

# Patagonia Area Resource Alliance

## Report to the Community

### *2016 Activities and Accomplishments*

#### ***Watchdog Activities***

The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service started an environmental cleanup in November 2015 of the Lead Queen Abandoned Mine situated within the Harshaw Creek watershed. The cleanup was designed to 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 by installing 11 rock-filled dams called gabions. Members of PARA discovered in August 2016 more orange sludge oozing from the Lead Queen and most of the gabions upside-down. We will continue to monitor the U.S. Forest Service's efforts to contain and mitigate toxic flows from the Lead Queen.

Coordinated and submitted NEPA scoping comments on the USFS Environmental Assessment for the Arizona Mining Inc's Hermosa-Taylor Deposit Drilling Project along with Defenders of Wildlife, Arizona Mining Reform Coalition, Save the Scenic Santa Ritas, and Sky Island Alliance.

Coordinated and submitted comments on the ADEQ Work Plan for ASARCO January Adit (Norton Mine) Voluntary Remediation Work Site prepared for Arizona Minerals Inc by an expert whose comments are based on his professional knowledge and experience in mining operations and mining environmental remediation which has spanned more than 35 years.

Maintained 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***

Stepped up our game with the Patagonia Fall Festival and became a sponsor. Invited local and regional environmental groups to join us in our double-sized space. Used amazing photographs, new handouts, and an opportunity to sign a scoping letter to educate folks on the amazing beauty of our land and the mining threats it faces. And there was our jaguar, El Jefe, handing out notecards and encouraging other little jaguars through face-painting.

With a grant from Fund for Wild Nature, we were able to support a Monitoring Specialist to conduct regular monitoring of abandoned mine sites that leak toxic acid mine waste into the Patagonia Mountains. Also, held a Comment-Writing Workshop that guided local community members through the process of commenting on the proposed plan by Arizona Mining Inc to the US Forest Service for exploratory drilling on public lands in the Patagonia Mountains. AMI has since withdrawn the proposal.

Received a grant from Western Mining Action Network for additional cameras and a new computer to expand our camera program in the Patagonia Mountains. Citizen scientists from the community continue wildlife monitoring efforts in the Patagonia Mountains focusing on areas immediately at risk by proposed mining activities. Data gathered is used to fight mining proposals through species lists, presence of vulnerable species and habitat analysis. Additional collaborations are ongoing with Defenders of Wildlife, EARTHWORKS, Sky Island Alliance and Tucson Audubon to ensure this data is applied to advocacy efforts in the most effective ways.

Wrote to Administrator Gina McCarthy of the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of our organization, other organizations, and the hundreds of thousands of people we represent, to urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as it moves forward with the development of the financial assurance regulations required under CERCLA 108(b), to ensure that these regulations will rigorously protect taxpayers from the clean-up costs associated with metal mines and compel timely remediation to protect communities from the hazardous materials associated with these facilities.

### ***Outreach Activities***

Held private meetings for local residents about the current situation on mine exploration in the Patagonia Mountains.

Screening of “Ours is the Land”, short documentary film that depicts in vivid and powerful detail the spiritual, cultural and physical connection of the Tohono O’odham people of Arizona the Santa Rita Mountains, which is imperiled by the proposed creation of the mile-wide, half mile deep Rosemont open pit copper mine south of Tucson, Arizona. Gave an update and answered questions.

Sent three PARA Board Members to the Western Mining Action Network conference at the Apache Gold Resort and Casino in San Carlos, Arizona where the theme was Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Protecting Water, Traditional Cultures, and Landscapes in a Changing Climate.

Attendance at the Patagonia Town council meetings and workshop.

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.

Through the courtesy of a local pilot we were able to get a birds eye view of the Arizona Mining Inc mineral exploration site. The flight enabled us to take photos and videos of the roads and drill pads cut into the landscape.

Participated in Patagonia Trails Day and EARTHfest.

Sponsored a raffle for one of Robert “Shoofly” Shufelt’s prints, “Out to Prowl Pastures,” a framed size 29.5” x 24.25”, signed, and numbered lithograph. Robert “Shoofly” Shufelt has been drawing Western art since 1975. With immense talent and superb artistry, his work depicts the true American West, which can only come from years in the saddle as a working cowboy.