

# Talking points for comments on Resolution Copper Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The following is a series of question on topics presented in no particular order that can be used when you comment either at the public meetings or in your written comments.

## Alternatives

- Why has the Forest Service not given more credence to the no action alternative required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?
- Why didn't the Forest Service examine other methods of mining that would not destroy Oak Flat?

## Cultural

- Since the Forest Service considers Oak Flat to be sacred and a Traditional Cultural Property, why is the Forest Service thinking of allowing Rio Tinto to destroy Oak Flat?
- Do you consider what Resolution Copper plans to do to Oak Flat and the surrounding area religicide (causing the possible extinction of a native religion)?
- Why haven't you fully analyzed the cultural value of Oak Flat and the new Skunk Camp tailings dump alternative?

## Climate change

- In light of the increasing impact of climate change, why haven't you fully analyzed the carbon footprint of this project?
  - including transportation to the place copper would eventually be smelted
  - the carbon footprint of smelting and final processing
- Are all the planned mine facilities "hardened" to withstand a greater magnitude of climate events over the next 40 years?

## Water

- Have you notified farmers in the San Tan Valley that pumping at least 590,000 acre feet of water from the MARRCO railroad corridor between Florence Junction and San Tan will cause the ground to collapse 10 feet and will take the water table 124 years to recharge?
- How can we take any of the Superior and Oak Flat hydrology information in the DEIS seriously, when the Forest Service relied primarily on a deeply flawed hydrological study done by Rio Tinto?
- Why haven't you fully analyzed the impact to the proposed project when CAP water deliveries are curtailed, due to ever decreasing water levels in Lake Mead?
- How can you justify Resolution Copper using as much water as the city of Tempe under the drought conditions we face now and projections that the drought will continue or get worse?
- Why does Rio Tinto believe that water consumption for the Resolution copper mine will be only 10% of the average water use for existing copper mines in Arizona?
- What alternatives does Rio Tinto have for water supply if they cannot meet their promise to consume only 15,700 acre-feet of water per year?
- If Rio Tinto says that the water table in Superior has already dropped 15 feet since they began dewatering the #9 and #10 shafts, what will happen to the water table in Superior if the mine is built?

- Piping in water for residential and commercial use is one thing, but what about the water for the plants and animals that also inhabit Superior?

#### Tailings alternatives

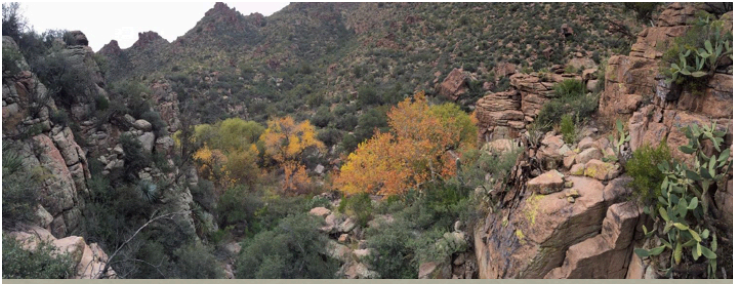
- How much did Rio Tinto's finding that the water table under their first proposed tailings dump was higher than they thought and that the ground was more fractured than they thought have to do with the decision to make Skunk Camp the preferred alternative?
- How can you say that Skunk Camp is the preferred alternative toxic tailings dump if you haven't done any actual studies to show that location is a viable site?
- Where are all the engineering studies and reports that allow us to know that the Skunk Camp site is a technically sound option for containing 1.6 billion tons of toxic material?
- If the preferred location for the toxic tailings dump would be on private land, how can we be assured that Resolution Copper would be required to post a bond to make sure they clean up after themselves?
- Have you done the engineering and geological studies to know that the tailings pipeline would be stable and not leak?
- If the tailings pipeline leaked, what would be the consequences?

#### Power

- Does Rio Tinto have a guarantee from the Salt River Project that they will supply power to the Resolution Copper mine equal to as much as 22% of their current peak power capacity?
- Why have you not done environmental analysis on the two new 230kV power corridors (and other power corridors) that need to be put across Forest Service land?
- How much of the power that Resolution Copper would need would come from renewable energy sources?
- Is Rio Tinto planning on building any renewable energy facilities to power their project?

#### Tailings dam safety

- Are you comfortable with the fact that the tailings dams proposed at any of the 4 alternative locations would be illegal in either Chile or Brazil?
  - Brazil has banned any tailings dams that would potentially kill more than 100 people if they collapsed making all the alternatives illegal if constructed in that country.
  - Chile has banned all upstream and centerline dams also making all the alternatives illegal if constructed in that country. Why does the DEIS not require any warning systems for dam collapse for the downstream communities?
- Why has Rio Tinto proposed designing the tailings storage facility for the 5,000 year earthquake, rather than the Maximum Credible Earthquake, even though all proposed sites are clearly upslope from local populations centers?

