



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Coronado National Forest
Supervisor's Office

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Tucson, Arizona 85701
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File Code: 2810/1950

Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Interested Party,

I am writing to inform you that I have prepared the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and draft Record of Decision (ROD) for the Rosemont Copper Project. This letter is intended to provide a brief background of the project and then advise eligible parties of the opportunity to object to the project and to describe the process and timelines involved in objection process.

Background

In July 2007, Rosemont Copper submitted a preliminary mining plan of operations (MPO) to the Coronado National Forest requesting approval to construct, operate, reclaim, and close an open-pit mine on and adjacent to NFS lands for development of the Rosemont ore deposit. This project area is located about 30 miles south of Tucson, Arizona. It is on approximately 995 acres of private land owned by Rosemont Copper Company, 3,670 acres of Forest Service System lands, and 75 acres of Arizona State Land Department lands. The Rosemont Copper Project consists of the development of an open pit mine, ore processing plant, waste disposal facilities, access roads and utility corridors. The operation would produce concentrates of copper, molybdenum, and silver. The life of the operation, including construction, operation, reclamation and closure, is approximately 24.5 to 30 years.

The Forest Service's review of the 2007 preliminary MPO identified the need for additional information. In February 2008, a supplemental preliminary MPO was accepted for environmental review by the Coronado National Forest. Since then, the Forest Service has worked diligently to process the request in a timely manner while ensuring compliance with regulation, policy and direction. Furthermore, the Forest Service has worked closely with the proponent, cooperating agencies, many different organizations, special interest groups, and with the general public to ensure all comments were considered throughout the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review.

The draft EIS was released on October 19, 2011 followed by a comment period through January 31, 2012. Seven open public meetings were held early in the public comment period to provide information on the draft EIS and solicit public comment. In addition, oral and written comments were accepted throughout the public involvement period. Over 25,000 submissions were received during this public comment period.

Comments received on the draft EIS have been considered in preparation of the final EIS and draft Record of Decision. In addition, the Forest Service has continued to work closely with cooperating and regulatory agencies in fine-tuning the proposal, improving impact analysis, and developing mitigation and monitoring measures. To date, the Rosemont Copper proposal has been one of the largest and most complex projects undertaken by the Forest Service.



The FEIS and draft ROD are available for review online on the project website at <http://www.rosemonteis.us>. These documents are also available for viewing electronically (DVD) and in hard copy at all of the Coronado National Forest offices and at select libraries throughout the area. For a complete list of locations containing both electronic and hard copies, please visit the project website or contact the Forest Service at 520-388-8300.

Objection Process

Unresolved concerns about the FEIS and the draft ROD for the Rosemont Copper Project will be addressed through a new objection process recently implemented by the Forest Service. Rather than seeking higher-level review of unresolved concerns *after* a project decision has been made, those who are eligible will be able to seek that review *before* the project decision has been signed. We believe that considering public concerns before a decision is made aligns with our collaborative approach to public land management and increases the likelihood of resolving those concerns resulting in better, more informed decisions.

In order to file an objection, you must have previously submitted specific comments regarding the proposed project in accordance with regulations at 36 CFR 218.5(a). Written comments are those submitted to the responsible official or designee during the designated opportunity for public participation provided for the proposed project. Written comments could include submission of transcriptions or other notes from oral statements or presentation.

Objections must be submitted within 45 calendar days following the publication of this notice in the *Arizona Daily Star*. The publication date in this newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. It should be noted that the regulations prohibit extending the time to file an objection. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

Objections, including attachments, must be filed via mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays). Electronically filed objections may be submitted by email in word (.doc), rich text format (.rtf), text (.txt), and hypertext markup language (.html). Please submit your objections to the Regional Forester at:

Mail: Southwestern Region
333 Broadway SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Phone: 505-842-3292
TTY: 505-842-3198
Fax: 505-842-3110

Email: objections-southwestern-regional-office@fs.fed.us

Per regulations at 36 CFR 218.8(d), an objection must include (at a minimum) the following:

- the objector's name and address, with a telephone number, if available;
- a signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for email may be filed with the objection);
- identification of the lead objector when multiple names are listed on an objection (verification of the identity of the lead objector shall be provided upon request);
- the name of the proposed project (*Rosemont Copper*), the name and title of the Responsible Official (*Jim Upchurch*), and the name(s) of the National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented (*Coronado National Forest, Nogales Ranger District*);

- a description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider. Please note, incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in §218.8(b);
- a statement that demonstrates connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection. Issues raised in objections must be based on timely, specific comments regarding the proposed project, unless based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities.

Thank you for your interest in the Rosemont Copper Project.

Sincerely,



JIM UPCHURCH
Forest Supervisor