

FC012215

PUBLIC HEARING
INTENT TO ISSUE A
CLASS III UNDERGROUND INJECTION CONTROL AREA PERMIT FOR
FLORENCE COPPER, INC.
Florence, Arizona
January 22, 2015
7:00 p.m.

REPORTED BY:
DIANE DONOHO, RPR
Certified Reporter
Certificate No. 50691

PREPARED FOR:
(ASCII/CERTIFIED COPY)

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1 PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS, taken at 7:00 p.m. on
2 Thursday, January 22, 2015, at the Florence High School Gym,
3 1000 South Main Street, Florence, Arizona, before Diane Donoho,
4 a Certified Reporter, Certificate No. 50691, in and for the
5 State of Arizona.

6

7

PUBLIC HEARING OFFICER:

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9 Beatrice Wong
10 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, California 94105

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Florence, Arizona
Thursday, January 22, 2015
7:00 p.m.

MS. WONG: welcome and good evening, everyone. The public hearing is now in session. Okay. As the Mayor said, my name is Beatrice Wong, and I am from the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9 in San Francisco, the public hearing officer for this hearing. You'll have an opportunity to make oral comments after I explain how the hearing will proceed. Just so you know, written information about the Class III UIC Permit that we're taking comments on today is at the registration table which is to my right against the wall. The bathrooms and exits, which you came in, are also to the right.

The Mayor has already introduced my colleagues from the EPA. So I won't reintroduce them to you. There are five of them here as well as our court reporter who is Diane Donoho. So she is a certified court reporter. She'll be producing a written record of tonight's hearing. And so we ask that you please speak clearly and slowly so that the court reporter can

21 understand you and record your comments accurately. Because
22 it's difficult for the court reporter to transcribe multiple
23 voices, we ask that you refrain from speaking while another
24 person is speaking. And the acoustics in this gymnasium also
25 makes it a little bit difficult for her to hear when people are

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1 speaking. So I really do appreciate if you would cooperate and
2 let one person speak at a time.

3 The purpose of the hearing is for the EPA to obtain
4 your oral and written comments. EPA will not be providing
5 responses to your comments today during this hearing. EPA's
6 responses to your comments will be in our final decision on
7 the UIC Permit. They'll be addressed there.

8 This hearing is a formal legal proceeding. Your
9 written and oral comments will be part of EPA's official record
10 on this matter. EPA will consider all your oral and written
11 comments related to the proposed action when it makes its final
12 permit decision for the project. You can submit oral comments,
13 written comments, or both. If you'd like to submit prepared
14 written documents or fill out a comment form while you're here
15 today, you're free to do so. There's a table with forms and a
16 box for you to submit those written comments today if you'd
17 like to. Otherwise written comments can be made to the EPA.
18 They just have to be postmarked on or before March 16, 2015.
19 And written comments can be also be submitted by email which
20 just also need to be submitted before midnight on March 16. So
21 by 11:59 p.m. You can find EPA's address on the information
22 sheet that is located at the registration table.

23 About my role today at the hearings, it's really
24 just to facilitate this public hearing process to make sure

25 that everyone who wishes to speak has an equal opportunity to

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1 do so. I actually have no involvement with making a decision
2 on -- reviewing your comments or making a decision on this
3 permit. My job is solely to just make sure this hearing runs
4 smoothly.

5 As I said, there is a registration over to my right
6 against the wall. You don't need to register in order to
7 attend the hearing. However, if you'd like to have notice of
8 EPA's final permit decision on the project, you can sign in on
9 the registration log, and we'll be sure to give you that
10 notice.

11 If you wish make oral comments at today's hearing,
12 please fill out a speaker request form. I know many of you
13 have already done so. It's also located at the registration
14 table. Please write your name on the form legible so the
15 court reporter can rely on your form to have the correct
16 spelling of your name.

17 I will call out names on the speaker request form
18 in the order that they are received. When called, please step
19 up to the microphone that's provided. There is a podium right
20 here in the middle. And speaking into to the microphone will
21 ensure that the attendees and the court reporter can hear you.

22 Before stating your comment I'll just ask that you
23 state your name for the record. You should note that your
24 comments as well as your name will appear as part of EPA's
25 official record.

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1 what I'm going to do is initially limit speakers to
2 3 minutes. Various timekeepers will be keeping time today.

3 The time starts when you speak, and the timer will hold up a
4 yellow card when you have 1 minute left and then a red card
5 when your time is up.

6 If you have additional comments when the time is
7 up, you can submit additional comments in writing to us, and
8 those comments will be treated as the same as any oral
9 comments that you make. If you're not in the room when I call
10 your name, I will place your speaker request form at the
11 bottom off the pile and call your name after all the speakers
12 that I have in this pile have been called and had a chance to
13 speak.

14 A copy of today's transcript will be posted on
15 EPA's website for this matter, and it's also available for
16 inspection at our offices in San Francisco. If you wish to
17 purchase an official copy of the transcript, you can make
18 arrangements with the court reporter following the hearing.

19 Okay. So let's begin the public comment portion of
20 the hearing, and I'm going to call the first six speakers to
21 the podium to come up front. There are chairs in the front
22 for you to come down and sit in. So you can wait to speak.
23 I'll call six speakers at a time.

24 Okay. Kelly Norton, Xavier Ortega, James Stephens,
25 John Anderson, Chip Jackson, and Tom Rankin.

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1 COMMENTS

2 BY KELLY NORTON:

3 For the record my name is Kelly Norton, and I am
4 the president of the Arizona Mining Association. I want to
5 thank the EPA for the opportunity to speak on behalf of
6 Florence Copper.

7 The Arizona Mining Association represents 22 mining
8 companies currently active in the state of Arizona. In 2012
9 our industry had a \$4.8 billion economic impact. 65 percent
10 of U.S. copper production came from the Arizona mines.
11 \$500 million were paid in state and local government taxes.
12 We employed 52,100 people. The average wage in the mining
13 industry is \$99,500 which is double the average wage in other
14 industries in Arizona. In Arizona we need to get projects
15 like Florence Copper through the permitting phase so that we
16 can add more of these high paying jobs.

17 In addition to job creation it is important to note
18 that Florence Copper will spend an estimated \$208 million of
19 capital improvements. They're expected to generate over \$468
20 million in Arizona state and local reviews and state land
21 trust royalties, \$68 million directly going to the Town of
22 Florence, \$33 million directly to Pinal County.

23 Mining provides us with essential resources we need
24 in our everyday life, and at the rate technology is moving and
25 the need for copper is increasing, we need to open more copper

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1 mines so we don't become dependent on other countries. Since
2 the United States became a nation, it has encouraged science
3 and innovation. As a result, the United States has been the
4 birthplace of some of the world's greatest inventions
5 including the airplane, internet, microchip, cell phone,
6 refrigerator, personal computer, LCD and LED technology,
7 airing conditioning, electric motor, ATM, and many more. All
8 of these great inventions need copper.

9 Because of the advancement of technology, mining
10 too has evolved from small and simple operations to large and
11 complex mining and processing systems that employ the latest

12 in engineering technology. The environmental impacts of
13 mining have also evolved through time. A better scientific
14 understanding of the environmental impacts of mining coupled
15 with great advances in mining and environmental technologies
16 have enabled modern miners to better predict, plan for, and
17 prevent or minimize protection adverse environmental impacts.

18 The in situ mining process is another innovative
19 use of technological advancement which is sweeping across our
20 industry and is the process by which Florence Copper will be
21 mined. Ore deposits cannot be moved, and we shouldn't fear
22 the advancement of technology which will bring the ore out of
23 the ground with minimal ground disturbance. It's important to
24 understand that today's mining is not what it was a hundred
25 years ago. There have been more research completed on each

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1 mine site and process, and there are more rules and
2 regulations which mining companies follow before a project
3 gets off the ground. Florence Copper has done their due
4 diligence in these areas, and we have every confidence that
5 the United States Environmental Protection Agency is providing
6 a thorough and fair review of the Florence Copper project
7 according to their standards. Thank you.

8

9

COMMENTS

10 BY XAVIER ORTEGA:

11 My name is Xavier Ortega, and I'm the chief
12 executive officer of BJ Cecil Trucking. We're a family-owned
13 business here in the state of Arizona for over 50 years, and
14 we're a liquid bulk and dry bulk HAZMAT carrier with one of
15 our primary commodities hauling is sulfuric acid. And I'm

16 here just to talk a little bit about the importance of
17 sulfuric acid in the state and how safe it is to transport and
18 how important of a commodity it is in the state. Not only is
19 sulfuric acid a commodity that is used in the mining industry,
20 but it is a commodity that is used by power plants, by water
21 treatment plants, and by the farming community.

22 On a daily basis we, as a company, transport
23 hundreds of loads of sulfuric acid on all the major highways
24 in the state of Arizona and the southwest. And we're not the
25 only carrier. So it's moved every day, and it also goes down

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1 Highway 79. It's already in this community, and it's been in
2 this community for decades.

3 We have very strict regulations by the Federal
4 Motor Carriers Association for the offloading, unloading, and
5 the treatment of any spills. And I can assure you that, given
6 the long history that we have as an organization in this
7 community, that sulfuric acid is handled in the highest safety
8 standards and the transportation of it to this project with
9 Florence Copper would be adhered to in all aspects.

10 So we are here in favor of the Florence Copper
11 Project, and that's all I have.

12

13

COMMENTS

14 BY JAMES STEPHENS:

15 Good afternoon. My name is James Stephens, born
16 and raised here in Arizona. I've been running around here for
17 the last 45 years. Florence has been home to friends and
18 family and the like. I've got -- my brother works for the
19 Department of Corrections here. I've been in friends'
20 weddings right here in Florence. One of the things that I do

21 is I work for a drilling company. And we started this company
22 about four years ago, but I've been in the industry 25 years.

23 One of the people that helped start this company is
24 John G. He's a fourth generation family here and member. He
25 has a son, does fifth generation, also works for a drilling

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1 company. And one of the things we do in this drilling
2 industry is we travel around a lot. There's not drilling real
3 close to where you live most of the time. We're always on the
4 road, away from our families quite a bit. So what we'd really
5 like to do is have a project that would be close to home. We
6 have over half a dozen people that work for us that live in
7 Florence that would be home more often.

8 In the drilling industry it's a hard blue-color
9 job. I started in 1989. You don't have to have a college
10 degree to do this type of work, a higher education. But you
11 can make good money, and you can be head of household, and you
12 can raise a good family. And if we could have more local
13 people working for us in the drilling industry in the local
14 area, they could be home every night, they can be home on
15 weekends, they could be there for their kids' football games
16 or baseball games, they could go roping. There's a lot of
17 pros to having drilling closer to town for a drilling company
18 like us and have more local people work for a drilling
19 company.

20 So with that said we're in support of it. And
21 thank you.

22 MS. WONG: I'm just going to ask that people refrain
23 from clapping or anything. I appreciate that you want to show
24 your support, but let's just keep the clapping and other

25 things -- let's not do that. Thanks.

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1 COMMENTS

2 BY JOHN ANDERSON:

3 My name is John Anderson. I'm proud to say that I
 4 live at 2631 North Presidential Drive here in Florence. I'm a
 5 member of the Florence Town Council. Johnson Utility well
 6 that supplies water to my home is 600 feet deep. That well is
 7 less than 2 miles from the Florence Copper site. And
 8 according to the EPA notice, the PTF site depths are going to
 9 be between 450 and 1200 feet. Our well is definitely in the
 10 same zone as the PTF. Also according to the EPA data, it
 11 states clearly that in situ mining will not be allowed in the
 12 aquifer that is currently being used to supply drinking water.

13 Florence Copper has paid for several economic
 14 studies that claim that the Town and Florence Unified School
 15 District would receive revenues from the project on the copper
 16 production at the proposed mine. This is simply not true.
 17 The only revenue that the Town will get and the School
 18 District will be the property taxes that we're currently
 19 getting off the property. In fact the Town and the School
 20 District will probably receive more taxes if this were
 21 developed into residential community, and it would not affect
 22 our drinking water. Florence -- any dollars that are raised
 23 through the royalties and paid to the State Land Department
 24 would go toward the Pioneer Home up in Prescott or to the
 25 Department of Corrections. Again, no dollars would go to

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1 Florence or the School District.

2 I recently met with the mayor of Miami. He told me
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3 that he owned a home in Miami and one in Mesa. He moved his
4 wife and daughter to Mesa so his daughter could get a good
5 education because the Miami School District is so far behind
6 that they don't have the money.

7 The EPA has been involved in testing on the site
8 with the previous owner, BHP, in 1966. The data indicates
9 that the PLS produced from the magma Florence in situ product
10 contained very high levels of the radio nucleides, and they
11 were above accepted standards.

12 The Town of Florence opposes this mine. We want
13 clean water. Clean water is absolutely necessary for the
14 growth of our town. You know, this area, when BHP did their
15 testing back in 1966, was open desert. BHP owned a lot of the
16 land. It was open between Florence and Queen Creek. Now
17 today there's over 80,000 people living in this area. So this
18 is a definite danger to our people. Thank you.

19

20

COMMENTS

21 BY CHIP JACKSON:

22 Good afternoon. My name is Chip Jackson. I'm
23 president of Aquarian Tec. We're a resource recovery
24 reclamation company working both in the fracking of oil wells
25 and recovery of oil and water out of produced water. About a

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1 year and a half ago we decided we may need to do something
2 other than that, and luckily we did. So we worked on the
3 mining industry.

4 We are basically trying to get zero affluent out of
5 what mining things come out of the ground. We're working on
6 taking the calcium out and producing products that are viable.

7 we're also looking at other recovery things that are already
8 in the in situ mining.

9 I've worked 45 years in the food industry. We in
10 the food industry have to have zero discharge on many of our
11 products especially in the dairy industry. I'm taking that
12 technology and moving it into the mining industry to try to do
13 the same type things.

14 Florence, we've gone worth for about a year. We're
15 working on projects that will help them recover as much as
16 possible so there's less going to any landfills, any fill
17 areas within the site. Their technology is wonderful. Having
18 worked with other mines in this area that are open pit, the in
19 situ process is so much better. It has virtually no
20 degradation of the land, and it would be a shame for this not
21 to go forward. Thank you.

22

COMMENTS

23
24 BY TOM RANKIN:

25 Good afternoon, folks. Again, thank you very much

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1 for coming. We really appreciate it. I'm glad to see we have
2 a turnout of people from both sides of the issue here tonight
3 because what we're talking about tonight is highly important
4 to the Town Council and the Town of Florence because it would
5 directly impact the quality of life of our residents and the
6 growth of our community.

7 I want to thank the EPA for hosting this open house
8 and this public hearing. I have confidence that the EPA will
9 listen with an open mind and gain a further understanding of
10 what Florence Copper is proposing and why the Town and its
11 residents know this project is bad for Florence.

12 We have been trying to send Florence Copper a
13 message for five years now, and that message is no. I'm
14 hoping that, after the EPA has the opportunity to hear all the
15 information, that they would join the Town in telling Florence
16 Copper no.

