



March 6, 2026

Contact: John Dougherty, (520) 261-5014, jdougherty@scenicsantaritas.org

For Immediate Release

SSSR files protest challenging April 29 auction of 160 acres for Copper World

Tucson—Save the Scenic Santa Ritas today filed a [formal protest](#) challenging the Arizona State Land Department’s pending April 29 auction of 160-acres of State Trust Land requested by Toronto-based Hudbay Minerals for the proposed Copper World mine.

The protest challenges the state-approved \$993,000 valuation of the land, the state’s failure to determine the impact on the value of nearby State Trust Land caused by Hudbay’s anticipated groundwater depletion, and the department’s violation of a statute requiring five-year disposition plans for state lands prior to being sold.

“Once again, we are requesting Governor Katie Hobbs to withdraw this ill-conceived auction of land that Hudbay states it won’t need for at least 15 years,” said SSSR Executive Director John Dougherty. “This auction undermines the public’s faith that the department is working in the best interest of Arizona citizens rather than enriching a foreign mining company with a sweetheart deal.”

The appraisal acknowledged that the proposed use of the land was for industrial purposes but then used rural residential and vacant land to determine the value of the property. Hudbay intends to use the land to dump mining waste which will allow it to process additional copper ore worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

The sale of the land facilitates development of the mine that will pump at least 9 million gallons of groundwater a day from the aquifer beneath Sahuarita and Green Valley, which is already in a subsidence zone. The appraisal did not determine the impact of groundwater depletion on the value of thousands of acres of State Trust Land slated for development immediately east of Hudbay’s primary well field.

SSSR’s protest also focuses on the department’s failure to have a legally required disposition plan in place before auctioning the 160-acre parcel. The protest states the department may only “cause state lands to be sold if the sale of them is not prohibited by law.”

“SSSR will consider all legal options if the department rejects the protest including filing a lawsuit that could result in a ruling that restricts future state land auctions until the disposition plan is in place,” Dougherty said.

###