

# Readers' Forum

## Copper Rule support not popular

Dear editor,

In an article in the Silver City Daily Press on Nov. 11, New Mexico Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn said at a recent meeting of the Gila Economic Development Alliance that "This community was a strong supporter of the (copper) rule when it was adopted."

Flynn's statements are not supported by facts. A review of the record before the Water Quality Control Commission shows 120 Grant County residents opposed the Flynn/Freeport-McMoRan Copper Rule, while only 12 comments were received from Grant County in support.

That's a ratio of 10-1 against and it doesn't include Grant County organizations that opposed the rule, including the Gila Resources Information Project, the Gila Conservation Coalition and the Upper Gila Watershed Alliance.

The number of supportive commenters who didn't have some kind of financial tie to or reliance on Freeport-McMoRan or copper mining was 0.

Other entities opposing the Flynn/Freeport rule included the League of Women Voters, the Attorney General's Office and two former chiefs of the Environment Department's Ground Water Quality Bureau.

More than 1,200 comments opposing the Copper Rule came in from around the state, including from other counties impacted or potentially impacted by copper mining. Only 15 supported it.

The truth is, the Copper Rule that is supposed to protect our drinking water from copper-mining pollution actually allows water pollution and it therefore violates New Mexico law.

Let's let the New Mexico Supreme Court do its job and make its decision based on the law and science, without the political interference of NMED Secretary Flynn acting on behalf of his friends at Freeport-McMoRan.

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