17 This project is in the geographic center of town
18 inside the town limits. It is not near the town as the EPA
19 says in its Statement of Basis and Public Notice of Intent and
20 as Florence Copper has stated in the media and apparently to
21 you. Don't be fooled by Florence Copper's misleading
22 propaganda.

23 Florence Copper is asking you to take the first
24 step in a process that will ultimately allow it to inject
25 massive quantities of sulfuric acid in our water supply. The

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1 old test wells from BHP's test facility are still out there
2 and still showing signs of residual acid from the three-month
3 test in the 1990's. Florence Copper says it will be different
4 this time, and they are right. It will be much worse.

5 Once the sulfuric acid solution pollutes our water
6 supply, we believe that it is going to cause health risks for
7 our residents including our kids and our seniors. Property
8 values will drop out of the sky, and any efforts for the Town
9 to attract businesses, jobs, and more residents to Florence
10 will turn to dust. The best we can hope for the water will be
11 only stink like rotten eggs. I don't trust Florence Copper.

12 They tried to fool us, and when that didn't work,
13 they tried to bully us. And they have no shame, no respect
14 for the truth, and no respect for the citizens of our
15 community. They stopped calling it a sulfuric acid solution

16 and started calling it vinegar-type solution. Then they
17 called the sulfuric acid solution lemon juice. Would you like
18 some sulfuric acid on your salad or in your iced tea? No.
19 Call it what you want. It's still sulfuric acid, and we don't
20 want it in our water, and I don't think you would either.

21 They told us the money raised in royalties paid to
22 the state would support education. It doesn't.

23 Let me conclude by saying thank you, again, for
24 coming. We really appreciate it. We hope that, when you go
25 back to San Francisco, you make your decision, your technical

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1 knowledge that you'll come back with no to the test project,
2 no to contaminating our water supply, no to putting our
3 community at risk, and no to Florence Copper. Thank you.

4 THE HEARING OFFICER: I really do ask everyone to
5 refrain from clapping after each speaker, and we can just keep
6 this moving. Thank you.

7 The next speakers are Dave Malton, Mary Poulton,
8 Jeff Masterson, Steve Hildebrand, Rodney Lawson, and Doretta
9 Allison.

10

11 COMMENTS

12 BY DAVID MALTON:

13 Hello. My name is David Malton, and I live on over
14 two acres of land on the border of Florence. I have my own
15 water well that I use for my drinking water, my pets, and my
16 livestock, and I have no issues with the Florence Copper
17 Project. I'm here tonight to ask the EPA to finalize this
18 permit and to help the majority of the people that live here
19 to have a better economic future.

20 According to citydata.com most of these people are
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21 around the age of 35. We don't see a lot of that group here
22 tonight. The people against this project are here today
23 probably don't realize that they are dumping more sulfuric
24 acid down their drains at home into our wastewater system and
25 aquifer every day with the use of products like dish washing

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1 soaps -- Palmolive, Finish, and Sunlight -- which is only a
2 fraction of a thousand household products that contain higher
3 concentrations of sulfuric acid and yet they have never even
4 thought about this twice.

5 Because of the propaganda that has been pushed out
6 by what I believe to be special interest groups in our area,
7 you are going to hear from conspiracy theorists here tonight
8 who have been misinformed, misled, or have not really taken
9 the time to study the process being used. These people seem
10 to not understand that, although the project uses sulfuric
11 acid, the same acid used in their common household products,
12 that it's 99.5 percent water and only .5 percent sulfuric
13 acid, which is about the strength of household vinegar.

14 Our farmers mix sulfuric acid with irrigation water
15 to help the Ph of our soil. They use a lot of it, usually
16 more than 50 gallons a month per farmer. It does not hurt the
17 roots of the plant, it does not hurt our aquifers, and it's
18 been used safely since the 1800's.

19 We know it's a fact in our society that the elderly
20 people are preyed upon and taken advantage of every day, and I
21 think that's what the propaganda here has done to our elderly
22 here today. How many of our senior citizens actually
23 purchased their red shirts? How many of them actually get
24 bussed around for free by companies with agendas, by

25 companies, real estate agencies that will benefit by building

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1 golf courses and HOA communities?

2 Congress just gave 2400 acres of Native American
3 land for an open-pit mine not far away from here. The
4 rainwater and flash flooding will go through that area and
5 push all those chemicals down to us in our water system.
6 where were these red shirts at that EPA meeting? Please keep
7 these facts in mind as you make your decision today. Thank
8 you.

9 MS. WONG: Please refrain from clapping.

10

11 COMMENTS

12 BY MARY POULTON:

13 My name is Mary Poulton. I'm here as a 32-year
14 citizen of the State of Arizona. I'm a professor of mining
15 engineering at the University of Arizona and director of the
16 Lowell Institute for Mineral Resources. I have a background
17 in hydrology, geophysics, sustainable resource development in
18 addition to law and public health. I'm here speaking as an
19 informed citizen, not as an official of the University. I'm
20 not a consultant to Florence Copper. I have not done research
21 for the company. I have no financial stake in the company.

22 In a previous career I worked for the U.S. Army
23 Corps of Engineers and got to sit on your side of the table
24 and got to appreciate public hearings and when emotions run
25 high. But at the end of the day our regulatory decisions were

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1 based on best available science and engineering.

2 I've been familiar with this copper deposit for
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3 nearly 30 years. We now have an opportunity for a 21st
4 Century approach to mining without large scale surface
5 disturbances. The research has gone into this for many
6 decades now. In situ mining is technically feasible, and this
7 deposit is perhaps the most perfect deposit for in situ
8 recovery. Engineers and geologists have studied this deposit
9 for a long time, and the technology available to model and
10 monitor solution flows is highly advanced. I know this
11 because I've also started a technology company that has very
12 advanced technologies to do this. There are hundreds, if not
13 thousands, of successful projects around the world that
14 control flow of solutions within well fields.

15 Florence Copper Project is not about mining in the
16 traditional sense. It's about control of subsurface solutions
17 to extract copper. It can be a game changer to produce
18 critical materials for this country in the most sustainable
19 way possible.

20 Sustainable resource development pillars are to
21 balance environmental stewardship, social responsibility,
22 economic growth, and good government's capacity. Mining
23 converts natural capital to other forms of capital that allow
24 the economic growth that we so desperately need in this state.
25 The advantage of this copper deposit after the copper is

♀

1 extracted that the site cannot just be reclaimed but restored
2 to a higher value. This deposit can produce copper at the
3 lowest cost, the lowest water use, the lowest energy use, and
4 the lowest surface and subsurface impact. If we care about
5 the environment, we have to seriously consider being able to
6 use this deposit.

7 From a technical and sustainability perspective, I
8 strongly believe, based on my years of research and study,
9 that this project is technically feasible, environmentally
10 safe, and beneficial to this community. I have never spoken
11 at a public hearing in support of a specific mining project,
12 but I feel so strongly about the technical feasibility of this
13 project that I couldn't sit quiet and let misinformation be
14 propagated. Thank you.

15 LARRY MCCONNELL: Good evening. My name is same
16 Larry Michael McConnell, and I am a resident and homeowner in
17 the Magic Ranch of Florence Copper, I'm here to speak about how
18 I'm so vehemently opposed to this project.

19 MS. WONG: Are you Jeff Masterson?

20 LARRY MCCONNELL: Larry Michael McConnell.

21 MS. WONG: We did not call your name yet, sir.

22 LARRY MCCONNELL: My wife said my name was spoken.
23 So I came down.

24
25

♀

1 COMMENTS

2 BY JEFF MASTERSON:

3 Good evening. My name is Jeff Masterson. I am an
4 honest man earning an honest living in the copper mining
5 industry. I'm here tonight to speak out in favor of this
6 project. I am a native Arizonan born in the town of Prescott
7 and raised in the southeast valley of Tempe and Chandler.

8 My advocacy for this project, as well as all
9 copper mining in general, comes from my personal experiences
10 as well as all realistic knowledge and understanding of how
11 copper is safely produced and how it is utilized in all of

12 our lives. My experience started over 30 years ago when a
13 small family-owned business in Tempe decided to hire me.
14 This small family-owned company was one of many that relied
15 on the success and continued growth of the copper mining
16 industry. This success was paramount since all the
17 employees, including myself, had families to raise.

18 Since then I have been safely working in and
19 around all of the copper mines throughout Arizona and New
20 Mexico for the past 23 years. In this time I have
21 recognized that the number one goal of these mining
22 companies first is safety for everyone that comes onto the
23 mine site and, second, absolute environmental stewardship.
24 Our copper producers today are extremely conscientious when
25 it comes to the environment. They have large environmental

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1 departments dedicated to protecting all aspects of the
2 environment. This includes water, land, air, wildlife, and
3 people.

4 There are literally tens of thousands of local
5 individuals, families, businesses, in some cases whole towns
6 that rely on the safe production of copper not to mention
7 300 million of us Americans that are benefiting from it
8 right now. I was born in a hospital almost 50 years ago,
9 and let me tell you, March in Prescott gets pretty cold.
10 Thanks to copper mining I was fortunate to have creature
11 comforts like lights and heat for my short stay. When I was
12 ready to go home, my mother put me in an automobile. None
13 of that would have been possible if companies like Florence
14 Copper weren't able to locate, permit, extract, and produce
15 copper. So I ask you a question. How are you benefiting

16 from copper production? Thank you very much.

17

18

COMMENTS

19 BY STEVE HILDEBRAND:

20 Hi. My name is Steve Hildebrand. I'm a mining
21 engineer and graduate from University of Arizona in '74, and
22 I've had over 40 years of experience in mining. Now, I've
23 spent about over 30 years in situ leaching. I've done
24 leaching in Zambia, in Chile, Arizona, especially Arizona
25 between Florence and Miami and Salmon well. So I want to

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1 speak from experience of operating in situ leaching and
2 explain to you problems, if there are problems, and how it
3 works.

4 In situ leaching at salmon wells started out as an
5 experiment. They had several goals in mind. Can we handle
6 acidic solutions? Can we get copper to migrate into solutions
7 and then pump it into the surface and let it collect
8 underground? So these things were technical issues that
9 were brought up. And this worked at Salmon well. We produced
10 a technology at Salmon well called well-to-well leaching which
11 is exactly what's going to be used here at Florence. And in
12 fact, the people that were working at Salmon well worked for
13 Magma Copper Company which bought Florence from I guess it was
14 Continental Oil, and they started research here at Florence.

15 Someone earlier said that the benefits of the
16 Florence property are many. They have the millidarcies that
17 are absolutely required to be able to do in situ leaching,
18 somewhere in the neighborhood of 150 to 200 millidarcies.
19 They have the isolation which is essential when you're talking
20 about aquifers from the surface down. There's a barrier

21 between -- from the mineralized zone to anything on the
22 surface.

23 Besides the high permeability they do have the
24 copper, but the copper is a low grade copper. And there is no
25 other way to mine this copper except by in situ leaching. You

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1 couldn't afford to put an open pit, and I don't think anyone
2 wants an open pit in the middle of Florence.

3 Okay. Lastly I'd like to talk about the
4 environmental and safety issues. I've worked a long time in
5 in situ. I've never had a lost time accident due to in situ
6 and the only accidents I've seen even have to do with
7 underground miners building sumps. So this is an extremely
8 safe operation for the people that are employed in the in situ
9 mine. Besides being safe, one of the criteria that we measure
10 metric that we measure a copper mine is how many pounds of
11 copper you get per manshift. It's just 10 times what you can
12 get from any other mining method. This is a practical kind of
13 mining method for Florence.

14 Now, is it cost effective? That's the last issue.
15 And when I was at Salmon well, that was the first thing that
16 we were looking at. Can you get the copper mobilized and out?
17 You can. The last year of in situ operations at Salmon well
18 in 1998 we produced over 40 million pounds at 37 cents a
19 pound. Thank you.

20

21 COMMENTS

22 BY RODNEY LAWSON:

23 My name is Rodney Lawson. I am a citizen. In
24 1970, July of that year, President Nixon signed Reorganization

25 Act Number 3 and established the EPA. In December of that

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1 year William Ruckelshaus became the first administrator. In
 2 one of his very first speeches he said an environmental ethic
 3 is needed. Each of us must measure the impact of our own
 4 decisions and actions in the quality of air, water, and soil
 5 of this nation.

6 Fellow citizens of Florence and members of the
 7 panel, I submit to you that Florence Copper has measured the
 8 impact of their decisions and that it is a safe decision.
 9 Florence Copper has conducted all of the testing, studying,
 10 and planning required by the highest authority in the country,
 11 the EPA. The EPA has done their job in studying and
 12 scrutinizing every detail of the in situ process. The
 13 brightest environmental scientists and engineers have
 14 determined this is sound science. This is only the beginning
 15 of the EPA involvement. From here forward there will be
 16 constant and thorough monitoring throughout the life of the
 17 site and beyond.

18 Since 1974 with the passing of the Safe Water
 19 Drinking Act, the EPA has been setting the standard for our
 20 drinking water. Does anybody here really believe that the EPA
 21 would issue an underground injection permit if this process
 22 wasn't safe? This is the same agency that banned DDT and
 23 forced the cleanup of the Hudson River and the Valley of the
 24 Drums along with many other sites all over the country.

25 We the citizens of Florence should not be

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1 questioning the issuing of this permit. Instead we should be
 2 challenging the EPA to continue with their oversight as

3 tenaciously and thoroughly as they have in the past at so many
4 other sites. Knowing this, when we make a cup of coffee or
5 fill a pool for our grandkids, that our government is at work
6 protecting us.

7 Florence has a long history of family and
8 friendship. We come together in good times and bad. I
9 believe it is time for us to come together as a whole to
10 support a new phase in the future of Florence. We can call
11 the past few years growing pains, no recriminations, no finger
12 pointing, no name calling.

13 Mayor Rankin and members of the Town Council, with
14 this permit I'm asking you to reconsider your opinion of
15 Florence Copper. Voice your approval for the PTF. If it
16 doesn't work, the EPA shuts them down. If it does work, think
17 of the benefit to our town, our schools, and our future. It
18 is time to act like the Florence of family and friendship that
19 used to be. A divided Florence will not survive. Florence
20 Copper has an environmental ethic. Let's hold them to it.
21 Thank you for your time.

22

23 COMMENTS

24 BY DORETTA ALLISON:

25 Good evening. My name is Doretta Allison, and I am

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1 a senior citizen who lives -- happens to live here in
2 Florence. And I am just an ordinary citizen. I don't have
3 any technical backgrounds or anything, but I do manage two
4 businesses on Main Street here in Florence, even as the senior
5 citizen. I am a real estate agent and have practiced in this
6 area for the last eight years. I have over the last few

7 years, as this has been an issue, attended almost every public
8 hearing, every meeting. I've gone online and researched
9 everything I could find. I've read the reports. And I have
10 not found anything that have caused me to be overly concerned.
11 I believe that all the agencies that have been involved have
12 done their due diligence as well as you would do. And if all
13 the permissions are given, I think Florence Copper should have
14 the right to start the testing.

