



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
130 W. CONGRESS, TUCSON, AZ 85701-1317
(520) 740-8661 FAX (520) 740-8171

C. H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

January 18, 2007

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Member
United States House of Representatives
1440 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: **Resolution of the Pima County Board of Supervisors Opposing Mining in the Santa Rita Mountains Coronado Forest**

Dear Congressman Grijalva:

Enclosed please find a resolution unanimously passed by the Pima County Board of Supervisors on January 16, 2007. As you recall from being on the Board of Supervisors, this controversial issue arose previously. Then a broad-based community coalition of Save the Santa Ritas successfully challenged the proposed mining activity, which was subsequently abandoned by the owner, ASARCO. To keep the mining proposal for Rosemont from resurfacing again and again in the future, it is necessary to withdraw the area from further mineral exploration. Apparently such was successfully accomplished by Congressional action in passing the Cave Creek Canyon Protection Act in 1993 for lands in the Chiricahua Mountains. We believe this area, opposite the Madera Canyon international birding area, is just as ecologically sensitive as Cave Creek Canyon.

We ask your assistance in initiating those necessary Congressional actions to withdraw the Santa Rita Mountains within the Coronado National Forest from mining or mineral exploration. We realize that some entity will ultimately have to deal with the existing rights as they may exist regarding the Rosemont property; however, we believe that withdrawing the area from further and future mineral exploration is a first necessary step in the ultimate protection of these public lands from mining exploitation.

We also believe the existing Land and Water Conservation Fund should be used to acquire the private mining in-holdings in the Coronado National Forest to conserve this most important, scenic and ecologically sensitive area.

Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Huckelberry".

C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/jj
Attachment

c: The Honorable Chairman and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION NO. 2007- 15

RESOLUTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OPPOSING THE PROPOSED ROSEMONT MINE

WHEREAS, Augusta Resource Corporation submitted a draft plan of operations to the U.S. Forest Service on July 31, 2006 to develop the Rosemont Mine on private and Forest Service land within the Santa Rita Mountains south of Tucson; and

WHEREAS, Augusta's July 31, 2006 plan of operations was not accepted by the U.S. Forest Service due to insufficient information; and

WHEREAS, Pima County provided comments on the July 31, 2006 plan of operations to the U.S. Forest Service and to Augusta stating five performance criteria that should be met by any mining or development project proposed for such a location; and

WHEREAS, these five performance criteria address concerns in the areas of conformance to the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Conservation Lands System, and Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, prevention of water quality and quantity impacts, concurrent reclamation, visual impacts, and an environmental enhancement endowment; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Forest Service via the National Environmental Policy Act will be required to take into account consistency with local land use plans, which in this case is the Pima County Comprehensive Land Use Plan including the Conservation Lands System; and

WHEREAS, Pima County is preparing an application for a Section 10 permit pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act via the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the land proposed for mining contains important ecosystems desired for protection; and

WHEREAS, the typical legacy left behind from prior and existing mines places undue costs and adverse impacts on the tax payers of Pima County with few local tax benefits, and is therefore unacceptable; and

WHEREAS, a recent study of 70 Environmental Impact Statements for modern-era hard rock mines found that water quality impacts from hard rock mines are consistently underestimated and therefore the mitigation is consistently inadequate; and

WHEREAS, water quality impacts to Davidson Canyon and Cienega Creek would be detrimental to rare riparian habitat along the creeks, the endangered species within the creeks, and the high quality water supply to the Tucson Basin; and

WHEREAS, Augusta has not yet shown how the Rosemont Mine will conform to the Clean Water Act, Stormwater and Section 404 permit requirements for the deposition of dredge and fill materials in waters of the United States; and

WHEREAS, a recent geological survey of the site brings into question the stability of the high wall natural rock formations above the proposed mining pit; and

WHEREAS, the County has questioned the validity of Augusta's Forest Service mining claims due to the fact that the claims are not proposed to be mined for the recovery of valuable minerals, but are instead proposed to be used as a dumping ground for waste produced from mining on Augusta's private land, thereby invalidating the legal foundation of the original claims; and

WHEREAS, Augusta has not yet proved that it has valid Forest Service mining claims; and

WHEREAS, the information Augusta has provided the County to date leaves many questions unanswered and is insufficient to determine if and how Augusta would be able to meet the five performance criteria outlined by the County to address the negative impacts associated with the proposed Rosemont Mine.

NOW, THEREFORE, UPON MOTION DULY MADE, SECONDED AND CARRIED, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Pima County Board of Supervisors opposes Augusta Resource Corporation's proposed Rosemont Mine.
2. Pima County will continue to actively comment on any future plan of operations submitted for Rosemont Mine, including during any formal review by the U.S. Forest Service per the National Environmental Policy Act.
3. The Pima County Board of Supervisors hereby supports the withdrawal of all Pima County natural reserve parks from mineral entry, as well as Federal lands included in National Parks, Monuments, and Forests within Pima County.
4. The Pima County Board of Supervisors hereby supports the inclusion of these lands (Rosemont) for conservation purposes into the National Forest Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds.
5. The Pima County Board of Supervisors requests the Arizona Congressional Delegation initiate the permanent withdrawal from mining and mineral exploration all federal lands within the Santa Rita Mountains area of the Coronado National Forest.

Passed by the Board of Supervisors of Pima County, this 16th day of January, 2007.



Chairman, Pima County Board of Supervisors

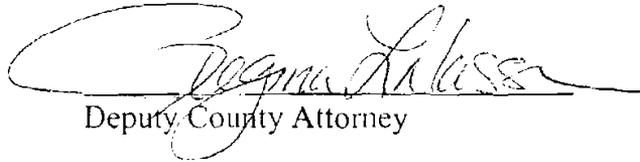
JAN 16 2007

ATTEST:



Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Deputy County Attorney