



SAVE THE SCENIC  
SANTA RITAS  
ASSOCIATION

# 2025 Annual Report



Eastern flank of the Santa Rita Mountains where Husbay plans to blast the mile-wide, half-mile deep Rosemont Pit.  
Photographer: Cheryl Rogos

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to protect the scenic, aesthetic, recreational, environmental, cultural and wildlife values of the Santa Rita Mountains from being destroyed by open-pit mining. For nearly 30 years, we have engaged in education, outreach, litigation and communications with the backing of more than 3,000 supporters to protect the mountains for future generations.

# KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We made major changes to our staff and initiated a comprehensive strategic plan to stop Toronto-based Hudbay Minerals from developing Copper World, which could become the fourth largest open-pit copper mine in the United States.

- We hired two new staff members, enabling our team to better enact our mission.
- We continued litigating two lawsuits challenging Copper World's plans to pollute our air and industrialize the 52,000-acre Santa Rita Experimental Range, the nation's oldest and largest open-space research center.
- We worked closely with the Pima County Board of Supervisors as it passed its fourth resolution since 2007 opposing open-pit mining in the Santa Rita Mountains.
- We hosted five community events where 700 citizens spoke out against Copper World.
- We coordinated with Pima County staff to draft an ordinance limiting the number of heavy truck trips across unpaved county roads to reduce dust and potential violations of federal clean air standards. Copper World is estimated to require more than 110 heavy truck trips per day across the seven-mile unpaved Santa Rita Road. The Board of Supervisors is expected to vote on the ordinance on Dec. 16.



A truck kicks up dust driving along Santa Rita Road. Photographer: Erick Meza



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



SSSR hosted an April community meeting in Sahuarita.

Between our *Hike with Sierra Club* in March, our *Community Town Hall* in April, and our *Rally for the Santa Ritas* in May, **nearly 700 supporters** came out to **enjoy nature**, learn about our mission, and **stand together in solidarity**.



SSSR supporters hike in the Santa Ritas.

When we asked you to use your voice remotely, you showed up again. In response to a September Action Alert, **you sent 339 letters** to the Arizona State Land Department opposing plans to auction 160 acres of state Trust Land to Copper World to be used as a mine tailings dumps.



Hundreds of supporters rallied in May in Tucson to oppose Copper World.



# LEGAL ACTIONS

We initiated lawsuits against two state agencies. We filed an administrative appeal challenging the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality's issuance of Copper World's Class II Air Permit. Although the administrative law judge ruled against us, we are considering whether to appeal this decision to Superior Court.

We also challenged a right-of-way issued by the Arizona State Land Department to Copper World for a mine tailings pipeline that crosses the state-protected Santa Rita Experimental Range. The SRER is required by state law to be operated for "ecological and rangeland research". A pipeline carrying mining waste across the SRER is not compatible. We expect a ruling later this year or in early 2026.

# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

We extend special thanks to the following partner organizations: Center for Biological Diversity, Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, DarkSky Southern Arizona, Friends of Madera Canyon, Patagonia Area Resource Alliance, Sierra Club, Sky Island Alliance, and Tucson Bird Alliance.

These organizations joined us in a letter to Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs requesting she withdraw the Land Department's proposed auction of 160 acres of state Trust Land in the Santa Rita foothills. Copper World has requested the state to auction the land. The company intends to dump toxic mine tailings on the site.



# OUR TEAM



Staff members Paige and John.

## Staff

John Dougherty, Executive Director  
Paige Humphrey, Outreach Coordinator

## Board of Directors

Thomas Nelson, Ph.D, President | Ron Steffens, Vice President | Carol Shinsky, Treasurer | Stan Hart, Ph.D., Secretary | Eric Betterton, Ph.D. | Steve Brown | Sheila L. Dagucan, Esq. | Andrea Hoerr | Tai Kondo Koester | Erick Meza | Roger E. McManus | Alan Ruiz Berman | Gregory C. Shinsky | Gayle Hartman, Emeritus | Morris Farr, Ph.D., Emeritus | John Michael Kozma, Emeritus | Thomas F. Purdon, MD, Emeritus

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

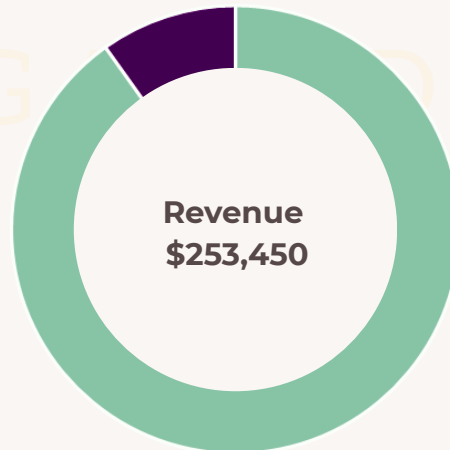
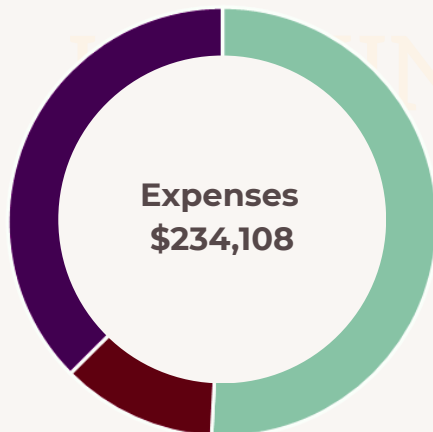
Thanks to you, we have raised more than \$250,000 through Dec. 2 and we encourage you to donate generously to close out 2025 and continue contributing throughout 2026. If you're not already doing so, please consider making regular weekly, monthly or semi-annual contributions.