15 I have heard that one of the concerns about
16 Florence Copper Project has been that it will negatively
17 affect the values of our homes. I've been a realtor for 35
18 years. I've seen all kinds of things put up around places
19 where we thought that it would hurt the houses. But where
20 there is a demand, the prices go up. We don't have a demand
21 here because we don't have jobs. And so when I meet with a
22 buyer, I disclose that the Copper Project is in the works here
23 and suggest that they go on the tour, that they go online,
24 that they do all the research that they possibly can. And I
25 have not had one buyer back out because of Florence Copper.

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1 However, I've had several buyers who backed out because of the
2 water that we currently have.

3 An even larger reason that the property values
4 would not increase has to do with the lack of jobs. Whether
5 we're concerned about home values or needing more businesses,
6 we need people who have good jobs to move here. Jobs bring
7 housing, taxes, and business to the community, and we
8 certainly need all of them.

9 I have heard concerns about the water quality, and
10 I certainly have that too. But I don't know anyone in Anthem
11 or San Tan valley who actually drink the tap water right now.

12 And most of the residents I know are far more concerned about
13 the quality of the water we have now than what would happen
14 with Florence Copper. I have grandchildren who live in
15 Anthem, and I certainly would not endorse anything I thought
16 would ever hurt them.

17 I believe Florence Copper could be beneficial to
18 our community and hope that it will be able to proceed. I've
19 read some propaganda that Florence Copper has never
20 contributed anything to Florence. However, they've given out
21 more than \$150,000 in grants, scholarships, and contributions
22 and donations to community efforts. And they've not made a
23 penny yet. So I would like to see the project go forth.
24 Thank you.

25 MS. WONG: Al Kerestes, Jim England, Merritt Strunk,

1 Denise Kollert, and Mark David.

2

3

COMMENTS

4 BY AL KERESTES:

5 My name is Al Kerestes. I reside here in Anthem.
6 We have been debating this project well over three plus years
7 now in spite of other pressing issues the Town should address.
8 I have listened to the opposition's message. It will
9 contaminate our drinking water, in sit copper recovery is
10 unsafe, property values will decrease, the land should be used
11 for housing and parks for the general plan, the mine will be
12 in the middle of the town, et cetera, et cetera. It's
13 never-ending. The most loudly preached, of course, our water
14 supply will be contaminated and the in situ recovery method is
15 unsafe.

16 The opposition still continues to use flawed data,
17 half truths, and scare tactics. Their goal, stop Florence
18 Copper, do whatever it takes. Some residents and perhaps
19 members of the Town Council opposed to the mine, instead of
20 doing their homework or looking to the EPA and ADEQ as
21 non-biased experts dealing strictly in facts, choose to
22 believe the propaganda put out in our monthly utility bills
23 and quarterly Town newsletters. Those leading the opposition
24 have done their homework well. They remind me of slick
25 politicians. If you tell the people an untruth convincingly

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1 long enough, it goes from fiction to fact.

2 This piece of property sat idle for many years. It
3 appears the Town, aware a large copper deposit lay beneath the
4 surface, made no effort to acquire it. It wasn't until Curis
5 Resources purchased this site and began the task of applying
6 for permits the Town woke up. Obviously upset and knowing a
7 Canadian company is here to extract the Town's copper, hence
8 the roadblocks. Bottom line, the Town and other opposition
9 groups missed a golden opportunity, and they know it. You can
10 bet the interest groups leading this charge to stop the mine
11 would think differently if they owned the property. Would
12 they leave copper worth billions of dollars in the ground? I
13 think not. If the Town owned the site, trucks would have been
14 rolling down the highway loaded with copper plate years ago,
15 and we would not be here tonight holding another public
16 hearing.

17 I along with many others here tonight believe the
18 EPA and the ADEQ with their teams of hydrologists, geologists,
19 soil and mining engineers, chemists and environmentalists have
20 done their due diligence, reviewed every aspect of Florence

21 Copper's proposed production test facility and find it
22 presents a sound, safe operation.

23 In closing, this area of Pinal County needs
24 Florence Copper to go forward. It will bring much needed
25 jobs, tax revenues to the town, county, and state; a catalyst

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1 to spur business growth in downtown Florence; bring new
2 families to the area resulting in increased real estate sales
3 and property values; a win for everyone. I and my fellow
4 supporters ask the EPA, based on their sound review, grant the
5 underground injection control permit to Florence Copper.
6 Thanks for listening.

7

8

COMMENTS

9 BY JIM ENGLAND:

10 Q. I'm Jim England, and I'm a past mayor of Florence.
11 My wife and I were born and raised in Florence, and our
12 families have been in Florence area since the 1800's. The
13 original copper deposit on that property was bought by Conoco,
14 and they bought it from my father, and the original thing was
15 to put in an open pit mine, and nobody had any problem with
16 that. Now they want to put in a mine that you can't even see,
17 and everybody is up in arms. And this mine wants to give I
18 don't know how many jobs and money. The economic value of it
19 would be tremendous to the school district, to the town, to
20 the county.

21 I live three miles downriver from the proposed
22 site, and I live right on the river. I have a well. I have
23 no problem with worrying about my water. You've all heard
24 about the three C's in Arizona. Well, Florence has three

25 C's also, cattle, cotton, and convicts. They need to add

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1 the fourth C and add copper to it also. I would strongly
2 support this project. Thank you.

3

4 COMMENTS

5 BY MERRITT STRUNK:

6 My name is Merritt Strunk. I'm a resident here in
7 Florence also, 3325 North Riverside Drive. I strongly support
8 the project also. I trust the EPA will permit them to
9 progress with the testing stage. And there are some strong
10 reasons.

11 I grew up on a farm in Iowa, and I remember, as a
12 young grade schooler, that we put in a tile in our fields to
13 drain the water out of the wet spots, and that tile would drop
14 right down into a creek. And in the summertime we would go
15 down to that creek, cup our hands in under that tile and drink
16 that water. The day came when my dad said, "Don't drink that
17 water anymore, kids. It will poison you." What changed? It
18 was not an in situ process. It was the farm chemicals that we
19 started spreading on the fields. It was weed killers, insect
20 killers, and fertilizers injected into the ground became too
21 dangerous for us to drink that water.

22 What I've observed -- and that was my main concern
23 when I heard about Florence Copper. I wanted to make sure
24 they weren't doing the same thing to the water that my kids or
25 my grandkids could be drinking. And the more I studied, the

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1 better it looked, the safer it was. And then I met a man by
2 the name of Dan Johnson who's a hydrologist who not only

3 watches over the purity of the water but also has helped clean
4 up projects in other states like California. I think maybe
5 they're doing it right, and I think maybe I can trust people
6 that I've watched close up and in living color respond with
7 kindness, politeness, and facts to people saying they were
8 trying to poison their grandkids and one woman said I don't
9 want my child to die. I happen to know these people drink the
10 same water, live in the same community, and they're good
11 people. I support the project. I trust others will too.
12 Thank you for listening.

13

14

COMMENTS

15 BY DENISE KOLLERT:

16 Good afternoon. My name is Denise Kollert, and I
17 live in Florence, and I'm one of those senior citizens also.
18 I am speaking tonight in support of the Florence Copper
19 Project as I have many times in the past. I want to thank all
20 of you from the EPA who are here tonight being told by some
21 you don't know what you're doing by allowing this test project
22 to go forward.

23 I'm not going to tell you about the science of this
24 project, like some will do tonight, because that is your area
25 and all your colleagues' area of expertise. What I will say

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1 is I've done the tour. I've asked questions and gotten
2 answers that made sense to me. I went to the ADEQ's Open
3 House and Public Hearing and listened to people talk about
4 this project like they are tonight and will continue but don't
5 have a clue about what they're saying. That is because they
6 were given words to say without the knowledge of what they

7 were saying.

8 This is a test project. It's just that. You do a
9 test to figure out what may still need to be done to make this
10 project even more safe. We have to trust our government, you
11 folks, that will do what is in the best interest of the
12 people, or the whole process is a farce. I have that trust.
13 I have that trust in you and all the people that have asked
14 all their questions of the Florence Copper people.

15 Our town had one of the best hydrologists in the
16 country spending my tax dollars do a study of this project.
17 They completely ignored what this report said, and I don't
18 know why. I guess it was just because they didn't like the
19 results.

20 I have a question for everyone in this building
21 tonight who is against this test project. If one of the
22 developers who is fighting this project obtained this land
23 somehow, do you really think they would leave a copper deposit
24 worth billions in the ground and build over it? Not. This
25 fight I think is about the copper in the ground and who will

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1 recover it for profit, not about leaving it in the ground.

2

3

COMMENTS

4 BY MARK DAVIS:

5 Okay. Esteemed ladies and gentlemen of the panel,
6 my name is Mark Davis. I'm an engineer who's worked in the
7 mining field for most of his career. I'm very familiar with
8 the design, goals, and history of the Florence Copper Project.
9 Florence Copper is set to be a success.

10 The American public needs to be educated about the
11 facts and science of copper rather than frightened by outright

12 fabrications and willful ignorance. As a mining professional,
13 I'm happy to present these facts and science.

14 Florence Copper will create several jobs at the
15 company I work for in addition to the over 500 jobs it will
16 create in Pinal County. These are good paying jobs with
17 world-class benefits and the pride that comes from doing
18 useful work and being able to provide for a family. The
19 methods used to control groundwater for the region are proven.
20 The success of these techniques has been proven around the
21 world in open pit, underground, and in situ mining operations.
22 They exceed the most rigorous state, national, and
23 international standards.

24 Florence Copper is a mine built with our industry's
25 best, the best knowledge, the best safety controls, the

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1 greatest oversight ever given to a facility of this type.
2 Mining, as an industry, prides itself on reducing
3 environmental impact to a minimum, and Florence Copper is no
4 exception.

5 Copper is essential. Copper is the core of the
6 green economy. Without it no solar cells, no wind turbines,
7 no battery banks, no wiring, and no electrical motors. Copper
8 makes clean renewable energy possible. Copper is a patriotic
9 metal. From shell casings to radar systems, it enables us to
10 defend the freedom so many have fought and died for. American
11 copper has defended freedom since the Revolutionary war when
12 Paul Revere made copper sheathing and bolts for our fledgling
13 Navy.

14 At a time when so many jobs have been sent
15 overseas, do we want to send even more copper production into

16 the hands of hostile nations when we can have its benefits
 17 here at home? The answer is no, especially when the only
 18 things preventing us from supplying our own needs are scare
 19 tactics, pseudoscience, and fanaticism. Thank you for your
 20 time and attention.

21 MS. WONG: Alvin Wilson, Wilbur Freeman, Robert
 22 Mongrain, James Tchida, Rick Grinnel, Rita Maguire, and Stacy
 23 Gramazio.

24

25

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1 COMMENTS

2 BY ALVIN WILSON:

3 Thank you. My name is Alvin Wilson. I've lived
 4 down here at Magma Ranch part of Florence going on 70 years
 5 now. I've attended pert near all the meetings since we moved
 6 here, and I am very much in favor of the Florence Copper
 7 Project going ahead.

8 I've heard so many things from the opposition. I
 9 just -- I can't believe they can have their head in the sand
 10 that far. We even heard at one of the meetings one of the
 11 Council members got up and said, "The only thing worse than
 12 mining for copper was drilling for oil." You know, I'm sorry.
 13 I hate to tell them all that everything on this earth,
 14 including our bodies, have to come from this earth. And we
 15 have to be smart enough and figure out how we can get it, how
 16 we can use it, how we can take care of it. And that's what I
 17 think Florence Copper is trying to do in their little part of
 18 it, to make all of our lives better and easier.

19 You know, we hear on the television every day about
 20 things that we're doing to ruin the country, ruin the climate,

21 ruin the earth. And I don't know. I can't buy all of that
22 because, you know, supposing we are changing the climate?
23 well, who changed it back thousands or, as they choose to say,
24 millions of years ago? People weren't around then, but the
25 climate still changed, you know. I'm afraid we don't take

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1 that in consideration.

2 And yes, you know, we can quit enjoying the
3 benefits of things that come from the earth, which everything
4 does, but it would be a pretty sad life, you know. We could
5 quit burning fuel to produce energy. Could quit all of this
6 stuff as they say we could. But the bottom line is I believe,
7 if we're going to quit everything that could possibly be
8 detrimental, then we better take a long look at whether we
9 would like to go back to living in a cave or under a pile of
10 brush naked. And that's what the bottom line is. We have to
11 learn to take care of the earth, to work together, and use
12 what we were given in a productive way. And I think Florence
13 Copper is trying to do that. Thank you.

14

15 COMMENTS

16 BY WILBUR FREEMAN:

17 welcome to historic Florence. I want to first
18 thank the EPA for the time and effort they have put into the
19 permitting process. My name is Wilbur Freeman, and I am a
20 lifelong resident and a former mayor and council member of
21 Florence, and I continue to volunteer my time for the
22 betterment of this community.

23 Now, in my mind the issuance of the draft permit
24 just reaffirms that the in situ method of copper recovery is

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25 environmentally safe. ^{FC012215} It also reaffirms in my mind that the

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1 team at Florence Copper has the knowledge, experience, and
2 expertise to safely and efficiently operate this small-scale
3 production test facility. And in fact, you good people at the
4 EPA would not have issued the draft permit if you had any
5 evidence to support that the in situ process was not
6 environmentally safe. The fact that we are here this evening
7 participating in this public meeting signifies that this
8 project is moving forward and closer to startup. And that is
9 good news for the local, regional, and state economies and,
10 yes, the local school district.

11 As we all know, it is private investment, not
12 bigger government, that drives the economy. This project will
13 in fact create good paying, head of household jobs, and quite
14 frankly I have not seen a whole lot going on around here in
15 terms of new job creation. It is those private sector jobs
16 that will help support our local businesses and schools. In
17 fact, the revenues generated from this project that will
18 benefit our local businesses and schools are too significant
19 to ignore and pass up.

20 I have personally witnessed the continued support
21 for this project both locally and regionally. The support has
22 been nothing short of tremendous. And in fact all the polls
23 taken indicate that the majority of the residents and
24 businesses do support this project. The support is both
25 undeniable and undisputable.

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1 As a former elected official, I always try to
2 evaluate situations that are both practical, opportunistic,

3 and a good fit for the community. I get it. This project is
4 in fact good for Florence. It's about what's best for all of
5 us collectively. So I say let's get on with it.

6 My message to the EPA is to please issue the final
7 version of this permit after the public comment period, and
8 let's not let an opportunity of a lifetime slip right through
9 our fingers. If anything, the new jobs created by this
10 project will help stimulate the good growth that we all want.
11 The bottom line is that both the Copper Project and new
12 housing and commercial development can co-exist. Everyone
13 benefits.

14 In closing, I have a suggestion to everyone who may
15 want to learn more about the project, both for supporters, the
16 opposition, and even those on the fence who may be undecided.
17 Take the tour, come with an open mind, ask questions, get the
18 facts, and become informed. No one is going to twist your
19 arm. It's that simple. Thank you.

