



File Code: 1950
Date: September 6, 2017

William Werkheiser
Director (Acting)
United States Geological Survey
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston, VA 20192

Dear Mr. Werkheiser:

I would like to invite the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to take part in the environmental review of the Resolution Copper Project and Land Exchange Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as a participating agency.

The EIS will analyze the environmental effects of:

- a mining proposal submitted to the Tonto National Forest by Resolution Copper Mining, LLC;
- the exchange of 2,422 acres of federal land near Oak Flat for 5,344 acres of privately held land elsewhere in Arizona; and
- any necessary amendments to the Tonto National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

Currently, we are developing alternatives to the proposed action based on issues raised during the public scoping process in 2016. Additional information regarding the project may be found at our project web site (www.resolutionmineeis.us) or by calling or e-mailing Mary Rasmussen of my staff (480-710-7304 or mcrasmussen@fs.fed.us).

The scope of the EIS is, in part, set forth in Section 3003 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (P.L. 113-291). This law requires the Secretary of Agriculture to prepare a single environmental impact statement, which shall be used as the basis for all decisions under Federal law related to the proposed mine, the Resolution mine plan of operations, and any related major federal actions.

Participating agency status is an environmental review role reserved for agencies who have an interest in and relevant information to share about a proposed project, but who have less time and resource capacity available compared to a cooperating agency (23 U.S.C. 139(d)). The Council on Environmental Quality has established clear expectations that cooperating agencies have a higher degree of authority, responsibility, and involvement in the environmental review process than participating agencies. Joining the project as a participating agency would meet our mutual interest to cooperatively achieve better outcomes and would also allow the USGS flexibility in



how and when to participate in the environmental review process.

Please consider this invitation to join the Resolution Copper Project and Land Exchange environmental review process as a participating agency. I would appreciate a written response for the project files regarding your level of interest and an agency point of contact for future correspondence regarding this project.

Sincerely,



NEIL BOSWORTH
Forest Supervisor

cc: mhitzman@usgs.gov; mcraasmussen@fs.fed.us