

Protecting Baja California from Mining

PARTICIPACIÓN PÚBLICA
MINERÍA Y MEDIO AMBIENTE



Large-scale mining proposed for Baja California threatens local water resources in an area already under pressure from population growth and mega-resort development.

“Citizens have a right to be involved in decisions that impact their livelihoods and the environment, but it can be daunting to understand the process,” says ELAW partner Fernando Ochoa at Environmental Defense of the Northwest (DAN).

Mining companies take advantage of this inequity, submitting highly technical proposals with unsupported promises to use the latest technology to protect the environment while providing a boost to the economy. Mining laws offer no space for public participation, so communities feel powerless.

DAN is helping communities on the Baja California peninsula participate in decisions about proposed mining activities through workshops and a public participation guide: *Participación Pública, Minería y Medio Ambiente*.

The guide provides an overview of Mexico’s mining laws and explains the complex permitting system and regulatory standards that apply to mining operations. It identifies opportunities in the decisionmaking process for citizens to gather information, ask questions, present alternative ideas, influence mining regulations and policy, report violations, and seek administrative or judicial relief.

DAN’s María Llano took the lead in the research of the guide, with help from Fernando, colleagues at DAN, and ELAW’s Pedro León and Killian Doherty. Many thanks to the International Community Foundation and Resources Legacy Fund for supporting this work.