20

21 COMMENTS

22 BY ROBERT MONGRAIN:

23 Good evening. My name is Robert Mongrain. I'm a
24 geologist by education, and I work for an environmental
25 engineering and consulting firm. I want to thank you the EPA

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1 for the time to speak to you this evening.

2 Unfortunately the mining industry has a rather
3 large black eye from -- that dates back to the 1800's and the
4 practices that were in place at that time. However, the
5 environmental regulations that were promulgated that were
6 discussed earlier promulgated in the 1970's and into the

7 1980's provide significant safety net for companies to do
8 business that will not leave a legacy that we see from what
9 happened in the 1800's and early 1900's. As a matter of fact,
10 the regulations typically overlap so that there are additional
11 safeguards put in place.

12 The mining industry is one of the most highly
13 regulated industries in today's economy. The Draft UIC Permit
14 for Florence Copper has been issued based on sound evaluation
15 by the EPA of these regulations. They have determined that
16 it's administratively complete, it's technically sound, and
17 it's protective of the drinking water aquifer in the Florence
18 area. Therefore, I fully support that and ask that you would
19 go forward with the permit. Thank you.

20

21

COMMENTS

22 BY JAMES TCHIDA:

23 My name is James Tchida, easy to say but not if you
24 don't see the phonetics of it. I've lived in Arizona my whole
25 life except for traveling and working and living outside of

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1 the United States for eight years both in Asia and in Europe.

2 During my time working outside the United States, I
3 managed manufacturing operations where we solve complex
4 problems but not associated with the environment and with
5 mining. So I'm very familiar with processes such as FMEA,
6 Failure Mode and Effects Analysis, and contingency plans if
7 something doesn't go well or as planned.

8 I've watched this process for five years. And
9 during this five years there has been a lot of emotion and a
10 lot of rancor and a lot of negative comments from people who
11 are not familiar with how to analyze complex issues. And our

12 public officials in this Town are part of that. They like to
13 say no, not here.

14 But what about contingency plans? what about
15 asking about aquifer? what about asking technically competent
16 people such as geologists? The two-hour session this evening
17 prior to this open hearing I had some questions, and I asked
18 those questions. And I'm very comfortable with the answers
19 because I'm not afraid to ask the questions of people who
20 know.

21 We are now in after five years of me trying to
22 listen to my neighbors and understand their complaints and
23 listen to public officials, I went away and did research on my
24 own in spite of the fact that I'm not a geologist. I could
25 not find a problem.

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1 I welcome this phase of the project. With the EPA
2 we are now going into a phase where we'll no longer be talking
3 fear. We'll be talking fact. And the more we talk fact it
4 will silence the people who don't take the time and just want
5 to talk fear. I thank the EPA for this opportunity.

6

7

COMMENTS

8 BY RICK GRINNELL:

9 Good evening. My name is Rick Grinnell. I'm the
10 vice president of the Southern Arizona Business Coalition
11 based out of Tucson, Arizona. And some of our audience may
12 ask, "well, what are you doing up here to tell us what we need
13 in our community?" And my response is simply this: we're one
14 state and one community, and the mining industry has been good
15 to most of us, if not all of us, in one way, shape, or form.

16 Many of my family have worked in this industry. So as much as
17 Florence is maybe 80 miles away, every time I come up here, I
18 spend dollars and gratefully enjoy the company of the good
19 people of Florence.

20 with that this is not my first public hearing.
21 And I am very grateful and appreciative of the time,
22 expertise, and integrity of the process that it takes to get
23 to this point. I am not a geologist. I'm not a
24 hydrologist. I'm a working man that understands you need to
25 understand the facts before you make decisions. Otherwise,

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1 you put yourself in a very subjective and negative position.

2 So with that, as you have reviewed the facts, you
3 brought us to this point. And it is my belief that the
4 continuation of the submittal of information will provide
5 you an opportunity to provide approval in this process after
6 a full, total, and comprehensive review. You've done a fine
7 job.

8 I would ask that we now get to the point where we
9 eliminate the political and the emotional process that comes
10 with all these public hearings. And I'm very grateful to
11 the audience for their integrity on both sides of the issue
12 because, if we move to the point of facts, we'll be able to
13 solve the fears and overcome the barriers that allow us to
14 continue to grow.

15 Just recently the President of the United States
16 talked about economic recovery. Well, I have to tell you in
17 Arizona right now we're not recovering as well as everybody
18 thinks we should be. The unemployment rate is huge. The
19 construction industry has an unemployment rate of over
20 36 percent. Every one of those jobs affect our lives, the

21 transportation industries, the hospitality, dining, and I
22 just had dinner at one of your fine restaurants here.

23 So I would ask that the EPA in the final process
24 continue to reflect on the facts, as you have done, and to
25 also keep in mind that this testing process was accomplished

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1 in 1997 and '98 with no adverse public effects made
2 available to me to this date. And I guess at the end of the
3 day, I have seven grandkids. The mining industry provides a
4 ground level opportunity for the kids, not only to work with
5 their hands and their bodies, but also to expand their
6 minds. Not everybody's made for a college education, and
7 the mining industry is a great place to start.

8 with that I say thank you again for your time and
9 energy. I thank the City of Florence for letting me be
10 here.

11

12

COMMENTS

13 BY RITA MAGUIRE:

14 Good evening. My name is Rita Maguire, and I'm the
15 executive vice president and general counsel for Florence
16 Copper. I appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight to the
17 EPA on behalf of Florence Copper to endorse the issuance of
18 the Class III Underground Injection Control Permit.

19 I began working on the Florence Copper Project in
20 2011. My particular area of legal and professional expertise
21 is on the groundwater and surface water management regimes
22 here in Arizona. Florence Copper has gone through an
23 extensive and comprehensive review of its proposal to
24 construct an in situ copper recovery facility. The EPA and

25 three state regulatory agencies have regulatory oversight

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1 authority on this project. Each in their own way under their
 2 own independent statutory authorities are dedicated to
 3 preserving and protecting the groundwater supplies in the
 4 aquifer directly beneath our feet. This project is
 5 environmentally sound. Florence Copper has a number of
 6 speakers here tonight to speak to the design, the
 7 construction, and the operation of its facility.

8 My purpose is to address a few issues outside of
 9 the scope of the science of in situ recovery but may be of
 10 concern to the local residents and to the members of this
 11 panel.

12 The first issue is the quantity of water that will
 13 be used to recover the copper oxide from the site. Some are
 14 concerned that it will use a lot of water. That's typical in
 15 a desert environment and wholly appropriate. And perhaps the
 16 use of that the water would come at the expense of residential
 17 growth in the area. In fact Florence Copper's test facility
 18 will use less than 100-acre feet a year during its two-year
 19 operation. And if it is permitted to move into full scale
 20 commercial operation, it will use less than 1500 acre feet per
 21 year. By comparison a farm on the Florence Copper property
 22 could use up to 3500 acre feet of water per year, and a
 23 residential housing development could use up to 3,000-acre
 24 feet per year. The in situ recovery process actually uses
 25 less water than most types of farming and will use

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1 substantially less water than required by residential
 2 development on the same area of land.

7 experienced in this community for the Florence Copper Project.
8 Florence Copper has given presentations to dozens of civic and
9 other community groups in the area including the local
10 Chambers of Commerce, the Elks Club, the Rotary Club, the
11 Community at Florence Gardens, and beyond. We've held open
12 house events and have participated in many community
13 activities including Polar Fest, Junior Parada, and historic
14 home tour.

15 Our Florence Copper tour program is incredibly
16 successful. We've given over 115 tours of the property to
17 date to over 1,200 residents. Our tours have proven to be an
18 extremely helpful way to explain to the good people of
19 Florence and Greater Pinal County how the in situ process
20 works and correct the misinformation that is circulated about
21 this project. Everyone here this evening has an open
22 invitation to take a tour of the Florence Copper site, which
23 from the feedback I've received is known to be a very positive
24 and educational experience.

25 Most everywhere we go in this community and the

♀

1 surrounding areas we are greeted with enthusiastic support.
2 To date we have received nearly a thousand cards and letters
3 expressing support for the opening of the Florence Copper
4 Project. Our supporters believe in the science and
5 engineering of the project and encourage us to keep moving
6 forward in the permitting process to bring more jobs and
7 economic opportunity here.

8 We take the concerns of those opposed to using in
9 situ copper recovery on our property very seriously, and we
10 strongly encourage you to reach out to the community affairs
11 team to get any question answered. We fully respect your

12 opinions but encourage you to base your opinions on the facts
13 and the science, not the myths and the rhetoric about the
14 Florence Copper Project. Thank you.

15 MS. WONG: The next speakers are Richard Sichling,
16 Chuck Blair, Clint Sundt, Dan Johnson, Jeremiah M. Dowd, and
17 Karen Wall.

18

19 COMMENTS

20 BY RICHARD SICHLING:

21 Good evening. My name is Richard Sichling.
22 Florence Copper has been a place that I've known for a long
23 time. I started working there back with Magma in 1995. Some
24 of the things that I did working on the site deal a lot with
25 the facts and not some of the rhetoric. Some of the things

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1 that we did and are still doing today, although I do not work
2 for them but they are continuing these processes today, is we
3 installed 31 wells all around the site. These wells continue
4 to monitor the water, and they monitored the water during our
5 tests that we did with BHP. These wells continue to show that
6 the hydraulic control of the solutions worked, worked very
7 efficiently, and continue to work.

8 I heard it said that we didn't clean the site up.
9 Well, when BHP decided to shut things down, it was put into a
10 rinse mode but was never identified as complete closure. This
11 way the operation can continue in a future date as it knew
12 that it would always move forward and recover the copper.

13 The in situ procedures that were developed during
14 these days and years that BHP and Magma had this operation
15 showed that we could very scientifically and efficiently

16 control the solutions, and as was discussed, this is a
17 world-class opportunity. The fractures in the bedrock in the
18 copper-bearing area allow for the solutions to move through
19 freely and allows them to remove the copper.

20 This is going to be a great opportunity for
21 Florence and for copper industries all over to show an
22 advancement and way to move forward very cleanly and
23 environmentally friendly to all the areas. I look forward to
24 your support of their permit, and thank you for your time.

25

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COMMENTS

1

2 BY CHUCK BLAIR:

3 Good evening. My name is Chuck Blair, and for the
4 record I'm originally from Marana, Arizona. I'm here tonight
5 to show my support for the Florence Copper Project. First to
6 everyone here I would like to say why the project is important
7 to me.

8 Florence Copper is not important to me just because
9 I am part of the mining industry. It is important to me
10 because I am also an Arizonan. As an Arizonan, I grew up with
11 and will always support equally all of our resource
12 industries, cattle, cotton, citrus, copper mining, et cetera.
13 Like quite a few other people in this room tonight, you can
14 say that I have a family tradition of harvesting or using
15 resources to provide the nation with goods and services. My
16 grandfathers and great-grandfathers were jacks of all trades
17 with farms; worked in factories, mines; grew their own
18 orchards; worked on national gas and oil pipelines.

19 My father worked for the commercial home
20 construction industry in Arizona for a long time through large

21 booms of people moving here from out of state. He happened to
22 work for a company that ended up building some pretty trendy
23 homes in pretty trendy neighborhoods not too far from here.
24 These homes were not built with dreams and fairy dust. They
25 were built with resources that were grown and mined. They

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1 were built with a lot of Arizona copper. There are
2 electronics and computers all through these houses made out of
3 Arizona copper, and metals from Arizona mines are used to
4 manufacture the cars sitting in the driveway especially the
5 Priuses.

6 You see, Florence Copper isn't just important to
7 me. It's important to Arizona because we produce things. And
8 we need those jobs.

9 To the EPA members here representing yourselves
10 tonight and the nation, I understand what you've been tasked
11 with is sometimes a grave probably monotonous slash I've been
12 to a few of these where people were pretty angry on both
13 sides. I don't envy you. Seems like everybody here tonight
14 though is a pretty nice crowd. I just want you to know that
15 for a few years of my minerals industry career I worked in
16 mine permitting for the United States Forest Service. So I
17 felt the heat from both sides too. I am acutely aware that,
18 although we the public are given much opportunity to comment,
19 that your job requires you to focus on science and the law,
20 not our whims and opinions. I would like to thank you for all
21 of your hard work. You have a tough job to do that bears a
22 great responsibility.

23 I am hopeful that the review of Florence Copper's
24 proposed mining permit has went well and they will soon be

25 testing new copper mining technology that will reduce surface

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1 impacts to Arizona lands while keeping us the leader in
2 copper. Thank you for your time.

3

4

COMMENTS

5 BY CLINT SUNDT:

6 Good evening. Please allow me to introduce myself.
7 My name is Lieutenant Colonel Clint H. Sundt. I am a retired
8 military member. I'm a veteran of the Iraq War. I'm an
9 Arizonan. I'm also a long-term member of the Arizona mining
10 and business community. My family's had a company here since
11 1928, and we've been in mining all along.

12 I'm here today to give my support to the Florence
13 Copper Project. I would like to speak to the benefits of this
14 project for the community, the businesses of the areas, the
15 economy, and the state of Arizona. By approving the permit to
16 move forward with this project, the EPA will open the gates
17 for economic development, jobs for people of this community,
18 sustainment of critical resources for our nation, copper.

19 I've been involved in the mining community, the
20 military community, and the Arizona business community
21 directly since 1994. I've worked in the Florence area since
22 1997. As a result of my experiences, I can attest to the fact
23 that this community will directly benefit from this project.
24 Our state, as you've heard, is not in the best economy like
25 some politicians will tell you. People need jobs. People

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1 from my company need jobs. We need the work. It's our
2 responsibility, as community leaders, business leaders, and

3 responsible stewards of the environment to provide jobs for
4 the people of this community, this state, and this nation.

5 The Florence Copper Project presents those
6 opportunities for us as leaders. It will create jobs while
7 responsibly taking care of the environment. The technologies
8 that will be used by the Florence Copper Project are a proven
9 science, and that's what matters. They're environmentally
10 sound, and as you have heard, miners are some of the most
11 environmentally sound people will you come across.

12 It was mentioned before the five C's, and I had the
13 opportunity to share with some of you before in the open house
14 about the five C's of our great state, climate, citrus,
15 cattle, and cotton, but most importantly copper. Copper is
16 the most important thing we can provide to your nation.

17 My last assignment in the military was the command
18 and engineer battalion that's right up the road on Highway 79.
19 You can't miss it. It's the facility with all the copper
20 roofs. I tell people all the time the most valuable thing
21 Arizona provides to our nation's defense is, number 1, the
22 Arizona soldier, but number 2 is copper.

23 I thank you for your time, the opportunity to
24 testify here today, and I ask that you approve the permit for
25 this project.

♀

1 COMMENTS

2 BY DAN JOHNSON:

3 Thank you for the opportunity to speak this
4 evening. My name is Dan Johnson. I am vice president and
5 general manager for Florence Copper. I have undergrad and
6 graduate degrees and professional registrations in hydrology,

7 geochemistry, and engineering, and I've been working in those
8 fields for over 30 years. You'll hear some people opposed to
9 scary sounding things this evening. But the truth is the
10 sound science and engineering and your own expert evaluation
11 support the fact that this project can be done in a safe
12 manner and, with your oversight, be done in the safe manner.

