



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Coronado National Forest
Supervisor's Office

300 W. Congress
Tucson, Arizona 85701
Phone (520) 388-8300
FAX (520) 388-8305
Deaf & Hearing Impaired 711

File Code: 1950-3/2810

Date: July 10, 2008

Elaine Zielinski
State Director
USDI Bureau of Land Management
One North Central Avenue
Suite 800
Phoenix, AZ 85004-4427

**CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN
RECEIPT REQUESTED
NUMBER: 70033110000285807816**

Dear Ms. Zielinski:

I am writing to invite the USDI Bureau of Land Management to participate as a federal cooperating agency with the USDA Forest Service, Coronado National Forest, in the environmental study of a proposed Mine Plan of Operation. The proposed Rosemont Copper Mine would extract and process ores from the Rosemont Deposit located approximately 30 miles southeast of Tucson, Arizona. The mine and associated facilities would encompass approximately 4,500 acres in public and private ownerships, including approximately 15 acres of land within the jurisdiction of the Tucson Field Office, Gila District, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Pima County, Arizona. The Mine Plan of Operation proposes to use lands owned by the USDI Bureau of Land Management as utility right-of-way access to the primary mine production areas.

The Coronado National Forest, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, published a Notice of Intent (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado/rosemont/documents/rosemont-noi-02282008.pdf>) to prepare an environmental impact statement on Rosemont Copper Company's Mine Plan of Operations. Briefly, the proposed action is to construct and operate an open-pit copper mine and associated processing facilities, including access roads, required utilities, and to reclaim affected lands. A full description of the proposed action (Mine Plan of Operation) may be viewed at: <http://www.rosemontcopper.com/operations2.asp>.

Based on the Mine Plan of Operation, the Coronado National Forest identified the following preliminary issues in its Notice of Intent. Effects on:

- the economy, public services, quality of life, and other community resources in Pima County, Tucson, and nearby communities
- the quality and availability of surface water and groundwater resources
- vegetation and wildlife, including those having special-status designations
- soils and geology
- aesthetic resources, including visual quality objectives and State Highway 83, a scenic highway
- archaeological, historic, and cultural resources, including Native American interests and values
- Forest recreational use and compatibility with other Forest land uses



- increased traffic on local roads and transportation systems
- noise on nearby residents, Forest users, and sensitive wildlife
- mining and processing and vehicle traffic on ambient air quality

The formal scoping period for public comment is scheduled to close on July 14, 2008. Upon completion of this scoping effort, comments will undergo content analysis and reports of the results will be produced. These preliminary issues are expected to be refined as the environmental study progresses.

I am requesting USDI Bureau of Land Management's participation as a federal cooperating agency due to its ownership and jurisdiction by law (40 CFR 1508.15) over lands involved in this proposed action. Under a cooperating agency agreement, I would expect the USDI Bureau of Land Management to be a partner in the development of the environmental impact statement and related documentation required by the environmental law, regulation, and policy. To promote a successful partnership in this endeavor, I am prepared to have the Rosemont Copper Project Team Leader, interdisciplinary team, and primary consultant (SWCA Environmental Consultants) undertake activities to enhance interagency cooperation:

- Consult with your agency on any relevant technical studies that will be required for the project
- Organize joint field reviews with your agency
- Provide your agency with project information, including study results
- Request your agency's review of relevant sections of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement prior to its release for comment
- Include information in the environmental documents and record needed by your agency to discharge your agency's compliance responsibilities with law, regulation, and policy
- Include information in the environmental documents and record that assists your agency with any other requirements regarding jurisdictional approvals, permits, licenses, and/or clearances

I encourage your agency to express its views on subjects within your jurisdiction and expertise, and will expect that if, at any point in the process, your agency's needs are not being met you will inform my team leader. I anticipate that the environmental documents and associated public involvement processes used in this study will satisfy your agency's National Environmental Policy Act compliance requirements, including those related to project alternatives, environmental consequences, and mitigation. The Forest Service intends to utilize the environmental impact statement and our subsequent record of decision as our decision-making documents and as the basis for determining the Final Mine Plan of Operation.

I look forward to receiving your agency's written response to this federal cooperating agency invitation by August 29, 2008. I request that your response define the ways your agency would like to be involved in this environmental study, and whether any additional documentation of our cooperating agency relationship is desired.

Questions or concerns about the Mine Plan of Operation or our agencies' respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this environmental study should be directed to Deputy Forest Supervisor, Reta Laford. Ms. Laford may be reached via telephone at (520) 388-8300 or via electronic mail at rlaford@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeanine A. Derby
JEANINE A. DERBY
Forest Supervisor

cc:

Ms. Cindy Alvarez
District Manager
USDI Bureau of Land Management
Tucson Field Office
Gila District
12661 East Broadway
Tucson, Arizona 85748

Mr. Michael Taylor
Deputy Director of Natural Resources
USDI Bureau of Land Management
One North Central Avenue
Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-4427