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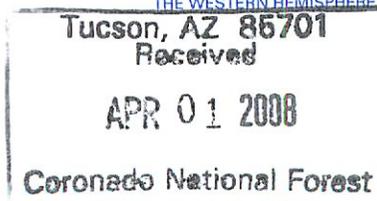
Washington, DC 20515-0308

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Mr. Corbin Newman
Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service Region 3
Office of the Regional Forester
333 Broadway SE
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Ms. Jeanine Derby
Forest Supervisor
Coronado National Forest
Office of the Forest Supervisor
300 W. Congress St
Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear Mr. Newman and Ms. Derby,

Thank you for meeting with me on Thursday, March 27, 2008 to hear my concerns and recommendations about how we can provide more opportunities for public comment on the proposed Rosemont Mine. As I indicated in my letter of March 18, sufficient public comment is essential to fully identify the issues related to this controversial mine proposal.

Unfortunately, the Environment Impact Statement process has gotten off to a difficult start. Over the last two weeks, since the process was first announced, several events have undermined public perception of the Forest Service as an impartial facilitator. I recognize that some of these events have been beyond your control. I believe significant steps are necessary to restore public confidence, both in the Forest Service and in the EIS process.

For these reasons, I am pleased we have agreed to the following six adjustments to the Forest Service's course of action regarding the Rosemont Mine:

- The public scoping process will be extended from the original 30 days to 120 days. The closing date for the public scoping process will be extended to July 11th 2008. This expanded window will ensure that the public has ample opportunity to learn about the EIS process and provide their comments to the Forest Service. It also demonstrates that the Forest Service is serious about collecting public comments.
- Three additional open-house meetings will be scheduled. To ensure ample opportunity for the public to educate themselves about the EIS process and provide comments, three (3) additional open-house meetings will be scheduled. In our meeting you indicated that one has already been scheduled for April 5 in Vail and another is in the planning stages for Sahuarita. A third will be scheduled in the Sonoita area in the coming weeks.

- All future open-house meetings will begin with an explanation of the process. The remaining open-house meetings will begin with an oral and written explanation of the process. This introduction will provide an overview of the EIS process; the purpose of the open-house meeting format; the type of comments being solicited; the role of the Forest Service; and the identification of officials from the Forest Service, Augusta Resources, and other relevant organizations in attendance at the meeting. The introduction will also explain that the open-house is not intended as a public hearing, and that public hearings will be held on dates and at locations which will be announced at each open house.
- Three public hearings will be scheduled. In addition to the open-house meetings mentioned above, the Forest Service will also schedule three (3) public hearings during the 120 day comment period to allow Southern Arizonans to express their views in an open public forum. As we discussed, these three hearings will be held in Central Tucson, the Green Valley/Sahuarita area, and the Sonoita/Patagonia area.
- The selection process for the EIS contractor will be reviewed. As we discussed, concerns have been raised about the process employed by the Forest Service to select SWCA as the primary contractor to perform the EIS, and that firm's ability to evaluate the Rosemont proposal objectively. To address these concerns, the Forest Service has agreed to conduct a review of the selection process.
- A community work group will be established to participate in the EIS process. A work group will be convened to provide community and technical input throughout the process. This group will include representatives of appropriate public agencies, members of affected communities, and my staff. The group will be charged with assuring that all specific public concerns relevant to the project are raised and addressed in the EIS.

In closing, I want to acknowledge the pivotal role that the Forest Service plays in the EIS process. As we discussed, full involvement of the public is essential in order for your agency to fulfill its mission, particularly on an issue as important and complex as the proposed Rosemont Mine. I believe our agreement to the six action steps described in this letter will help restore public confidence in the EIS process and, ultimately, improve the quality of its conclusions.

Thank you for your very positive response to my concerns and for your commitment to ensuring openness and transparency. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely Yours,


Gabrielle Giffords
Member of Congress