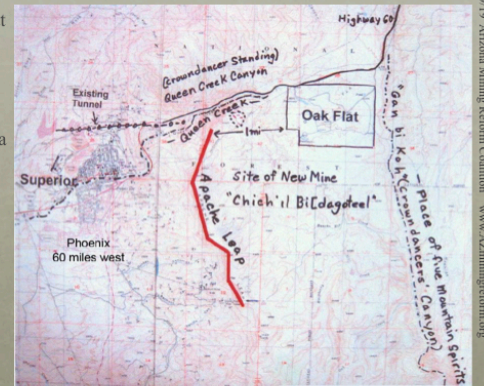


## What does Rio Tinto want to do at Oak Flat and what is the Tonto National Forest Analyzing in the DEIS?

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## Location

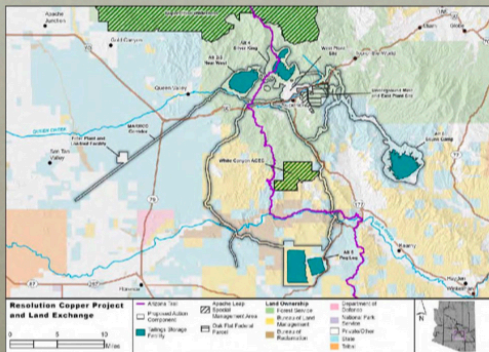
- The Sacred Site of Oak Flat is an hour east of Phoenix, Arizona, and ½ hour west of the San Carlos Apache Reservation.
- The Oak Flat watershed is a rare and sensitive desert riparian ecosystem.
- Oak Flat is one of the best rock climbing locations in North America and heavily used for recreation.



## Mining Plan

The Resolution Copper Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) contemplates development of:

- A massive block cave mine at Oak Flat, to mine copper and molybdenum.
- A concentrating plant west of Superior outside the town boundary.
- A toxic tailing dump at one of 4 locations.
- A loading facility west of Florence Junction.
- 30 water wells in the MARCO railroad corridor close to the town of Magma.

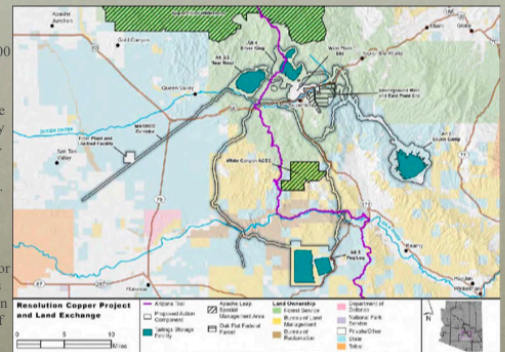


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## Mining Plan

Rio Tinto's mining plan would:

- Use the same amount of electricity as between 219,000 and 1.6 million US households.
- As much as 17% of the total electrical capacity of the state of Arizona.
- At least 50,000 acre-feet of water per year (for 40 years).
- More than the city of Tempe (180,000 people).
- Arizona is preparing for severe water shortages leading to the reduction of 320,000 acre-feet of water from the Colorado River.
- At the point that Rio Tinto water wells would pump groundwater, Pinal County agricultural water users would be the most severely impacted by the shortage.



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## Underground Mine at Oak Flat

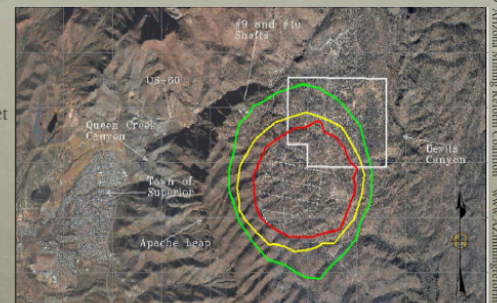
- The proposed block cave mine would be a cubic mile in size and located approximately a mile underground.
- Block caving is akin to an "upside-down open pit." All ore would be removed from 7,000 feet under the ground, resulting in a huge void in the earth.
- The massive void would cut through multiple underground aquifers and require intense mine dewatering.
- As the mine progresses, the ground would collapse, siphoning surface water and groundwater supplies from the area.



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## Subsidence

- Rio Tinto estimates that subsidence would destroy or render unsafe at least half of the Oak Flat Campground.
- The plan calls for a subsidence crater 1,000 feet deep and 2.5 miles in diameter.
- Based on incomplete Rio Tinto data, there is a 5.3% chance that Apache Leap would be reached by subsidence.
- An unacceptable risk for the destruction of irreplaceable cultural heritage.



