

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

August 2012

What we do, and what we've accomplished in the past 18 months

- Formed alliances with international organizations, Defenders of Wildlife and Sky Island Alliance, which resulted in a lawsuit against the US Forest Service insisting they do the proper environmental review prior to exploratory drilling by Wildcat Silver on public lands. As a result of this lawsuit the Forest Service withdrew their original approval to Wildcat Silver for this drilling project. This effort was significant and has caused the Forest Service to raise the bar for environmental protection for all these mining companies.
- Produced a short documentary to increase public awareness about the potential challenges of mining activity in the Patagonia area. This documentary has been shown to packed houses at the Friends of Sonoita Creek annual meeting, The Tin Shed Theater, and was recently a selected film for the Wild & Scenic Film Festival hosted by the Coalition of Sonoran Desert Protection at the Loft Theater in Tucson last month. We've also shown the film and done presentations to the Santa Cruz Valley Citizens Council in Tubac and the Santa Cruz County Commissioners.
- We are Working in coordination with the Town of Patagonia and the US Forest Service to establish Harshaw Creek as part of the Town of Patagonia's Municipal Watershed. We've attended multiple meetings in Tucson at the Coronado National Forest District Headquarters with the Patagonia Town Manager. We've provided maps and information. The Forest Service will be coming to Patagonia for a public meeting on Sept. 6th, in part to discuss this Watershed designation.
- Received a grant from PRCF (Patagonia Regional Community Foundation) allowing us to create a new and much more comprehensive website that provides extensive information regarding governmental policies such as the National Environmental Policy Act, relevant legislation, proposed industrial activities, and conservation/restoration efforts. It includes an up-to-date index of news articles related to our area as well as a news blog.
- With additional funding from the Patagonia Clothing Foundation we've been able to implement a platform of tools into the website including a supporter management system, email marketing & outreach tools, and an advocacy platform. These have allowed us to increase our outreach to a broader base of supporters. More people across the country now know about Patagonia because of these tools. With the Advocacy Platform tool we now are able to create action alerts when critical issues need immediate response. We monitor federal and state legislation that could affect our area and when action needs taken we make it as easy as we can for YOU by having the letters already written - you just need to sign and hit the send the button!
- We maintain a newsletter and subscriber list of approximately 400 people. We use our newsletter to keep people informed about local mining company activities, important local meetings or events, Forest Service notices and proceedings. We like to keep it local, relevant and brief. We recognize that most folks receive many emails and we only send ours out when there's important information for the community. In addition to our subscriber list, information from PARA's e-newsletters goes out to Save the Scenic Santa Rita's listserv (3000 people), and the Mountain Empire Action Alliance listserv (450 people).

- We manage several social networks: Facebook, Twitter, Resource, Tumblr, Google Plus, Pinterest. We have several news feeds set up, we scan them daily and then post relevant news articles to our social networks. Our news pages on our website and daily posts to our social networks will keep you abreast of all the pertinent information that applies directly and indirectly to our area. You don't need to search the web for it; we do it for you!

- Through our website and Social Networks we support and promote local sustainable businesses and eco-tourism to our area. Our website has an index of Patagonia area businesses and organizations with short descriptions and links to their websites. Our homepage has a prominent link to our Visit Patagonia page. We post local happenings on our website calendar of events as well as on our social networks.

•Meetings & Workshops

- Hosted several public meetings/workshops educating community members about the National Environmental Policy Act and the public comment writing process.

- As a result of our internet presence, we were contacted by the Southwest Rural Policy Network and Amigos Bravos and offered a grant to host a full day citizen activist workshop which took place in March of this year. Thirty-eight community members learned how to best utilize the Clean Water Act to protect our waters.

- Currently we are writing a grant proposal with Sky Island Alliance that will allow us to host several free educational workshops this upcoming winter and spring and will include instruction on wildlife tracking, plant identification, additional comment writing workshops specific to our area's concerns, and more.

•Festivals

- We staff information tables at Patagonia Earth Day, July 4th, and Patagonia Fall Festival. And we've had a float in the 4th of July parade for the past couple years with Save the Scenic Santa Ritas. These festivals attract thousands of people from the Tucson-Nogales-Sierra Vista areas as well as from further afield.

- We recognize that the mining threats being faced by the Patagonia area are battles being fought throughout the western United States. As a result we've joined forces with the Western Mining Action Network and Arizona Mining Reform Coalition. This allows us access to their combined knowledge and experience. Mining companies repeatedly use the same tactics to justify their existence. We certainly benefit from our associations with WMAN and AZ Mining Reform Coalition.

A FINAL WORD

Although our efforts have successfully delayed the four mining companies with claims in the Patagonia Mountains, it is just that, a delay. They will continue to push their plans. As Save the Scenic Santa Ritas has reminded us, this is a marathon, not a sprint. We've learned a lot in the past 18 months. We've also built a support system which, as we've stated above, includes international organizations that have had many successes in protecting wild lands. We are committed to protecting our Patagonia Mountains, our air, our water, and our way of life. Your financial support is necessary for us to continue our mission.