13 This in situ process has more in common with the
14 pump and treat water treatment facilities that exists
15 throughout our nation. It is a proven technology, verified by
16 independent experts who have testified to the safety and
17 viability of conducting in situ copper recovery here at
18 Florence Copper.

19 The solution of the approximately 99.5 percent
20 water and one half of 1 percent sulfuric acid will be
21 delivered to limited sections with a copper mineral deposit
22 buried deep below the ground's surface. This mildly acidic
23 solution will safely dissolve the copper as it is continually
24 recycled, extracted, and then controlled for processing. When
25 the soluble copper is fully recovered, water from the same

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1 aquifer will be recycled to flush the mineralized bedrock for
2 several months until both regulatory agencies, ADEQ and
3 yourself, are assured that the underground well field is fully
4 restored in accordance with the water quality standards
5 established in this permit.

6 Although it's a hydraulically closed-loop process
7 and more solution is always withdrawn than pumped into the
8 copper mineral deposit, 14 monitoring wells will be placed at
9 various depths around the four injection wells for this test
10 to ensure that the acidic water does not escape in the
11 immediate area. The additional 25 existing moderating wells

12 complete upgrading, cross-grading, downgrade in and around the
13 entire 1,200 acre property. They too will continuously
14 monitor to ensure the quality of the groundwater will not be
15 compromised by the test facility.

16 It is important to note that this highly unlikely
17 event that every recovery system failed, every monitoring
18 system failed, all safety backup measures failed and if all of
19 the environmental regulatory agencies somehow failed, well
20 understood signs strongly indicates that acidic water would be
21 neutralized by the high alkalinity data geological formations
22 within the project area. Even if each and every one of these
23 redundant safety protocols fail, still it would take several
24 decades for this same water from the project area to naturally
25 migrate laterally throughout the aquifer to the nearest

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1 drinking water source. The fact is that, if we can't do it
2 safely, we just can't do it. Your agency won't simply allow
3 us to do it. I can assure you the mining operations of
4 Florence Copper can and will be conducted with the utmost
5 regard for the health, safety, and welfare for the people who
6 work at the site and live in the community. Thank you for
7 your time.

8

9

COMMENTS

10 BY JEREMIAH M. DOWD:

11 Hello. My name is Jeremiah Dowd. I've lived here
12 in central Arizona for 39 years. You know, I prepared
13 something here, but we've heard all that already. It's
14 already been said. I know you want to take emotion out of
15 what you guys' decision is. I understand that completely.

16 But you got to put emotion back into it.

17 Look, I'm standing in this gym, and I look around.
18 All these banners is kids playing ball, growing up,
19 cheerleading, running track, spelling bees, everything that is
20 important to us in the next generation. For the last two
21 years that's all I've done is worked on building the next
22 generation, coaching, mainly athletics, you'll hear a lot of
23 that from me. I want you guys to put yourself back when you
24 were growing up and you were playing whatever it is you were
25 playing. You didn't get to do that if you weren't taken care

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1 of by your family, by your father working, by your mother
2 working. This project is imperative for that to continue.

3 We need jobs in the state of Arizona, Florence,
4 Globe, Miami, Superior, everywhere in central Arizona,
5 everywhere in the entire state, everywhere in this entire
6 company. None of that it less important. We need them. I
7 already trust that you guys are going to handle the safety
8 part of it. I trust that that company Florence Copper is
9 going to handle the safety part of it. I need you to think of
10 the emotional part for just a second, not a lot, just enough
11 to make the right decision.

12 Thank you for your time.

13

14 COMMENTS

15 BY KAREN WALL:

16 My name is Karen Wall. I live in Florence, and I
17 coordinate a grassroots group of 400-plus communities members
18 who are opposed to the Florence Copper Project, many of whom
19 are here tonight. A number of them have had firsthand
20 experience with EPA and state DEQ approved projects that have

21 gone terribly wrong. Agencies such as the EPA are meant to
22 represent the public interest, not corporations and monied
23 interests. Industries such as mining work to manipulate the
24 regulatory process to serve their own objectives.

25 The proposed pilot test is an unrealistic, small

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1 scale experiment that can be manipulated and cannot be assumed
2 to be transferable to a large scale operation due to the
3 exceptional resources and favorable conditions that often
4 accompany a pilot study. The two-year term of the pilot test
5 cannot prove that the acid solution has not migrated outside
6 the test area because of the short time frame and the fact
7 that the monitoring wells are too far away from the injection
8 site. Florence Copper claims they will be able to recover all
9 of the solution they inject, but they also say they will draw
10 out more water than they inject. The recovery wells would
11 have to get this additional water from somewhere. At the
12 depth where the acid injections would occur it seems logical
13 to assume it is coming from the adjacent lower basic fill unit
14 which is the source of the regional drinking water supply. If
15 water can be drawn from this aquifer, the acid solution can
16 also flow freely into it.

17 In their permit application Florence Copper
18 submitted a performance bond guaranteeing performance of
19 closure and post-closure care in the amount of a little over
20 \$3 million. I would like to point out that this bond names
21 only the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and not
22 the EPA. Why isn't there a performance bond issued on behalf
23 of the EPA? Better yet, why aren't there bonds issued in the
24 names of the at-risk parties including the Town of Florence,

25 Johnson Utilities, and property owners in the surrounding area

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1 who stand to lose the most if this project causes damage to
2 the environment?

3 If the EPA permits the injection of a solution that
4 is strong enough to dissolve copper and that could endanger
5 the water supply, they are certainly not protecting the
6 environment or the public interest. The only way to guarantee
7 the protection of the aquifer is to prevent even one drop of
8 acid solution from being injected into the ground in the
9 middle of Florence.

10 I urge the EPA to do the right thing and deny the
11 reissuance of the Underground Injection Control permit. Thank
12 you.

13 MS. WONG: The next speakers are Barbara Manning,
14 David Briggs, Marsha Day, Emily Hughes, Rebecca Miller, Karen
15 Christian.

16
17 COMMENTS

18 BY BARBARA MANNING:

19 My name is Barbara Manning, and I'm a resident of
20 Florence, Arizona.

21 In 1997 EPA did issue a UIC Permit to the mining
22 company BHP. The landscape was very different then. There
23 were no development, little housing, no wells to be concerned
24 about, and much of the land was owned by the mining company.

25 Fast forward 17 years to 2015. The landscape is

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1 now very different. There are many developments including
2 Anthem, Magic Ranch, Crestview, wild Horse, and they're all

3 expanding. The population of San Tan valley is over 85,000
4 people. There is now a total of 100,000 people who depend on
5 the aquifer for their drinking water. It is imperative that
6 EPA consider this changing landscape in their deliberations.

7 EPA has a responsibility to prevent any underground
8 injection of chemicals which would endanger the aquifer. EPA
9 has to recognize that this process has no track record and it
10 is still considered experimental which could adversely affect
11 a number of people. It is also critical for EPA to request
12 the test data from BHP because that test data shows that BHP
13 could not control the hydraulic flow of the sulfuric acid.

14 I have been told that you have not reviewed those.
15 Florence Copper tried to keep those records from BHP from ADQ.
16 A court order required them to give them out. More disturbing
17 is that the mining experts for Florence Copper placed those
18 monitoring wells in such a position that they would not be
19 given adequate accurate data about the hydraulic control of
20 the sulfuric acid. There was no vertical monitoring in their
21 plan.

22 ADQ now knows that they made an error in approving
23 that permit. It has been remanded. I hope that EPA will not
24 make the same mistake and carefully deliberate this permit.
25 Florence Copper has lost a lot of credibility. Thank you.

♀

1 COMMENTS

2 BY DAVID BRIGGS:

3 Good evening. I'm David Briggs. I reside in
4 Tucson, Arizona, where I've worked as a geologist in the
5 mining industry for more than 35 years. Math and science and
6 technology combined with increased costs of conventional

7 mining and compliance with environmental regulations are such
8 that at today's copper prices there are real opportunities to
9 develop the standalone in situ recovery projects that are
10 located at sites that have had no previous mining activity.

11 Florence Copper is one of the best sites in North
12 America to employ this technique because of the naturally
13 occurring high porosity and permeability of the soil which
14 lies beneath a stratigraphic barrier that physically separates
15 it from the area's overlying drinking water supply. A
16 statistical analysis data from drilling programs indicates
17 there are an average of 11 to 15 open fractures per linear
18 foot within the highly broken oxide ore zone. Testing has
19 demonstrated that the essentially fractured nature of the host
20 rock is sufficiently greater to permit the optimal transfer of
21 solutions between injection and recovery wells. The Florence
22 project will not employ fracking or other secondary
23 permeability enhancement techniques.

24 I fully support Florence Copper's efforts to
25 conduct the next phase of its evaluation, a two-year small

♀

1 scale pilot test which will publicly demonstrate the safety
2 and viability of recovering copper by in situ methods.
3 Florence Copper represents a new generation of mining projects
4 that will have a very small environmental impact. Arizona's
5 copper industry welcomes technological advances of this type.

6 I respect the judgment and the professionals at the
7 EPA who have taken the time to thoroughly review the
8 scientific data accompanying this permit application and thank
9 them for advancing the project to this stage. And I encourage
10 the EPA to finalize the permitting process. Thank you for
11 providing me an opportunity to express my opinions on this

12 subject.

13

14

COMMENTS

15 BY MARSHA DAY:

16 My name is Marsha Day, and I am a third-generation
17 resident of Florence and once served as mayor of this great
18 town, and I thank you for this opportunity. I'm proud of
19 Florence, its people, its history, its community, and most
20 importantly its potential. I see a bright future for us if we
21 can make the right decisions.

22 But we are at a major fork in the road. We can
23 either continue down the path that results in more empty lots
24 and condemned buildings, or we can start restoring this town's
25 vibrant past and creating a future for our families, their

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1 kids, and the future generations of Florence. While I dearly
2 love our retirement communities and those who join us part
3 time for the mild winters, we simply must provide for economic
4 opportunities for young families and our youth in order to
5 encourage them to prosper and grow here in their hometown of
6 Florence.

7 On October 21, 1996, I was mayor and signed a
8 proclamation in support of this copper project. Our City
9 Council recognized the important of mining in Arizona's
10 community. We recognized the innovative technology of the
11 project and environmental soundness. We supported the
12 company's commitment to be proactive in the community, and we
13 recognized how the project would provide employment and
14 revenue for local business.

15 In 1996 BHP was the owner of this project. Other

16 than that nothing has changed since then except, of course,
 17 the environmental standards and monitoring requirements that
 18 have become much more stringent. I am confident that Florence
 19 Copper will succeed and they will comply with our high
 20 standards for water quality and safety. They have already
 21 proven their dedication to this town by all the community
 22 involvement and generous contribution. If I was the mayor
 23 today, by authority invested in me, I would hereby proclaim
 24 that Florence Copper is welcome to the Town of Florence and
 25 would look forward to a long, productive relationship with

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1 Florence Copper.

2 Thank you to the EPA for issuing the draft permit.
 3 Now please issue the final permit so we can prove naysayers
 4 wrong and start rebuilding this town. Thank you.

5

6

COMMENTS

7 BY REBECCA MILLER:

8 Good evening. Thank you for having the public
 9 comment and everybody has a chance to speak. My name is
 10 Rebecca Miller. I'm a registered geologist in the state of
 11 Arizona, was registered in 1998. I started my geology career
 12 in Mexico actually, and if people could see what they have
 13 down there compared to what you have here, we had lights six
 14 hours a day and running water for two hours a day. So when
 15 you wake up and flick up the switch, no lights. So it really
 16 gives me an appreciation for what maybe some people don't
 17 appreciate here. And the value that you get from that comes
 18 from copper, comes from electricity, comes from logging, comes
 19 from iron, comes from spar in the paint, everything.

20 Another point I wanted to make here is how I also

21 permitted the mines in Montana. I worked for Montana DEQ for
22 five years. During that time we tried to permit the Zortman
23 Mine, the New World Cook City Project, and the Bull Project at
24 McDonald Meadows in Lincoln, Montana, home of the Unabomber.

25 So in those three we did get some things permitted,

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1 but we spent five years of our lives basically -- we were
2 state, you know, people, worked for \$12 an hour, one of my
3 first geology jobs. I was a geochemist -- and on those three
4 projects I could see where perception of fear, this fear
5 perception, actually became the reality, not so much in the
6 Zortman case, but McDonald Meadows was the cyanide gold leach
7 project, and it was so overcome with the fear of what cyanide
8 was going to do -- they'd been using cyanide for a hundred
9 years -- that the State passed a law that you can no longer
10 use cyanide. This is where the fear and perception of that
11 fear actually became a reality so much so that they passed
12 laws on it.

13 Another thing the New World Project, that was
14 another gold project, very high up in the mountains, high
15 elevation, lots of snow. You could have some problems with
16 that much snow. But it was also again the fear, this
17 perception of fear, became reality and stopped the project. I
18 think Clinton -- you all bought that project, all the tax
19 money, they bought Crown Butte out and traded them some land.

20 So I just want to -- I'm really speaking to the
21 people here that don't be afraid, have confidence. I've
22 worked with National Drilling. They drilled 284,000 feet for
23 Robinson Mining in 2011 where I worked. I worked with Daryl
24 Salpaul who originally modeled this deposit in 1996 and held

25 up the APP permit. There's probably a few more. David Briggs

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1 is right here. I worked with him at Rosemont Copper. So
2 trust the people that are here. We can produce.

3

4

COMMENTS

5 BY EMILY HUGHES:

6 Hi. I'm Emily Hughes. I'm a resident of San Tan
7 valley. I've been here for eight years. I'm an Arizona
8 native. I live in Copper Basin. I have five children, 4 to
9 12 years old. I also have two foreign exchange students from
10 Italy and Switzerland. I'm an advocate and volunteer for
11 Animal Care and Control. I'm an active member of my church.
12 I run a wedding venue full time. What I'm not is a
13 hydrologist or a miner or an engineer. And so I'm relying on
14 the EPA, and I'm relying on Florence Copper on this research
15 to make sure this is safe.

16 And my family moved here to San Tan valley in 2007,
17 looking for less expensive housing. We were able to purchase
18 our home that we could grow our family into at a significantly
19 lesser price than what we could find in Mesa. In 2013 I
20 decided I wanted to investigate the Florence Copper Mine for
21 myself. That very first tour I walked away with a very
22 different impression of the mine than I had previously been
23 reading. After that I think I attended I think eight tours
24 over the next few months. I walked away from each tour kind
25 of with awe for science and topography and just learned how

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1 uninformed I actually was.

2 I began to research in situ mining, asked as many
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3 questions as I could. Sometimes I asked the same questions
4 over and over just so I could have a better understanding. I
5 also, like I said, I attended several tours over the course of
6 the next two months. I also encouraged others to take the
7 same tour and form their own opinion. I did this because I
8 wanted to make sure I felt safe about the process, felt safe
9 about our water, that I felt educated enough about the
10 Florence Copper Mine so I could share information with others.

