



United States Department of Agriculture
Tonto National Forest

Resolution Copper Project and Land Exchange Environmental Impact Statement

Project Update #1
March 2017

Scoping Report Available at www.ResolutionMineEIS.us

The Tonto National Forest (Forest Service) is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) to consider and disclose the environmental effects from: 1) approval of a proposed plan of operations for mining activities on National Forest land; 2) the exchange of land between Resolution Copper and the United States; and 3) any necessary amendments to the Tonto National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

Resolution Copper submitted the General Plan of Operations (GPO) to the Forest Service in November 2013. The proposed GPO would authorize surface disturbance on Forest Service lands associated with development, mining, and processing of copper and molybdenum. In December 2014, Congress passed the Carl Levin and Howard P. 'Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (NDAA). Section 3003 of this law authorizes and directs the Secretary of Agriculture to administer a land exchange, which will convey 2,422 acres of Forest Service land in the area of the proposed mine to Resolution Copper in exchange for 5,344 acres of private land on 8 parcels located elsewhere in eastern Arizona.

The Forest Service has completed the Scoping Report for the EIS that includes information on the overall scoping process and what concerns were presented by the various participants. The purpose of the scoping process is to provide agencies and members of the public with an opportunity to provide input on the scope of the proposed project and content of the issue analysis in the EIS. The Forest Service conducted a 120-day *public* scoping for the EIS from March 18, 2016, to July 18, 2016. They also conducted *internal* agency scoping with Forest Service staff and *cooperating agency and tribal* scoping with those entities.

All comment letters were carefully read to identify comments. The contents of the comments are summarized in the Scoping Report. The topic areas or concerns contained in the Scoping Report will be used to develop the issues, alternatives, and mitigation strategies that will be analyzed in the EIS process.

Public Scoping Numbers

TOTAL SUBMITTALS = **133,653**
DUPLICATES = **141**
FORM LETTERS = **131,592**
FORM LETTERS PLUS* = **683**
UNIQUE LETTERS = **1,237**
INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS** = **6,948**

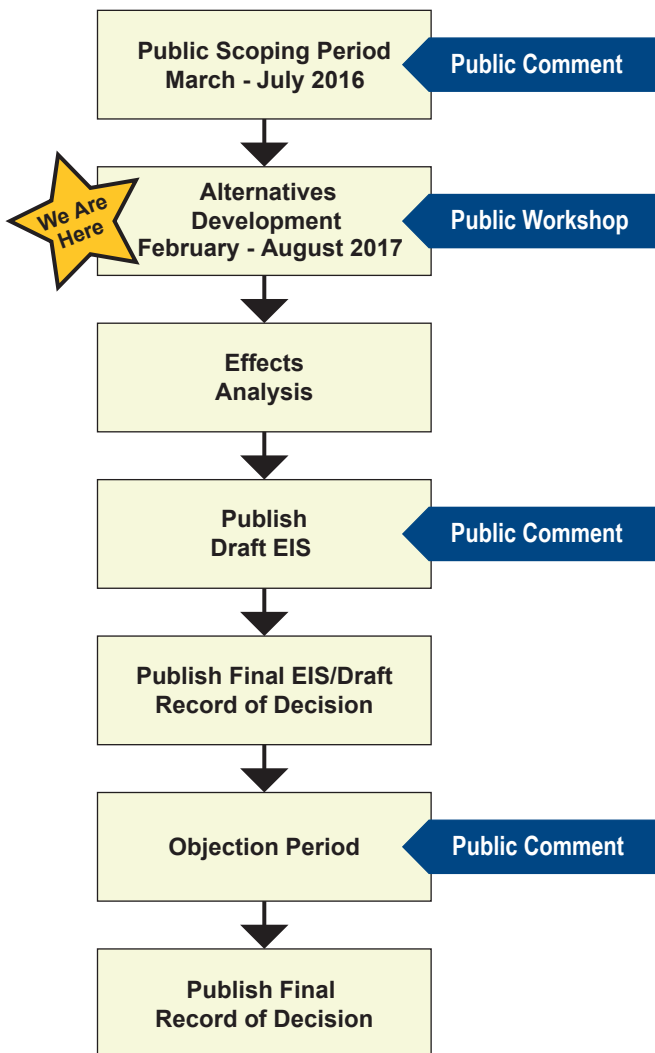
*Form Letter with additional comment
**Form letter comments are counted one time

Next Steps in the EIS Process

Primary Public Scoping Concerns

- Socioeconomic effects (both beneficial and adverse)
- Subsidence at Oak Flat
- Location of Tailings Storage Facility
- Contamination of groundwater and surface waters
- Impacts to biological resources, wildlife, and wildlife habitat
- Permanent impacts to tribal cultural resources
- Loss of recreational access and opportunities
- Threats to public health and safety
- Impacts to scenery resources

The NEPA Process



Alternative Development Public Workshop

The next step in the EIS process is **alternatives development**. The Forest Service is required to investigate alternatives to various aspects of the Proposed Action. Alternatives are supposed to be designed to “resolve” or “address” the key issues identified during scoping.

The Forest Service is hosting workshops to 1) update the public on the status of the EIS process 2) describe the alternatives development process, and 3) solicit input on the criteria being used to evaluate alternative tailings storage facility locations. The public will provide input as to the relative importance of a variety of environmental and social criteria that the Forest Service will use to evaluate alternative tailings facility locations.

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Superior High School
100 Mary Drive, Superior, Arizona

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

Southwest Regional Library,
775 North Greenfield Road, Gilbert, Arizona

The public workshops will be held from **5 to 8 p.m.**
The meeting agenda is open house 5 p.m.;
presentation 5:30 p.m.; question and answers 6 p.m.;
and workshop 6:30 to 8 p.m.

The online workshop will be available from March 23
through April 5, 2017, at the project website
www.ResolutionMineEIS.us.

To learn more about the proposed project, visit the project website at www.ResolutionMineEIS.us or contact Mary Rasmussen, Tonto National Forest, 602-225-5246 mcrasmussen@fs.fed.us.