We extend special thanks to Ben & Jerry's for their generous \$25,000 grant and the Western Area Mining Network for a \$4,000 grant.

Please spread the word to others in your personal and professional networks about the importance of protecting the Santa Rita Mountains from open-pit copper mining and contributing to SSSR. We hope you continue supporting our mission.

*The following figures reflect the period January 1 - December 2, 2025.*

**Administrative 51%**  
**Fundraising 12%**  
**Programs & Outreach 37%**



**Direct Public Support 90%**  
**Grants 10%**

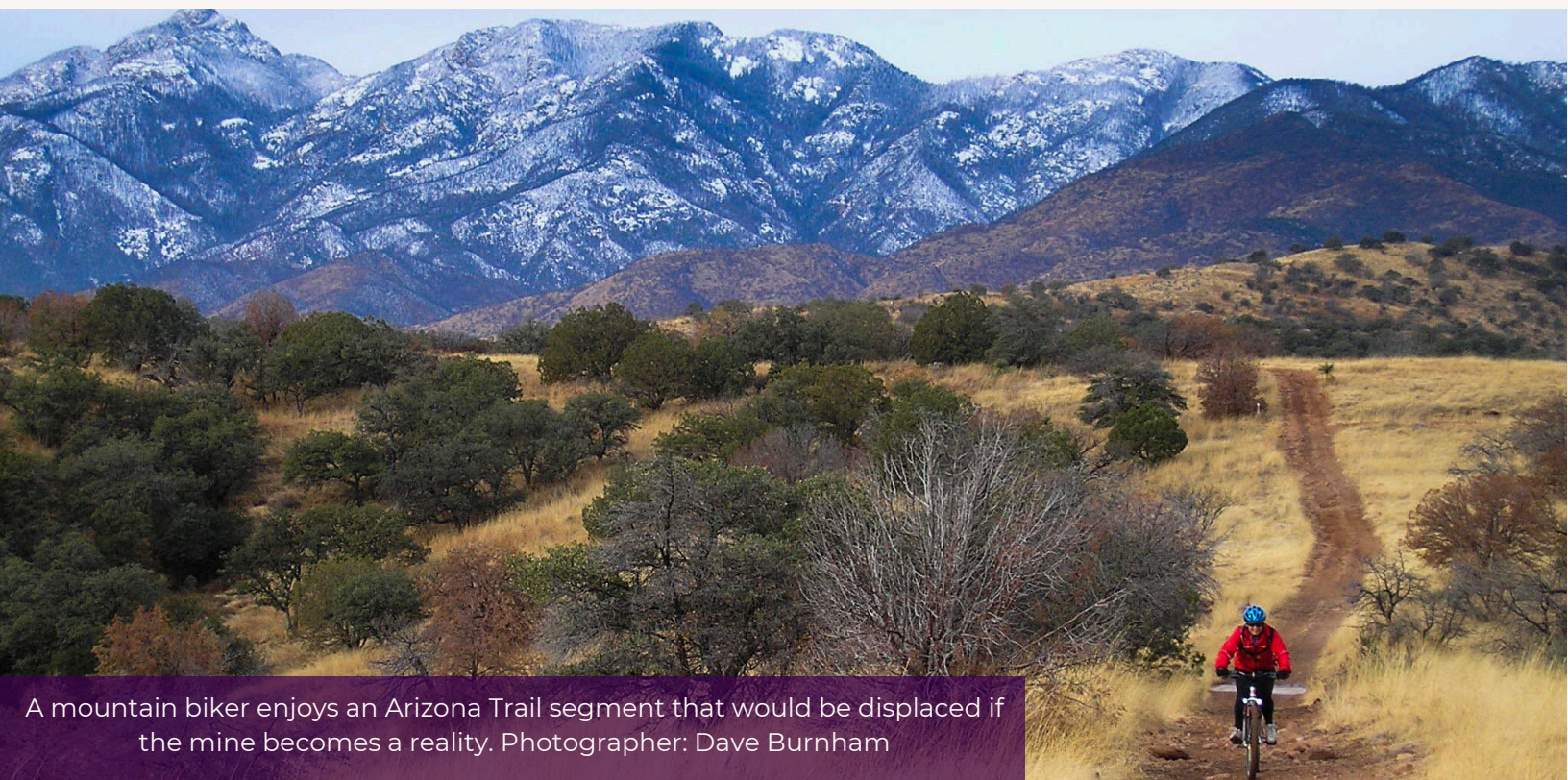


# LOOKING AHEAD



A winter storm blankets the proposed mine site, looking west.  
Photographer: Michael McNulty

**This upcoming year will be critical in our fight to stop open-pit mining in the Santa Rita Mountains. Your continued support is strengthening our ability to protect the mountains for future generations and conserve our water.**



A mountain biker enjoys an Arizona Trail segment that would be displaced if the mine becomes a reality. Photographer: Dave Burnham