11 The last thing I would want to do is put my
12 family's health and safety at risk or encourage something that
13 would put our community at risk. And after listening to the
14 evidence and reading everything I that could find on this
15 company and this project, I'm confident and very comfortable
16 about the issuance of this permit. I realize that this is
17 only a temporary permit that it will allow the company to show
18 that it can mine copper safely in the in situ process.

19 Additionally I want to see more good paying jobs
20 come to our area. It would be nice to see in increase in our
21 property values both for Florence and San Tan Valley because
22 of the copper mine. The science and engineering have proven
23 this is a safe process. Everyone I hear who's opposed seems
24 to have wrong information. Most of the people I have talked
25 to have never taken the tour or spoken with any of the

♀

1 engineers. I respect opinions. There is opposition in all
2 things, but I sincerely hope the community bases their
3 opinions on facts. I have enjoyed speaking with the different
4 engineers during the tours, hydrologists like Dan Johnson who
5 bring an impressive background. Thank you.

6

7

8 BY KAREN CHRISTIAN:

9 Thank you. My name is Karen Christian. As a
10 co-founder of San Tan Valley Safe Water Advocates and having
11 studied many water-related issues throughout our state over
12 the past three years, I stand here today after two years of
13 contemplating coming out publicly in full support of the
14 Florence Copper Project proceeding with its test phase.

15 Now, many may ask: If you're all about safe water,
16 how can you support this project? Because I believe in the
17 strict regulations developed over the past 30 years protecting
18 Arizona aquifers. Arizona has some of the tightest water
19 quality regulations in the world and for good reason.
20 However, after learning from geologists, hydrologists, and
21 those not related to the parties at hand, as well as studying
22 technological reports produced over the past two years, I have
23 concluded that the process deserves to prove that it is safe
24 environmentally.

25 Proving hydraulic control, maintaining safe

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1 standards, and their open door policies gives me the assurance
2 that we can be the safe water watchdogs and having the
3 knowledge that state and national agencies will be monitoring
4 the processes throughout the time frame of the test phase.

5 Having been in Arizona since 1970, I have
6 unfortunately seen a lot of fraudulent business dealings.
7 I've watched as big business entities and individuals have run
8 ram-shot over the little guys. Florence Copper, however, has
9 been a breath of fresh air. They've been nothing but above
10 reproach, and they answer the questions forthrightly with
11 utmost professionalism and integrity. The Mine Project has

12 been studied for years. The technology exists to see now if
13 this is economically and environmental viable.

14 Florence Copper studies have already included
15 jurisdictional water review, archeological investigations,
16 endangered species, groundwater monitoring, groundwater
17 geochemical modeling, groundwater hydrologic monitoring, and
18 hydraulic control and rinsing tests. The results of these
19 have been incorporated in the deployment plan. So how do we
20 simplify this? well, the technical report states that it
21 penetrates -- the wells penetrate the alluvial aquifer and are
22 securely sealed off through this zone to prevent leakage. In
23 addition the top 40 feet of the offsite mineralized body is
24 sealed off forming an exclusion zone. So in my own words
25 they've got the thing encased and nothing's getting out, kind

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1 of like the prisons up the road. So it would be pretty
2 hard to escape and especially with the ongoing monitoring of
3 the wells systems.

4 So I'm taking a chance, taking a chance on more
5 jobs for our community; more money for our state, county, and
6 the Town of Florence; and taking a chance that all the PhDs
7 and the governmental agencies that have to issue these 19 plus
8 permits will guarantee the protection of our environmental
9 resources, in particular our water supply, believing that this
10 may very well be the most environmentally friendly mining
11 project in the country. Thank you for your time.

12 MS. WONG: The next speakers are Bill Hawkins, Mark
13 Nicholls, Sydney Hay, Frankie Tyree, and Richard Travis.

14

15

COMMENTS

16 BY BILL HAWKINS:

17 My name is Bill Hawkins, 130 Campbell in Florence,
18 Arizona. I'm also on the Town Council. Earlier there was a
19 gentleman up here that said that the majority of the people in
20 Florence want this and the majority of the businesses in
21 Florence want this to happen. I don't think so. In our last
22 two elections anybody that was for the mine was defeated on
23 the Council elections. So that speaks for itself.

24 The BHP test run showed that it is going -- it's
25 still polluting the water. There's over 4,000 people a day

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1 commute into Florence. We're not short on jobs. So that's a
2 argument that's out the window. Mining towns in Arizona, I
3 haven't seen one that has prospered. Everybody talks about,
4 oh, copper, copper, copper. There's no shortage of copper.
5 We've got plenty of copper. If there was a shortage, the
6 price would be up. It's not. Look at the copper towns in
7 Arizona. You'll see that they're not booming. Nobody is
8 wanting to move there. They're deteriorating if anything.

9 The water, it's not the acid that we're worried
10 about. It's the heavy metals in the poisons that it releases
11 from the minerals that they're dissolving that migrate into
12 the water. And it will -- like they said earlier, they don't
13 have to fracture. It's already fractured. So it's going to
14 migrate out there. And then 3- or \$4 million to clean to up
15 if something goes wrong, that won't even touch it. That's a
16 joke. We just had a meeting of six states. Western states
17 had a meeting in Vegas here last month fighting over the
18 water. We're running out of potable water in the western
19 United States. You can't drink copper.

20 And they also made allegations that we're not a
Page 65

21 business friendly town. We're very business friendly. And
22 that's totally wrong.

23 Anyway, all I'm saying look at all -- we've been
24 asking for them to present one example of an in situ mine,
25 anywhere in the world, not just Arizona, anywhere in the world

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1 that has not polluted the environment. They have not come up
2 with one. So they keep saying it's proven technology. Give
3 us the proof.

4

5

COMMENTS

6 BY MARK NICHOLLS:

7 Good evening. My name is Mark Nicholls. I'm a
8 hydrogeologist. I have a master's degree in hydrogeology.
9 I've been practicing hydrogeology in the southwest for about
10 18 years now. I'm employed by a company called Haley and
11 Aldrich that was hired by Florence Copper to prepare much of
12 the documentation that was supplied in support of the UIC
13 application. As such, I'm aware of many of the protections
14 that EPA asked for, much of the deliberation that went into
15 those additional protections that were incorporated into the
16 permit. I was also responsible for responding to many of the
17 questions that EPA had, many of the technical questions
18 regarding the content of the application and the ultimate
19 permit.

20 As such, I'd like to talk a little bit about some
21 of the sentiments at Florence Copper. They're sensitive to
22 members of the community and some of their concerns and fears.
23 And we understand that some of those concerns we feel that the
24 members of the community may not have the appropriate

25 technical information to answer those. One of the concerns

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1 that we have heard is that folks were concerned about
2 hydro-fracking, a common term now used in the oil and gas
3 industry, kind of a buzzword in the environmental world.

4 As we've heard tonight, the formation is naturally
5 fractured. Over millions of years through geologic activity
6 and faulting, this formation was fractured. Copper-bearing
7 solutions flowed into those fractures and deposited minerals
8 within those fractures that we hope to extract. You know, our
9 intent is to inject a solution that will travel through those
10 fractures, redissolve that copper into a solution, and pull it
11 out so that we can extract that with an SXEW process. There's
12 no need to fracture the formation. The formation is naturally
13 fractured.

14 I would hope the members of the community would
15 know that the EPA incorporated a pressure injection or an
16 injection pressure limit that will hold injection pressures
17 below the pressures that would fracture the formation. So
18 we're really only talking about pushing fluid through existing
19 fractures to dissolve this copper mineralization and pull it
20 out.

21 That's just one of the many protections that are
22 built into the permit. Some of the other protections include
23 the fact that all of the core holes and wells that
24 were drilled by previous site owners will have to be abandoned
25 concrete sulfate-resistant cement essentially within 500 feet

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1 of the well field so that they don't become pathways for
2 solution migration. All of this happens within an Act for

3 Exemption. The Act for Exemption prohibits the installation
4 of drinking water wells within an area that might be affected
5 by the injection in the field. We feel that these protections
6 are appropriate. We worked very hard with EPA and witnessed
7 much of their hard work in developing some of these
8 protections, and we feel that it's appropriate and protective
9 and that the members of the community, once provided with the
10 appropriate information, we feel that they'll see that as
11 well. Thank you.

12

13

COMMENTS

14 BY SYDNEY HAY:

15 Good evening. Thank you for being here. I'm
16 Sydney Hay, and I am president of AMIGOS, which is a trade
17 association of small and medium-sized business in the Arizona
18 mining industry. For 40 years our organization has been in
19 Arizona and proudly supplying the best of the best in goods
20 and services to the mines. AMIGOS is actually an acronym it
21 stands for Arizona Mining and Industry Get Our Support. Our
22 over 300 member companies employ tens of thousands of
23 Arizonans, our fellow Arizonans in high-paying jobs. Our
24 members are engineers. They're technology companies. They're
25 transportation companies. And they're environmental

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1 companies. Many of our members have testified here tonight.
2 These members, employees, especially those in the
3 environmental area, spend every day, every day, protecting our
4 air and water and, not only protecting them, making things
5 better. And that's what our companies will continue to do for
6 Florence Copper when this project goes forward.

7 So on behalf of all our member companies and their
8 employees and the thousands of employees that they look to
9 hire, as new projects go forward in Arizona, we support the
10 Florence Copper Project. Thank you.

11

12

COMMENTS

13

BY FRANKIE TYREE:

14

Hi there. My name is Frankie Tyree. I was born
15 and raised in Arizona. I'm 50 years old. I spent 21 years in
16 the roofing industry, and I'm here to say that copper mines
17 don't decrease the property values. The overbuilding is what
18 decrease the property values.

19

In Green Valley property values have increased
20 because of the Sierrita Mine. In Safford, Arizona, property
21 values have increased because of the Safford Mine, and with
22 jobs in Florence they can only increase property values.

23

The in situ leach technology that will be used in
24 Florence Copper represents the next generation of copper
25 recovery and will have an extremely small environmental

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footprint. Experts and scientists at the EPA have thoroughly
2 reviewed the permit, and they will continue to monitor the
3 project throughout its operational life once the permit has
4 been finalized. We should support the Florence Project and
5 help these jobs and increase property values. Thank you.

6

7

COMMENTS

8

BY RICHARD TRAVIS:

9

My name is Richard Travis. I'm a Maricopa County
10 resident. I actually live downstream on the Gila River. I'm
11 a fourth-generation Arizonan, and I want to tell you a few

12 things about this project that haven't been mentioned today.

13 The process proposed by Florence Copper has
14 operated successfully in uranium recovery for decades in
15 Texas, Wyoming, and South Dakota. Florence Copper has
16 world-class technical staff. Florence Copper has a
17 world-class hydrologic consultant. Considering this, I feel
18 these tests would be done in an environmentally safe manner,
19 and I urge to you approve this test. Thank you.

20 MS. WONG: The next speakers are David Henry,
21 Charles Peterson, Lee Decker, Manuela Bowler, Eric Cantlin, and
22 Glenn Hoffmeyer.

23
24
25

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1 COMMENTS

2 BY DAVID HENRY:

3 Good evening. For the record my name is David
4 Henry. I work with Southwest Value Partners, and I'm a
5 Florence native.

6 I've heard a lot of things tonight, lot of new, lot
7 of old, most of which I don't believe has any prominent effect
8 on the permit that's put forth. The LBFU is important to the
9 region, and the draft permit and the aquifer exemption failed
10 to protect this valuable aquifer. It's no longer 1997. Much
11 has changed since the last issue of the aquifer exemption for
12 the permit to be approved for this area. The LBFU serves as a
13 current and future drinking water source for a growing
14 community. It's plentiful, currently has excellent water
15 quality, but it may not in this case if we move forward the

21 is with education, and I just point out that this nation has
22 spent billions of dollars to educate people how to think.
23 we've educated them how to recognize fact from fiction, how to
24 analyze, and I would hope that we would make our decisions
25 here based on the skills that we've invested so much of our

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1 nation in developing within our minds.

2 Myself, I have two graduate degrees in physical
3 science from the University of Georgia, one degree from the
4 University of Minnesota. I spent the last eight years of my
5 life designing and teaching environmental science. And I
6 think I am qualified to make an evaluation about the proposal
7 of Florence Copper.

8 I've looked at it. And in my educated opinion, if
9 their statements are factual and not enhanced, there is not
10 one thing I could find in there that I could use to deny them
11 a permit. They have worked awfully hard to protect the
12 environment. And I would think tonight we should be
13 commending them rather than being critical of them. The
14 protections that they put in place show tremendous amount of
15 intellectual effort as backed up by engineering experience.

16 So I would say that in this area they are doing a
17 much better job of protecting the environment than the
18 monument we have a little to the west which is called the
19 landfill. That is a monument to garbage. To the north and
20 northwest we have gigantic pits where we move the earth's
21 surface to place it into wetlands and natural drainage bases.
22 There's more concern there that I would have. I drink the
23 water here. I bathe in the waters here. I trust Florence
24 Copper. Thank you.

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1 COMMENTS

2 BY LEE DECKER:

3 Good evening. My name is Lee Decker, and I'm an
4 attorney with the Phoenix law firm of Gallagher and Kennedy.
5 I'm an Arizona native, and I've represented Arizona's copper
6 mining industry for the past 25 years. I appreciate this
7 opportunity to speak in support of the EPA's issuance of a
8 federal UIC Permit for Florence Copper.

9 while most other mining operations immediately
10 began with full commercial mining, Florence Copper is
11 proposing to first conduct a pilot test to verify that future
12 commercial scale operations will be safe for the environment.
13 This is a conservative and commendable approach that will
14 ensure that the proposed operations will have no impact to
15 surrounding groundwater or other natural resources.

16 It also is important to recognize that what is
17 being authorized by the proposed federal permit is the
18 temporary operation of the small scale pilot test facility
19 encompassing only 2 acres. Unlike other mining operations the
20 limited mining that will occur, as part of the pilot test,
21 will take place entirely within the orebody itself which is
22 located deep below the ground surface and below any drinking
23 water aquifers. No open pit or other similar surface
24 disturbances will be created.

25 With respect to the proposed UIC Permit it contains

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1 comprehensive and detailed provisions that will protect
2 groundwater to the fullest extent. The provisions include

3 detailed financial assurance obligations, comprehensive
4 groundwater monitoring from numerous dedicated monitoring
5 wells located in all directions immediately adjacent and
6 surrounding the proposed pilot test well field and, three, a
7 requirement to restore groundwater within the actual in situ
8 mine area to drinking water standards.

9 Importantly in the backdrop of this proposed
10 federal permit are existing state aquifer protection permits.
11 These existing permits provide extra layers of protection to
12 the surrounding groundwater and adjacent property owners. One
13 of the existing state aquifer protection permits is an
14 area-wide permit that already encompasses the entire Florence
15 Copper property and includes numerous point of compliance
16 monitoring wells in all directions surrounding the proposed
17 pilot project. A separate state aquifer protection permit has
18 been issued to Florence Copper that specifically authorizes
19 operation of the proposed pilot test. Each of the these
20 groundwater protection permits creates a comprehensive and
21 standalone safety net to ensure protection of groundwater.

