United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

**Southwestern
Region**

MB-R3-05-3

September 2011

Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Rosemont Copper Project

A Proposed Mining Operation
Coronado National Forest
Pima County, Arizona

Volume 1

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United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Coronado National Forest Supervisor's Office
300 W. Congress
Tucson, Arizona 85701
Phone (520) 388-8300
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Deaf and Hearing Impaired 711

File Code: 1950/2810
Date: September 28, 2011

ROSEMONT COPPER PROJECT:
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Dear Interested Party:

The Rosemont Copper Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) reports the Forest Service's analysis findings for operation of a proposed open-pit copper mine south of Tucson, Arizona. As proposed by the Rosemont Copper Company, the operation would directly impact approximately 3,670 acres of National Forest System land on the Coronado National Forest, 995 acres of private land owned by the Rosemont Copper Company, 75 acres of State Trust land administered by the Arizona State Land Department, and 15 acres of Bureau of Land Management-administered lands. The Forest Service is the lead agency in this National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. Many other Federal, state, and local entities are participating as cooperating agencies. For detailed information about the proposal and the participants, please refer to www.RosemontEIS.us.

I am distributing the DEIS in anticipation of the Environmental Protection Agency's publication of a Notice of Availability of the DEIS in the *Federal Register*, which formally begins a 90-day public comment period. Public comments play an integral role in our NEPA review process[1]. To be most useful in preparing a Final Environmental Impact Statement and rendering decisions about the project, your comments should relate to specific environmental issues. General comments and subjective expressions of advocacy or opposition to a project or alternative usually are not helpful unless they are substantiated by a link to a relevant issue.

Although there are many ways to submit comments, you only need to provide your comment once for it to receive full consideration. You may submit comments electronically; by U.S. mail, facsimile, telephone; and at public meetings. Electronic comments may be submitted on the project website at www.RosemontEIS.us by following the link to "Commenting on the DEIS". Emailed comments may also be submitted to CoronadoNF@RosemontEIS.us and comments-southwestern-coronado@fs.fed.us. Emailed comments should identify "Rosemont Copper Project DEIS" in the subject line with attachments in Microsoft Word (.docx), rich-text format (.rtf), or portable document format (.pdf).

[1] *Reviewers should provide their comments during the comment period on the DEIS. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to comments at one time and to use the acquired information in preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision-making process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the NEPA process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to their viewers' position and contentions [Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978)]. Environmental objections that could have been raised at the Draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement [City of Angoon v. Hodel (9th Circuit, 1986) and Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980)].*

Written comments may be sent via U.S. mail to: Rosemont Comments
P.O. Box 4207
Logan, UT 84323

Facsimiles may be sent to the attention of "Rosemont Copper Project DEIS" at (435) 750-8799.

Oral comments will be accepted by telephone on (888) 654-6646. In addition, both oral and written comments will be received by the Forest at the following scheduled DEIS meetings. If you have questions concerning special meeting needs or to request a sign language interpreter, please contact the Coronado National Forest at (520) 388-8300-voice or (520) 388-8304-TTY, dial 711 from a TTY for relay service, or email mailroom_r3_coronado@fs.fed.us 10 days prior to the meeting.

- **October 22, 2011, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**
  Desert Diamond Conference Center, 1100 West Pima Mine Rd., Sahuarita, AZ
- **November 5, 2011, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**
  Elgin Elementary School, HC1 Box 36, Elgin, AZ, 85611
- **November 12, 2011, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**
  Palo Verde High School, 1302 South Avenida Vega, Tucson, AZ
- **November 19, 2011, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**
  Empire High School, 10701 East Mary Ann Cleveland Way, Tucson, AZ
- **December 7, 2011, 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.**
  Benson High School, 360 South Patagonia Street, Benson, AZ
- **January 7, 2012, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**
  Desert Diamond Conference Center, 1100 West Pima Mine Rd., Sahuarita, AZ

Please be aware that all comments we receive regarding the DEIS, including personally identifiable information (PII) such as names and addresses, are considered part of the administrative record for this NEPA review. Within this context, your PII may be released to a third-party upon request under the authority of the Freedom of Information Act. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to appeal a subsequent decision under 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 215.

I look forward to receiving your comments and working with you to complete the NEPA review of the Rosemont Copper Project.

Thank you for you interest and participation in the activities of the Coronado National Forest.

Sincerely,

for JIM UPCHURCH
Forest Supervisor

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Environmental Impact Statement for the Rosemont Copper Project

Coronado National Forest
Pima County, Arizona

Lead Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service

Cooperating Agencies: Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Saguaro National Park, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory – Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of the Air Force Davis-Monthan Air Force Base 162nd Fighter Airwing, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Arizona Department of Mines and Mineral Resources, Arizona Department of Transportation, Arizona Department of Water Resources, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona Geological Survey, Arizona State Land Department, Arizona State Mine Inspector, Arizona State Parks, Pima County, City of Tucson, Town of Sahuarita

Responsible Official: Jim Upchurch, Coronado National Forest, Forest Supervisor
300 W. Congress St.
Tucson, AZ 85701

For Information Contact: Bev Everson, Interdisciplinary Team Leader
300 W. Congress St.
Tucson, AZ 85701
(520) 388-8300

Abstract:
This draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) documents the analysis of six alternatives (including a "no action" alternative) that was developed for the Rosemont Copper Project analysis. Alternative 4 – Barrel Alternative is the U.S. Forest Service preferred alternative. The Notice of Intent to prepare this document was published in the Federal Register on March 13, 2008. The public comment period was subsequently extended with a Notice of Intent that was published in the Federal Register on April 29, 2008. The Rosemont Copper Project proposes to mine copper and associated minerals on the Nogales Ranger District of the Coronado National Forest. The proposed activities include an amendment to the 1986 "Coronado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan."

A final environmental impact statement (FEIS) and a record of decision may be released following public review and comment on this DEIS. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 215.

Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the DEIS. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments at one time and to use information acquired in the preparation of the final environmental impact statement, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision making process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their

participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewers' position and contentions (Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. *v*. NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978)). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the FEIS (City of Angoon *v*. Hodel (9th Circuit, l986) and Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. *v*. Harris, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980)). Comments on the DEIS should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1503.3).

Send Comments to: Rosemont Comments
P.O. Box 4207
Logan, UT 84323

Date Comments Must Be Received: The 90-day public comment period begins the day after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes a Notice of Availability for the DEIS in the Federal Register. Comments MUST be received before the close of business on the last day of the comment period.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Documents

forest plan	"Coronado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan," as amended (U.S. Forest Service 1986)
preliminary MPO	preliminary mine plan of operations (WestLand Resources Inc. 2007)

Other abbreviations

°F	degrees Fahrenheit
ΔE	color difference index
Augusta Resource	Augusta Resource Corporation
CD	compact disc
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
DEIS	draft environmental impact statement
FEIS	final environmental impact statement
Forest Service	U.S. Forest Service
g	the acceleration due to gravity equaling 32 feet per second squared
ID team	interdisciplinary team
IMPLAN	Impact Analysis for Planning
MPO	mine plan of operations
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NO_x	nitrogen oxides
O_3	ozone
Pb	lead
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter
PM_{10}	particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter
ROD	record of decision
Rosemont Copper	Rosemont Copper Company
Rosemont Copper Project EIS	Rosemont Copper Project Environmental Impact Statement
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
TEP	Tucson Electric Power
the Coronado	Coronado National Forest (the agency)
VOC	volatile organic compound