



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Augusta Provides Permitting Update on its Rosemont Copper Project**

**Denver, CO, February 23, 2012 – Augusta Resource Corporation (TSX/NYSE Amex: AZC)** (“Augusta”) provides an update on the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding review from the regional Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its Rosemont Copper project.

The San Francisco Environmental Protection Agency office is the final agency to submit comments to the USFS on the draft EIS, joining the 25,000 comments of which approximately 10,000 have been characterized as form letters or duplicates by the USFS. The EPA review was provided approximately 30 days past the official close of the public comment period, due to a request from the EPA to the USFS for additional time. The receipt of these comments now allows the USFS to complete its response to comments, and a final EIS for the Rosemont Copper project along with the Record of Decision.

*“This is a standard part of what a regional EPA office does,” said Rod Pace, Rosemont Copper’s president and CEO. “It’s part of the rigorous review process that leads to a robust final EIS required by the National Environmental Policy Act.”*

The next steps for Rosemont Copper will be to finalize the air and aquifer protection permits by the State of Arizona, complete the Fish and Wildlife Service consultation process and develop the draft mitigation plans for species protection, mine reclamation and site closure. Much of the technical and analytical work to complete these next steps has already been completed and peer-reviewed, including hydrology studies and air modeling for the project site. The peer-review process has been on-going for more than two years.

*“Our leadership has always understood that our project would receive the highest scrutiny from all local state and federal agencies,” Mr. Pace added. “We want to build a mine, using the latest technologies and highest standards for conservation and protection of air and water resources. The extensive review of the draft EIS by the EPA, as well as all of the other commenting agencies, produces the input needed by the USFS to produce the most defensible final decision documentation possible.”*

In addition to the final comments on the draft EIS, the EPA is continuing its role to provide comment on the ACOE’s 404 permit application for Rosemont Copper. The EPA has submitted a 3b letter, which was issued last week, allowing the EPA to preserve their position for future discussions and negotiations as the final Section 404 permit documentation is drafted. An outline of the review/elevation process is included at the end of this press release.

The Rosemont team is committed to work with the USFS, ACOE and EPA to ensure that all questions are answered fully and successfully and that the project meets all standards addressed by the more than 300 studies and technical reports conducted over the past six years.

### **About Augusta**

Augusta is a base metals company focused on advancing the Rosemont Copper deposit near Tucson, Arizona. Rosemont hosts a large copper/molybdenum reserve that may account for about 10% of US copper output once in production in 2014 (for details refer to [www.augustaresource.com](http://www.augustaresource.com)). The exceptional experience and strength of Augusta's management team, combined with the developed infrastructure and robust economics of the Rosemont project, propels Augusta to becoming a solid mid-tier copper producer. The Company trades on the Toronto Stock Exchange and the NYSE Amex under the symbol AZC.

### **Contact Information**

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**US Environmental Protection Agency/Army Corps of Engineers  
Review/Elevation Process - Required Steps  
Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit Decision**