22 While most other mining operations in Arizona have
23 only one permit addressing groundwater, the proposed pilot
24 test facility will have multiple permits issued and enforced
25 both by the State of Arizona and by EPA. Each of these

♀

1 permits contains well thought through and redundant conditions
2 to ensure the groundwater quality will be protected to the
3 ultimate extent. Thank you.

4

5

COMMENTS

6 BY MANUELA BOWLER:

7 My name is Manuela Bowler. I know that the Arizona
8 Department of Environmental Quality and the EPA would not
9 approve this project if it wasn't safe. I know this is not
10 the first time this method has been used to extract minerals
11 and metals.

12 Pinal County was extremely hard hit by the economic
13 downturn of 2008 because our economy was not diversified
14 enough. My family suffered greatly because of that. My
15 husband moved our family to the valley in 2005. He's a
16 professional engineer. He lost his job three years later and
17 he had to move out of state. He lived out the state for five
18 years and now he still commutes from another part of the
19 state, home each weekend because there's not enough jobs in
20 our county that pay livable wages.

21 Statistics will tell you that economic development
22 has turned around in our county and that people are working.
23 And yet when you work in social work and you look at the
24 social service sector, you know wages and benefits are nowhere
25 what they were before 2008. People are working multiple jobs,

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1 and if you looked earlier tonight, the people who we're
2 missing here are the working people. They didn't get to show
3 up because they were probably at home bathing their kids or
4 reading bedtime stories and working two jobs to maintain a
5 livable wage.

6 This project throughout its lifetime will employ
7 youth and give opportunities for them to stay here in our
8 area. I hope that you will support and monitor the socially
9 and economically environmental responsible copper project.
10 Thank you.

11

12

COMMENTS

13 BY ERIC CANTLIN:

14 It's been a long evening. Good evening. My name
15 is Eric Cantlin. I'm a resident of Florence, and I'd like to
16 thank you for giving us the opportunity to allow us to make
17 our comments and our wishes and wants known.

18 You've heard a lot of technical, some competent,
19 some incompetent, some grasps at wishes of knowledge, some
20 stating facts of years of experience in the field of mining.
21 There's one thing that has not been proven tonight or stated,
22 and that's where we will be 20 years, 25 years from today.
23 Florence Copper -- and I have nothing against economic growth
24 and jobs, tremendous opportunity for whatever. I have nothing
25 against the monetary aspect. I have nothing at all against

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1 sulfuric acid. It's a fantastic chemical. Copper is a
2 fantastic mineral.

3 what I have a question and concern about is they're
4 proposing dumping over 5 billion -- that's B, billion --
5 pounds of sulfuric acid into the ground at different levels
6 beneath and around the major aquifer of southern Arizona.
7 There is not one proven engineering facet that can say they
8 can extract better than 80 percent of any chemical put into
9 the ground.

10 sulfuric acid not only blends the copper and allows
11 it to be liquefied and pulled, it also leaches off different
12 chemicals that exist in the ground and around mineral. Those
13 are the dangerous hazardous chemicals. It is now proven that
14 any content in the earth moves in all directions, down,
15 sideways, and up. So in 15 to 20 years these chemicals and

16 dangerous attributes of the side pocket are moving to where?
17 Our major aquifer, once contaminated, cannot be reversed.
18 Once contaminated, there will be no economic growth in
19 Florence or southern Arizona. It will be a desolate community
20 of nothing.

21 Please don't let the board make their decision and
22 have a legacy to stand on and look back 15 to 20 years and say
23 we were the ones that approved the beginning of that project.
24 You have a tremendous, tremendous decision to weigh and look
25 at. And I thank you for your time.

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COMMENTS

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BY GLENN HOFFMEYER:

Good evening. My name is Glenn Hoffmeyer, and I am
the technical services manager of Florence Copper. I'm also a
resident of the Magic Ranch Community. I have a degree in
metallurgical engineering. I have been working in the copper
business for nearly 25 years.

As a previous speaker pointed out, there are many
household products containing acid that we use every day
without a second thought. Local agriculture uses sulfuric
acid produced a short distance from Florence in order to make
things grow in our alkaline desert soils. Local copper
smelters have been safely transporting that acid for several
decades. Sulfuric acid is already here and has been for a
long time. Using it locally to make a valuable product like
copper will create additional employment to benefit our
communities.

How do we recover that copper? The weekly acidic
recovery solutions applied to the copper bearing zone. This
solution is just half a percent sulfuric acid and 99 and a

21 half percent water. And yes, the PH is similar to vinegar.
22 As it moves from injection well to recovery well, the acid
23 reacts with the copper mineral to make copper sulfate thus
24 consuming the sulfuric acid in the process. The acid does not
25 build up to ever increasing concentrations as some have

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1 suggested. We then remove the copper and reuse the same
2 solution again and again to recover even more copper. After a
3 two-year rinse stage, the site water will be returned to
4 baseline conditions. The permit and the regulatory process or
5 regulatory oversight process ensure that.

6 In closing, the in situ recovery process is safe.
7 I would not be working here if that were not true. Like many
8 others, I own a house here in the area, and I want my property
9 values to increase as well. In situ copper recovery and the
10 high paying jobs it will create is the way to do that.

11 Thank you very much for your time and the
12 opportunity to speak.

13 MS. WONG: The next speakers are Doug McCullough,
14 Armand Young, Dionne Parrish, Larry Michael McConnell, Don
15 Kempton, Jim Burns.

16

17

COMMENTS

18 BY DOUG MCCULLOUGH:

19 My name is Doug McCullough. I'm a resident of the
20 Florence area, just moved here roughly two years ago. My
21 family farmed in this area in the late 1950s. I am standing
22 in support of this project because, as I look and research the
23 industrial development authority in this area, we are not
24 doing anything to create jobs. Many of you are facing an

25 escalating property tax issue because that's the only way we

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1 have to generate capital to support our schools, to support
2 our infrastructure and everything else. We need to create
3 industry in this marketplace. We need to be able to provide
4 for our children and our grandchildren the opportunity to stay
5 within the community and hold, you know, employment that will
6 retain them in our communities.

7 when I was a young man and lived in this area,
8 Florence was a self-sustaining town in that it had two
9 marketplaces, a drug store, a theater. It was self-sustaining
10 because it was agrarian based community. Today, because it is
11 more governmental based and correctional based, it's not a
12 self-sustaining community. We have the need for the industry
13 in this. We can use the Florence Copper Project as an
14 incubator to show that the community has the interest in
15 creating industry and retaining the knowledge that we have
16 created with our grandchildren and our children.

17 My experience with the EPA and the ADEQ is that
18 it's incumbent upon you for the older side of these types of
19 projects, and my experience is you do your job very well. And
20 I cannot imagine that with the requirement in this situation
21 it will be that they have the means and the oversight to
22 remediate any issue that comes up because I believe your
23 agency would require that.

24 I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak,
25 and I hope that you will find in favor of this project. Thank

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COMMENTS

BY ARMAND YOUNG:

Thank you for being here. My name is Armand Young, and I am a resident of Florence. I am not in favor of the Copper Project and request that you rescind the draft permit.

Here we go again, another five years of misinformation from Florence Copper and now Taseko, another speculative mining company from Canada. How about the claim that their mining process is a closed system? Take a look at their mining diagram. The injection wells are not connected in any way to the recovery wells. The injection fluid can migrate vertically into the groundwater and upper basin and 360 degrees horizontally through fractures and faults.

They want you to believe this is a jobs or economic issue, but it is not. It's an environmental and water issue. Otherwise the EPA and ADEQ would not be involved. They do not tell you that water contamination occurred at BHP's 90-day test facility five years ago. It appears Curis set up the production test facility in such a way so migration of the acid solution would not be detected during the two-year test facility.

Taseko currently has no in situ mining operations and in my view cannot make claims about the safety of this

♀

1 process. They claim this is a proven technology. If that was
2 the case, there would be no need for a test facility, and on
3 Curis's original mine application they would not have had 91
4 deficiencies. The test facility does not meet current state
5 water standards and could cost the public an estimated
6 \$19 million plus \$477,000 for treatment and monitoring costs

7 per year. The original injection permit was issued when BHP
8 owned most of the acreage in the area and there were no
9 residential areas or residential zoning. Now there are
10 thousands of homes and people adjacent to the test facility
11 and thousands more to come if we can stop this madness of in
12 situ mining.

13 The Town of Florence and the majority of people see
14 the future, and it does not include in situ mining. Let's not
15 put our water, homes, and growth at stake or risk for this
16 speculative effort. Thank you very much.

17 MS. WONG: Is Dionne Parrish here? Dean Parrish?
18 Larry Michael McConnell? Don Kempton?

19

20 COMMENTS

21 BY DON KEMPTON:

22 My name is Don Kempton. I was born and raised in
23 Florence, fifth-generation Arizonan. As I listen to all the
24 information that's poured out, I have to commend you -- I
25 would like to call you youth, but you're grown ups like we

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1 are -- for choosing a career with the EPA. Hard career.

2 I trust -- some may not -- but I trust that you
3 will do the right thing because there's a long time in the
4 mine and there's a long time in your job and you will have to
5 account for what happens.

6 with that said, I want to go back upstairs to some
7 of the people that have moved into our area. I have no
8 degree. I was raised on a farm. For those of you that are
9 from back east, how many can remember picking berries when you
10 were a child? You can't grow berries here. It's alkalized
11 soil. Your soil was acidic. It was high in acid. The whole

12 eastern coast is high in acid. We fought this thing over all
 13 night over this much acid, and the whole east coast is acidic.
 14 California you can grow strawberries. If you try growing
 15 strawberries here, they burn because it's alkali. When they
 16 put the acid in, it begins to neutralize. A lot of them are
 17 saying it's going to carry heavy metals. As acid and the
 18 alkali meet together in the right amount, it makes pure water.
 19 Pure water will not carry very many minerals. It drops out.
 20 That's why it tastes so good.

21 In Hayden they have what's called an SX plan. They
 22 stack ore up in a great big mountain and run acid through that
 23 ore. They catch it at the bottom, totally opposite of what
 24 they're wanting to do. They been doing it since 1966. I own
 25 a piece of property right up against Diversion Dam. Since

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1 1966 that's been coming this way. My well tested really close
 2 to pure. Maybe I need to bottle some water and bring it out
 3 to you guys and your alkali water. I don't know.

4 I support this project. I know that the leach
 5 systems around the country are working, and it's just the
 6 opposite of what they're doing. It works. They use gravity.
 7 This is using pumps. That's all I can say.

8

9

COMMENTS

10 BY JIM BURNS:

11 I'm Jim Burns. Basically what I was going to say
 12 has basically been covered by three or four of these people.
 13 I do want to say this. I live here in the wintertime. I live
 14 in Oregon in the summertime. I farmed up there for many
 15 years. We use acid to penetrate -- let the water penetrate

16 our grounds to get to our crops. I don't see a problem here
17 because acid is used in so many things and we -- that affect
18 our lives, and we haven't died yet. So I'm not sure that we
19 should be so concerned about it. But I do know that we're
20 running out of water.

21 34 percent of the world's water supply is gone.
22 And if it takes acid -- and I'm pretty sure they'd probably do
23 the same thing here. They use the same acid to open up the
24 ground so the water gets to the plants. I think that people
25 have to look at this very broadly and make a determination.

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1 But I do approve Florence Copper. Thank you.

2 MS. WONG: The next speakers are Tina Smotek, Rick
3 Zimmerman, Arne Hawkins, Brett Tanner, Don Huer, Andrew
4 Ramirez.

5 Tina Smotek? Andrew Ramirez?

6

7

COMMENTS

8 BY ANDREW M. RAMIREZ:

9 My name is Andrew Ramirez. I'm 65 years of age.
10 I've been in Florence 62 years. I'm a fifth-generation
11 Florence family. I was on the City Council for 10 years in
12 the 70's, mayor of the Town of Florence. Back in '75 Conoco
13 was going to have an open pit mine. Town Council was
14 110 percent for it.

15 Times have changed, and in those years nothing
16 has really happened until Curis has come along. And at the
17 time that Curis came on, I was concerned about the mine. I
18 was concerned about the acid going into the mines. I
19 figured acid is bad for everybody. After listening to the
20 people, I don't know if we should get rid of our farmers now

21 or not.

22 But on a serious issue, we have to listen to the
23 facts, and that's what you're going to do. I trust that you
24 will do what's in the best interest based on facts and
25 science. That's the only thing we have to go on. I feel

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1 bad for the people here that are against it. The only thing
2 I can recommend is that they take a tour. Once you take a
3 tour, you may have more questions than you -- you know, that
4 you need to know. I just think that we need to live
5 together as one unit, one Florence, and I hope that you'll
6 make the right decision and that decision comes as soon as
7 possible. I, as an individual, am in favor of the Florence
8 Copper. Thank you.

9

10 COMMENTS

11 BY RICHARD ZIMMERMAN:

12 Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is
13 Richard Zimmerman, and I am a registered geologist in the
14 state of Arizona and have worked for over 20 years in the
15 investigation and remediation of soil and groundwater
16 contamination, some of which has been resulted from industrial
17 operations and some from mining operations. And I've had the
18 opportunity to design, build, and operate groundwater
19 remediation systems for removal of groundwater contaminants.
20 And this works very effectively to draw the contaminants
21 through the aquifer to the groundwater wells where it can be
22 extracted and remediated. This technology has been applied
23 all over the United States and has resulted in cleanups of
24 numerous groundwater contaminant plumes. This is the same

25 technology that is going to be applied to the extraction of

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1 copper at the Florence Copper Project.

2 I've been involved with Florence Copper in the
3 design of the solvent extraction electrowinning process, and
4 I've been privy to the plans and the methods that they've
5 been -- that they've designed to protect the aquifer. And I'm
6 very pleased and can endorse the effectiveness of the methods
7 that they are planning to protect the aquifer and strongly
8 endorse the Florence Copper Project for its protection of the
9 aquifer.

10 In closing, this in situ copper process is one
11 which is very environmentally effective in removing copper and
12 providing the copper that the world is going to need in the
13 upcoming years. And this project will give an opportunity to
14 demonstrate this technology where it can -- and hopefully it
15 can be applied to other places around the world to provide the
16 copper that we need for the future. Thank you very much.

17

18 COMMENTS

19 BY ARNE HAWKINS:

20 Q. My name is Arne Hawkins, and I'm a resident of
21 Florence. Most people are talking about the economy, jobs,
22 money. And obviously that's not why we're here. We're
23 talking about protecting our natural resources. One of the
24 most critical is water. And there's a couple of things that
25 are facts.