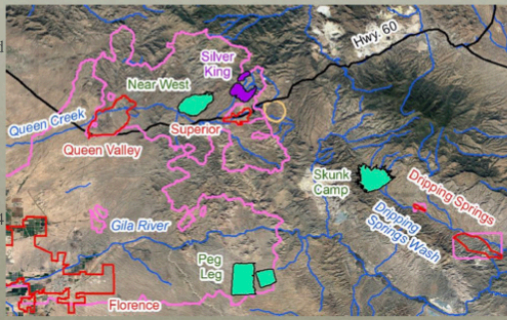
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## Tailings

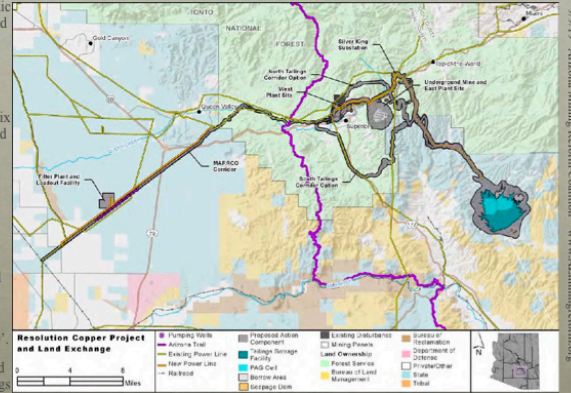
- 1.5 billion tons of toxic waste would be placed in one of five possible unlined dumpsites.
- Design criteria for all alternatives is weaker than current Canadian and Brazilian laws.
- Depending on the site chosen, a dam collapse would reach Superior in 2.4 minutes, Dripping Springs in 16 minutes, Queen Valley in 18 minutes, and Florence in 51.5 minutes.
- Predicted runout from dam failure for all alternatives would be in the range of 200 – 370 miles.
- Dam height would be: Near West #2 = 520'; Near West #3 = 510'; Silver King = 1,040'; Peg Leg = 310'; Skunk Camp = 490'.



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## Tailings Skunk Camp Alternative

- 1.5 billion tons of toxic waste would be placed in the Dripping Springs (Gila) watershed.
- The land needed for this alternative is a mix of State Trust land and private land although access for tailings pipeline, power line corridor and road is across Federal public land.
- Total disturbance for this alternative would be 15,872 acres.
- The height of the tailings would be 490'.
- A dam collapse would reach Dripping Springs in 16 minutes.



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## Tailings Near West

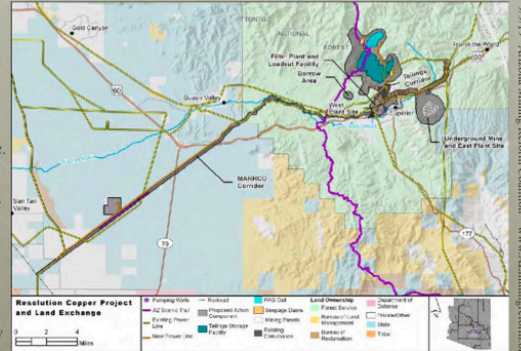
- 1.5 billion tons of toxic waste would be placed in the Queen Creek Watershed 4.5 miles upstream of the community of Queen Valley.
- The tailings would be placed directly on the ground - without a liner to control acid mine drainage.
- A dam collapse would reach Queen Valley in 18 minutes.
- Tailings would be acid generating and would contain elevated levels of chromium, selenium, uranium, and cobalt. Samples have elevated levels of aluminum, iron, manganese, chloride, fluoride, and sulfate when compared to US drinking water standards. Acid would begin to leach from the tailings within 90 days.



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## Tailings Silver King Alternative

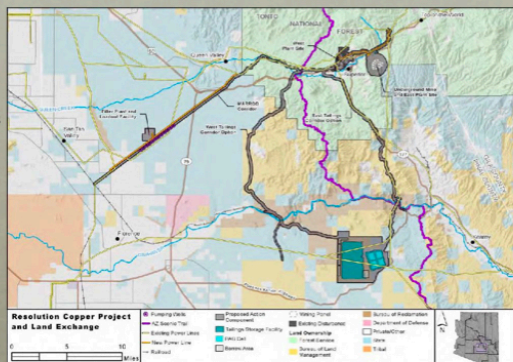
- 1.5 billion tons of toxic waste would be placed in the Queen Creek Watershed.
- The tailings would be placed directly on the ground - without a liner to control acid mine drainage.
- Total footprint for this alternative is 10,617 acres.
- The tailings height is 1,040' for NPAG pile and 750' for PAG tailings.
- A dam collapse would reach Superior in 2.4 minutes, and Queen Valley in 41 minutes.



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## Tailings Peg Leg Alternative

- The tailings would be placed directly on the ground - without a liner to control acid mine drainage.
- Total disturbance for this alternative would be 17,285 acres using the west tilings corridor and 16,938 acres using the East Tailings corridor.
- Dam height would be 310' (NPAG) and 200' (PAG).
- A dam collapse would reach Florence in 51.5 minutes.



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