

Threat to Mogollon

A small New Mexican community must fight back when a foreign mining company threatens their resources and livelihoods.



Synopsis

The historical town of Mogollon is like no other. nestled in the middle of a mountain pass 75 miles away from the nearest city. The residents depend on the abundance of the surrounding wilderness for their livelihoods. Unfortunately, like many other towns in the area, Mogollon's abundant natural resources attract mining companies who want to extract from and exploit the community. Summa Silver's bottomless funding allows the mining company to run ongoing political and information campaigns, swaying politicians and people to their favor. Convincing them to ignore their negative operations. Unbeknownst to many, Mogollon would bear the ecological destruction a mining operation would cause. Alone the residents were able to delay drilling, but it didn't last long. Seeking a permanent solution, the community is working with other environmental stewards to campaign for the preservation of their home.



The town of Mogollon was once known as the West's wildest and richest mining town. In the 1950s was home to around 4,000 people, most of whom worked in the mines until the 1970s when the mines closed. Now known as a ghost town Mogollon has been home to 15 residents in an isolated peaceful wilderness. However, all that changed in 2022 when a Canadian mining company began drilling for gold a few miles away.



Historically, similar towns in the area have been heavily impacted by mining companies. In the 1950s, the entire population of nearby Santa Rita was relocated, and the town leveled, to make way for an open pit mine. An entire generation of people lost their homes and were forced off of their lands.



From [linealist](#)
New Mexican
History and Archive
Projects



Currently, Summa Silver Company is obtaining permits to expand their mining operations into Mogollon. In order to receive those permits from the government, they must prove that the community of Mogollon benefits from their presence. Summa Silver claims that they bring business to the community by way of buying local gas, food, and other resources, but inhabitants of the city have said otherwise. The businesses that would truly benefit from those transactions are all owned by a single family, leaving the rest of the community to struggle with the burden of the ecological destruction that the mining operation would cause.

From Summa Silver Website

About Summa Silver Corp

Summa Silver Corp is a Canadian junior mineral exploration company. The Company owns a 100% interest in the Hughes property located in central Nevada and has an option to earn 100% interest in the Mogollon property located in southwestern New Mexico. The Hughes property is host to the high-grade past-producing Belmont Mine, one of the most prolific silver producers in the United States between 1903 and 1929. The Mogollon property is the largest historic silver producer in New Mexico. Both properties have remained inactive since commercial production ceased and neither have seen modern exploration prior to the Company's involvement.

From NM Political Report

The drilling program expanded in February when a second drilling rig was brought in, however operations paused in March so that Mexican spotted owl surveys could be conducted. The drilling pause came after WildEarth Guardians submitted a letter to New Mexico's Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department highlighting the organization's concerns that Summa Silver had not conducted Mexican spotted owl surveys prior to drilling. WildEarth Guardians said that the drilling permits required the company to use qualified biologists to conduct the surveys.

From Summa Silver Website

Summa Silver Resumes Drilling at the High-Grade Mogollon Silver Project, New Mexico

Sep 28, 2022



Director

Nidia Jimenez was born and raised in El Paso, TX where she grew up hearing stories from the US/Mex Borderlands. She is a Latin x environmental filmmaker who has always been drawn to true stories. Especially those that involve issues in her community, the Texas borderland. She is inspired by the untold stories of people who cross the border every day hoping for a better life. Growing up in a melting pot of border culture, the music, flavor and stories have given her a unique and underrepresented worldview perspective. She values sharing stories in a meaningful way and understands the power these stories have to help the community.

Director of Photography

Annie is a 21 year old filmmaker from Las Cruces, New Mexico. She's very passionate about documentary filmmaking, especially when it works to bring attention to the systems that harm the planet we call home. She enjoys meeting new people, making new connections and gaining a multitude of perspectives. She has experience with camerawork, editing, and structuring a store



Director's Statement

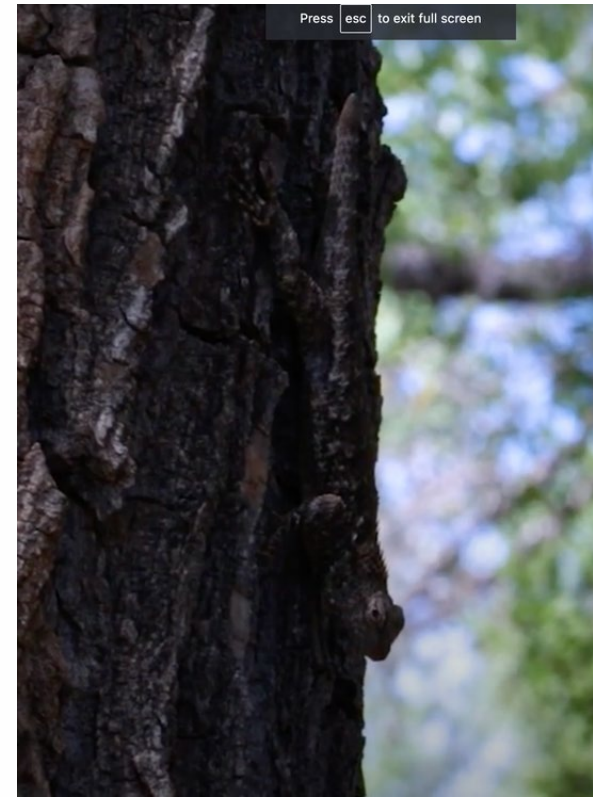
Living in a desert town, I never had the resources to camp, travel and appreciate New Mexico. It wasn't until Summer of 2022 when I enrolled in a documentary production class at New Mexico State University and I found that opportunity. The class led me to direct my first ever documentary, a film on the Gila National Forest. Through the research and production of the film I found my way into a Green Chile Cheeseburger restaurant in the middle of the woods. Where I was welcomed by a community who felt unheard and concerned they would bear the ecological destruction a mining operation would cause. They gracefully allowed me to film a portion of their story and grow their worries about the Mogollon's future.

A few weeks later I found myself interviewing Senator Hemphill from Silver City, NM for my Gila Documentary. Getting to know each other she asked me what project I was the most proud of. I told her the story of my visit to Mogollon and the untold stories of its residents. Coincidentally, Senator Hemphill's next meeting was with Summa Silver mining company asking for permits to keep drilling at Mogollon.

I understand the power these stories truly have to help communities because I have seen it first hand. Since then I have been driven to expand this ongoing story and give the people of Mogollon a voice even hundreds of miles away from their home.



A mining ghost town's struggle to stay dead



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