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1 There is not one commercial in situ copper mine
2 in operation in North America, and there's a reason for

7 I'm one of the companies that Sydney Hay, who spoke earlier --
8 I'm one of those that work within the mining community that is
9 part of the AMIGOS group. I rely on the mining community for
10 my family's well being, and as part of that mining community,
11 our company would not be successful if it weren't doing things
12 safe. If we violated any of those environmental or health or
13 any other safety issues, we wouldn't be in business. We're
14 very good at what we do as well as all in the AMIGOS
15 community. We know what we're doing. We have science. We
16 have expertise behind us, and we encourage this project to go
17 forward.

18 I raised my kids, and I've tried to raise them to
19 educate yourself and don't rely on the internet. Internet's a
20 good thing but don't rely on it. Educate yourself beyond
21 that. It's kind of -- I've also tried to teach them, you
22 know, when you have trouble with plumbing, I don't call an
23 electrician to fix my sink. When my light bulb doesn't work,
24 I don't call a plumber.

25 I'm encouraging everybody here to go on the tour

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1 and at least give that side an opportunity to share what they
2 know and then make your decision based on that. Don't rely on
3 the internet or other peoples' opinion. Find out for
4 yourself. And I think, as you do that in life in general, you
5 will be a more well-rounded person with a better education.
6 They've given everybody an opportunity, and I think especially
7 the community members here take advantage of the opportunity.
8 I also think you have a responsibility to go and visit and ask
9 the hard questions. Ask them the things that mean the most to
10 you and have them answer it. They've showed to me on a couple
11 of tours they're willing to do that. Don't be shy. Ask the

12 questions and get your answers and then make the best
13 decision.

14 I support the project, and I hope it goes forward.
15 Thank you.

16 MS. WONG: Don Howard here? Okay. It's almost
17 10:00, and this hearing is supposed to close at 10:00. We have
18 about five speakers who haven't been called and several who
19 weren't here when they were called. And I'm going to extend the
20 hearing long enough to let these five people speak, and they
21 are Phil Lagas, Paul F. Corso, Jr., Judy Grove, Vallarie
22 Woolridge, and Tara Walter. Thanks for being patient.

23
24
25

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1 COMMENTS

2 BY PHIL LAGAS:

3 It's been a long night. I'm sure you're as tired
4 as I am. So I'll try to keep this brief. I am a 26-year
5 resident of Arizona. I'm a registered geologist in Arizona,
6 and I have 30 years of experience managing environmental
7 permitting and remediation projects, many of which include
8 control, capture, and recovery of fluid and subsurface.

9 I was involved in the permitting efforts undertaken
10 by BHP that resulted in the original APP and UIC permits
11 issued for the Florence Copper site in 1997. Once those
12 permits were issued, BHP conducted a 90-day pilot test using
13 similar procedures and solutions to those proposed by Florence
14 Copper. In fact data from that test was used to support
15 permit applications for the current project. Groundwater

16 monitoring has been conducted at the site quarterly since 1997
17 before and after the BHP test began and continues to the
18 present. Contrary to what I've heard others say, those
19 groundwater monitoring data have shown no adverse impacts to
20 groundwater above background outside of the BHP test well
21 field for the past 17 years.

22 The current draft UIC Permit is more protective
23 than the one BHP was issued prior to their test. As
24 additional protections, the new draft UIC Permit includes
25 additional monitoring wells that are located closer to the

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1 test well field, groundwater monitoring for the same
2 constituents required by the protection permit, and an
3 increased frequency of groundwater analyses for a more
4 comprehensive list of constituents than was previously
5 required.

6 The draft UIC Permit is more protective than the
7 original BHP UIC Permit and complements the State of Arizona
8 APP program to protect downgrade primary users. I fully
9 support the project and look forward to you guys issuing a
10 final permit. Thanks.

11

12 COMMENTS

13 BY PAUL F. CORSO, JR.:

14 Good evening. Everyone's getting tired I'm sure by
15 now. My name is Paul Corso. I've been living in Florence for
16 four years. I was born and raised in Globe/Miami, Arizona,
17 with the copper mines. I own a company called Mid State Pipe
18 and Supply. I moved down here four years ago, brought my
19 family with me.

20 I'm here tonight to express my support of Florence

21 Copper's UIC Permit. For many years Florence has relied on
22 the prisons and the farms for its economic growth. The same
23 people that are fighting against the copper mine would be
24 fighting against the prisons today. I guarantee it if it was
25 a hundred years ago.

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1 while the prisons are really good here, and that's
2 great, but we need to get good jobs here. I would not -- I
3 say very strongly that, if I thought this copper facility was
4 going to be a problem and would pollute the groundwater, I
5 wouldn't be here tonight. I live here with my wife, my
6 children, and my grandchildren. We breathe the air. We drink
7 the water. And the health of my family is much more important
8 and certainly my first priority over anything else on this
9 earth. But the fact that U.S. EPA says a permit is deserved
10 carries a lot of weight in my eyes anyway. I know how stingy
11 you guys are with your permits. I've been around mining my
12 whole life like I said.

13 Let's imagine for a minute there was no prisons in
14 Florence. If there were proposed to build them, you know, and
15 it wouldn't have anything left here except the mine would be
16 here. I think it's easy for the people to come here and say
17 that it's going to pollute the water that haven't been around
18 and maybe come from back east. I'm just here to say that I
19 think it's good for the community, good for the people. I
20 heard the mayor say it puts the housing prices down. I sold
21 my house up in Globe/Miami and bought a house for a fifth of
22 the price here, and it's ten times the home I owned up there.
23 And I still got money in my pocket. So I guarantee it does
24 not bring the housing down. Thank you guys.

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1 COMMENTS

2 BY JUDY GROVE:

3 My name is Judy Grove, and I'm actually reading
4 comments for my neighbor, Marilyn Callahan, who couldn't be
5 here. Her husband became very ill at the last minute. May I
6 read her comments?

7 Contamination by Motorola in Phoenix;

8 The gulf oil spill of 2010, devastation to the gulf
9 cost for years to come;

10 Picher, Oklahoma, a modern ghost town that the EPA
11 calls the most toxic place in America;

12 Exxon Valdez oil spill, 1989, and still feeling the
13 effects;

14 Tennessee oil ash spill, 2008, experts say the
15 impact will take decades to sort out;

16 Libby asbestos contamination, 1919, the mine closed
17 in 1990, and the company is now bankrupt after facing more
18 than 270,000 asbestos-related lawsuits. No one knows exactly
19 how many people have been affected, but the local health
20 clinic says it has 1400 patients and sees about 30 new
21 patients each month;

22 Love Canal, Three Mile Island meltdown.

23 This is a very short list. While these are not in
24 situ copper mining events, the point is that none of the
25 devastation was intended. All were extolled as safe by

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1 companies and approved by EPA where applicable. Obviously man
2 cannot guarantee safety. Per FCP's current flyer, the FCP's

3 in situ mine is the first of its kind for copper in the U.S.A.
4 But they can offer no guarantee that our water will not
5 through human error or otherwise become contaminated. The
6 risks are too great for nearby residents.

7 when pharmaceutical companies develop new drugs,
8 they don't immediately go to market. They first have animal
9 trials and then human trials. Humans who involve themselves
10 in such trials are volunteers. We do not wish to be the
11 guinea pigs for this mine which the FCP, EPA, or the ADEQ
12 cannot guarantee to be forever safe and without contamination
13 to our drinking water.

14 To approve the mine is to do the same thing that
15 has been done on the long list of disasters and expect
16 different results. This is the definition of insanity. Thank
17 you.

18

19

COMMENTS

20 BY VALLARIE WOOLRIDGE:

21 Good evening. My name is Vallarie Woolridge. I am
22 also a member of the Florence Town Council, and I appreciate
23 the opportunity to speak. I appreciate you extending the
24 hearing.

25 I've listened to the various opinions tonight,

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1 and I appreciate those opinions that have been shared. But
2 I also have a question. I'm curious as to what percentage
3 of those people that spoke in favor of the copper project
4 actually live in Florence and will be directly affected if
5 we have an incident. So that being said, let me share some
6 facts with you about the land that the copper project owns.

7 The land was purchased by Florence Copper knowing
8 that it was not properly zoned for mining and without any
9 discussions with Town elected officials or staff. Florence
10 Copper gambled that it would be able to change the zoning to
11 allow mining and lost. In 2003 the property was annexed to
12 the Town at the request of its owner at that time. Purists
13 argue that the 2003 pre-annexation agreement and PUD, a
14 planned unit development, which was part of that agreement,
15 included a mine overlay that would have permitted mining on
16 the property.

17 In 2007 at the request of the property's owner,
18 the Town again changed the zoning to residential under an
19 amended PUD in which all references to a mine overlay were
20 removed. Curis acquired the property in 2009 for
21 approximately \$8.5 million knowing that mining on the
22 property was illegal. In 2011 Curis requested that the
23 Florence Town Council change the Town's general plan to
24 allow mining on this property. The Town Council denied the
25 request in a public hearing. In 2011 submit of Curis

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1 amended. In 2007 the PUD was amended, and the mining
2 overlay was removed.

3 There has never been a mine on the property.
4 Various owners have explored the possibility of mining over
5 the years, but no one has ever gone beyond exploratory
6 activities. And I have done research. I have taken the
7 tour, and I'm still not in favor of the mine. And most of
8 what you see -- most of what you don't see is what can hurt
9 you. Everything that shines is not gold. There is a time
10 and a place for everything. The time is not now for this
11 project, and the place is not in Florence. Thank you.

12

13

COMMENTS

14 BY TARA WALTER:

15

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18

19

My name is Tara Walter. I am also a representative. I serve on the Florence Town Council. And I've done my homework. One of the main platforms of why I ran was because this mine was coming into our backyard, and I was very passionate about it.

20

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Now, looking back on some of the history, the ADEQ previously issued a temporary aquifer permit, and in November the State Water Quality Appeals Board agreed with recommendation of a judge who presided over a six-week hearing that the permit issued by the ADEQ was unlawful, arbitrary, unreasonable, and technically invalid. The Board found that

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Florence Copper's claims supporting the APP were largely unsupported and that Florence Copper could not provide the necessary data and information required to indicate its proposed pilots were safe.

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Florence Copper still has yet to identify one in situ mining that has not left behind an absolute mess. Florence Copper's recent letter to the editor in the Florence Reminder criticizes the Town of Florence for allegedly providing misleading or knowingly false information.

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The Town has been open, honest, and provided factual information throughout the process. We stand by our comments and our actions, and we don't have to include disclaimers at the end of our press releases like Florence Copper does when they send out their news and updates. Now Florence Copper states that the Town's own scientific expert

16 declared that the pilot test facility poses no treat to the
17 public health or drinking water.

18 Now, first of all, the gentleman referred to by
19 Florence Copper is not the Town's expert. Additionally, he
20 never said the pilot test, let alone full production, would
21 not pollute the groundwater. He said, if done right, the
22 pollution caused by the test operation would not reach
23 existing water wells. He did not say the groundwater would
24 not be polluted during the test pilot or during the full
25 production because the groundwater will be contaminated if

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1 Florence Copper is allowed to move forward. If we're not
2 going to pollute the water, Florence Copper would not need the
3 permit in the first place.

4 In closing, I'd also like to say in observations
5 this evening many of the stakeholders -- and I use the word
6 stakeholders -- are not residents for the majority of the Town
7 of Florence. They're from outside areas. The people of the
8 Town of Florence elected me, and one of the main issues that
9 continues today is we do not want this copper project to move
10 forward in our community. I do not support this project.
11 Thank you.

12 MS. WONG: Okay. Is Dionne Parrish here? Or Larry
13 Michael McConnell? Tina Smotek? Don Huer?

14 Okay. Before we conclude is there anyone else here
15 who would like to make a comment?

16

17 COMMENTS

18 BY DAVID RAWLS:

19 Good evening. I'm David Rawls. I live in Florence
20 Gardens. I got here a little too late to sign up for the

21 roster.

22 I probably have more time involved with mining than
 23 anyone here. I've been involved with mining since I was 6
 24 years old which was 65 years ago. We had a really good mining
 25 operation in northern Arizona. It was clean. There were no

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1 chemicals. We were in the flagstone industry. That only
 2 lasted 10 years because the Executive Branch in the form of
 3 the U.S. Forest Service Department of Interior basically put
 4 us out of operation.

5 Like I said, there were no chemicals. It was a
 6 natural product that beautifies the country; made the country
 7 better, wealthier; provided jobs. The Executive Branch shut
 8 our business down by helping the Santa Fe Railway Corporation
 9 trespass. If we had been left alone, that enterprise would
 10 probably be employing 20, 30, 40 people. We had 120 acres of
 11 beautiful flagstone, 12 beautiful colors on 120 acres.

12 I'm here simply to ask you to let this project have
 13 a chance. This is America. People should be allowed to have
 14 a chance to do what they want to do. They should be allowed
 15 to pursue their American dream. I was denied that. I'm 71
 16 years old now. My life was made hell by the Executive Branch.
 17 I'm here to suggest to you that, if you don't give this
 18 project a chance, at least a chance, there's going to be
 19 writing on the wall, and it's going to be very clear.

20 America is in bad shape now because the Executive
 21 Branch for a long time has been hostile to mining, to natural
 22 resources, to small communities. I've been battling trying to
 23 wake America up. I don't know if I'm doing any good, but I am
 24 talking tonight. And I thank you for listening. And God

25 bless America.

♀

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1 MS. WONG: Okay. Before I close this meeting I just
 2 want to let everyone know that EPA's notice of the final
 3 decision on this permit will be sent to every person who
 4 submitted written comments or who signed up at the registration
 5 table to receive notice and provided an email address or postal
 6 address. This information is also available on EPA's website.
 7 So you can keep checking there.

8 I guess, if there are no further comments, I'll
 9 close the hearing. Public Hearing is closed. Thank you,
 10 everyone, for coming and participating in this public hearing.

11 (The Public Hearing concluded at 10:22 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF ARIZONA)
 2 COUNTY OF MARICOPA) ss.

3 BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were
4 taken before me; that the witness before testifying was duly
5 sworn by me to testify to the whole truth; that the foregoing
6 pages are a full, true, and accurate record of the
7 proceedings, all done to the best of my skill and ability;
8 that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and
9 thereafter reduced to print under my direction.

10 I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the
11 parties hereto, nor am I in any way interested in the outcome
12 hereof.

13 [] Review and signature was requested.

14 [] Review and signature was waived.

15 [X] Review and signature not required.

16 I CERTIFY that I have complied with the ethical
17 obligations set forth in ACJA 7-206(F)(3) and ACJA 7-206
18 J(1)(g)(1) and (2).

19 Dated at Phoenix, Arizona, this 23rd day of
20 February, 2015.

21 _____
22 Diane Donoho, RPR
23 Arizona Certified Reporter
24 Certificate No. 50691

25 * * * * *

26 I CERTIFY that GRIFFIN & ASSOCIATES, LLC, has
27 complied with the ethical obligations set forth in ACJA
28 7-206(J)(1)(g)(1) through (6).

29 _____
30 GRIFFIN & ASSOCIATES, LLC
31 Registered Reporting Firm
32 Arizona RRF No. R1005

♀