Creek “commonly fail.” The plan involves a massive earth-moving project to create a new channel. Kondolf determined that consistent with "geomorphic principles and experience with similar artificial channel reconstructions elsewhere," the new channel would very likely wash out..." during the initial moderate flows.
- Hudbay's proposed mitigation project would fill a portion of the existing Sonoita Creek channel, which is classified as a “Waters of the U.S.,” without corresponding mitigation. Contrary to the mining company's assertions, Hudbay’s Sonoita Creek mitigation component is not demonstrably “ecologically superior” to this resource’s current condition.
- The new channel Hudbay is proposing to build "would destroy existing riparian habitat, and fill material generated from the excavation would be spoiled on existing riparian habitat, also without mitigation."

The Kondolf report is just the latest criticism leveled against the Rosemont project and its impacts on the scarce water resources in southern Arizona.

The Corps has long expressed serious concerns about the mile-wide, half-mile deep mine that would dump waste rock and tailings on more than 2,500 acres of Coronado National Forest, stating that Hubday's previous water mitigation plan was inadequate. The Corps' Los Angeles district office recommended that the essential Sec. 404 permit be denied in July 2016. The Corps' South Pacific Division, located in San Francisco, is currently reviewing Hubday's application.

In 2016, Pima County, where the mine is located, formally requested that the Army Corps deny the 404 permit. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has also issued letters to the Army Corps stating that the mine project should not move forward because of the lack of adequate mitigation.

The 404 permit is the last major permit Hubday needs before it can begin construction on the mine proposed to be built in the Santa Rita Mountains on the Coronado National Forest 30 miles southeast of Tucson.

[Editors Note: Copy of the Kondolf report 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, RosemontMineTruth.com, Facebook, and Twitter.