July/August 2026 Update on the Community Protection & Benefit Agreement (CPBA) Process

Throughout July and August, the Town of Patagonia, the City of Nogales, Santa Cruz County, and South32, collectively the “Signatories,” continued advancing the Community Protection & Benefit Agreement (CPBA) process. Work focused on public engagement planning, progressing Early Action projects, interface with attorneys to provide key content for the CPBA and continued coordination with Spheros on protections.

What We Worked On

Updated Agreement

The Signatories worked on updating the March 2026 Community Investment Agreement (CIA) to outline a full CPBA that expands on the CIA by addressing protections and longer term needs based and vision based benefits considerations. The Signatories’ attorneys are negotiating the details of this outline with the objective of having a draft for discussion by the Signatories in October or November.

Schedule and Shared Objectives

The Signatories agreed to extend the expected CPBA signing schedule into the first quarter 2027. This adjustment will allow more time for engagement and avoid the year-end holiday period for important community and Signatory review.

Community Engagement and Website Updates

The Stakeholder Input for Protections Forms were finalized, and the forms were posted on www.cpba-hermosa.org. The public comment period was extended to August 31, 2026, following requests for a simplified survey form.

The Signatories also agreed on a process (shown below) for reviewing public comments submitted through the website.



Related Technical Updates

The University of Arizona Health Impact Assessment team provided a progress update and expects to deliver the Health Impact Assessment by December.

The Spheros Protection Roadmap team also provided an update and remains on target to deliver its recommendations regarding protections / monitoring by the end of October.

Protections, Monitoring, and CPBA Planning

South32 presented a summary to the Signatories of mitigation and monitoring measures documented in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), as well as additional protections being conducted beyond FEIS requirements.

Community Input

July/August Website Submissions

- 59 Survey Submissions
- 12 Comments/Messages

Comments, questions, and other feedback received on this website continue to be reviewed and considered by the Signatories as part of ongoing community engagement. Community feedback remains an important part of the CPBA process and helps inform priorities, investments, protections, and future agreement development.

The Signatories expect to schedule a series of public information events later this year and in early 2027. Please keep an eye on this space for updates and notices.