

Patagonia Area Resource Alliance

Report to the Community

2015 Activities and Accomplishments

Watchdog Activities

Won the lawsuit in federal court with Defenders of Wildlife against the US Forest Service for their unlawful approval of the Regal Resources Sunnyside mineral drilling project in southern Arizona's Coronado National Forest, in the Alum Gulch area of the Patagonia Mountains. Our victory now forces the Forest Service to analyze the cumulative impacts of multiple mining projects proposed in the same regional area – and can no longer conclude “one at a time” that they are no big deal.

Regal Resources is no longer listed with the Canadian Stock Exchange nor do they have a website any longer.

The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service began in October an environmental cleanup of the Lead Queen Abandoned Mine situated within the Harshaw Creek watershed. The cleanup will reduce or eliminate the downstream movement of waste rock containing elevated concentrations of arsenic, lead, and other heavy metals, as well as acid mine drainage to Harshaw Creek. Members of PARA discovered the orange sludge oozing from the Lead Queen in September 2014. We will continue to monitor the U.S. Forest Service's efforts to contain and mitigate toxic flows from the Lead Queen.

Ongoing identification and documentation of abandoned, leaking mine sites.

Maintain a wildlife monitoring project in partnership with Defenders of Wildlife and Sky Island Alliance for the areas in the Patagonia Mountains most threatened by proposed mining activities.

Advocacy Activities

Wrote a letter to Canadian Energy & Mines Ministers on behalf of thousands of Canadians, First Nations representatives, and other concerned organizations regarding the implications of the catastrophic failure of the tailings dam at the Mount Polley mine in British Columbia in August 2014, and the implications for tailings dam design and operational safety at mines throughout Canada.

Wrote a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management on behalf of dozens of organizations, representing hundreds of thousands of people, regarding the catastrophic failure of the tailings dam at the Mount Polley mine in British Columbia, and the implications for tailings dam design and operational safety at hardrock mines throughout the United States.

Wrote a letter to Congress on the Gold King mine waste spill into the Animas River in Colorado and how it has focused national media and political attention on a broader issue – the hundreds of thousands of abandoned and inactive mines that are actively polluting surface and groundwater, and occasionally threaten catastrophe.

Outreach Activities

The Kevin Pakulis Band played a benefit concert to raise funds and awareness for the Friends of the Mountain Empire at the Hotel Congress in Tucson. Support for the organizations – Patagonia Area Resource Alliance, Sky Island Alliance, Defenders of Wildlife, Tucson Audubon Society, Center for Biological Diversity and Save the Scenic Santa Ritas – that are working

to protect and preserve the habitat, water, and wildlife of the Mountain Empire from new mining in the Patagonia Mountains, Santa Rita Mountains, Canelo Hills, and the San Rafael Valley of southern Arizona.

Ongoing meetings and collaborations with Defenders of Wildlife, Sky Island Alliance, Save the Scenic Santa Ritas, Arizona Mining Reform Coalition, TNC Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve, Earthworks and Tucson Audubon for continuing advocacy for the Patagonia Mountains and raising awareness of area mining threats.

In September 2015, the Patagonia Area Resource Alliance convened a meeting of environmental and other civic groups in the Patagonia region to identify common issues and collaborative strategies for attaining conservation goals.

Participated the Patagonia Trails Day and EARTHfest event, Patagonia's 4th of July celebration and the Patagonia Fall Festival.

Attendance at the Patagonia Town council meetings and workshops.

Showed "Mining Patagonia" and answered questions at the Tucson Audubon Bird and Wildlife Festival as well as at the Tucson Audubon's Paton Center for Hummingbirds.