



ROSEMONT MINE: Remaining Permits and Decisions

Rosemont Copper has repeatedly claimed that the company needs only “one more permit” before it can begin blasting its massive open-pit copper mine in the Santa Rita Mountains near Tucson. They’re not telling the truth. Before the Rosemont mine can ever proceed, complex and critically important permits with strict regulatory provisions to mitigate the major impacts this project poses to southern Arizona’s water supplies, air quality and economy must first be issued. If regulators conclude that Rosemont cannot mitigate these impacts, they can refuse to issue these permits. Alternatively, if the agencies find that data and modeling for the permits is inaccurate or incomplete they can require Rosemont to redo its analysis.

Every open-pit copper mine that’s ever been dug has polluted the air and nearby water supplies with mercury, lead, arsenic or other poisons. The Rosemont Mine would not be any different.

- **The US Forest Service has yet to complete a final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and issue a Record of Decision.** In 2012, the Environmental Protection Agency gave the Rosemont’s draft EIS its lowest possible rating and concluded that it was one of the worst EIS’s ever reviewed. The Forest Service process has been delayed in large part by Rosemont’s failure to provide requested information and by the Company’s decision to dramatically change its mining proposal in July 2012.
- **The Clean Water Act permit that allows Rosemont to pollute area waterways is still pending with the US Army Corps of Engineers.** As with the EIS, the Environmental Protection Agency concluded in 2012 that the Rosemont Mine would cause “significant degradation” of area waterways, including “substantial and unacceptable impacts” to Davidson Canyon and Cienega Creek.
- **The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is assessing whether the Rosemont Mine would jeopardize nearly a dozen threatened and endangered species, including the jaguar, ocelot and southwestern willow flycatcher before it issues its Biological Opinion.** The FWS is also in the process of designating critical habitat for both the jaguar and the southwestern willow flycatcher that may include the Rosemont Mine site. The Arizona Department of Game and Fish has concluded that the Rosemont Mine “will render the northern portion of the Santa Rita Mountains virtually worthless as wildlife habitat and as a functioning ecosystem, and thus also worthless for wildlife recreation.” Federal agencies are not allowed to approve actions that destroy or adversely modify critical habitat for endangered species.
- **The Aquifer Protection Permit issued by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality in 2012 is still under appeal.** The appeal is on the grounds that it fails to protect area groundwater supplies. The Water Quality Appeals Board has not yet ruled on the appeal.
- **The air pollution permit issued by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) in January 2013 has been appealed.** This appeal is on the grounds that Rosemont manipulated data in its modeling to underestimate air pollution from the mine and pulled a bait and switch by announcing that it would operate under a different mining plan than the one submitted to ADEQ.
- **The Forest Service must also consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer and, potentially, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.** This process ensures that the proposed Rosemont Mine doesn’t adversely affect historic and cultural sites, including traditional lands of the Tohono O’odham Nation and other Native American Tribes.