

## Press Statement

January 15, 2021

Contacts:

Roger Featherstone, Director, Arizona Mining Reform Coalition, [roger@AZminingreform.org](mailto:roger@AZminingreform.org), (520) 777-9500

Henry Munoz, Chairperson, Concerned Citizens and Retired Miner's Coalition, [hmuno1@yahoo.com](mailto:hmuno1@yahoo.com)

Today the Tonto National Forest released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the proposed Resolution Copper mine and land exchange. The Tonto also released a Draft Record of Decision (DROD). The DROD only addresses the pipeline and powerline corridors needed for the project, and the Programmatic Agreement (PA), although the FEIS addresses the project more broadly.

"Although we are profoundly disappointed in the Tonto National Forest Service's conduct regarding the NEPA process we are not surprised by the conclusions, and lack of evidence to support those conclusions, in the FEIS and DROD," said Roger Featherstone, Director of the Arizona Mining Reform Coalition, "Instead of honoring their mandate to manage our public land to protect water and multiple uses, they have clearly buckled to political pressure from Rio Tinto and BHP (the owners of Resolution Copper), and their supporters. The FEIS and DROD are rife with holes and unsupported reasons for allowing a project that would destroy 16,000 acres and impact a far larger area."

It comes as no surprise that the Tonto National Forest intends on granting Resolution Copper permits for the powerline and pipeline corridors. The PA is not signed, and so presumably still subject to changes, but is treated in the FEIS and DROD as a final document.

While it is clear that the FEIS and DROD were timed to be released before a new administration takes charge of the US Forest Service to facilitate the land exchange, the documents purposefully keep the American public, the owners of Oak Flat (the sacred, recreational and ecological haven that Resolution Copper wants privatized), in the dark about the appraisals required by law before the exchange could be finalized.

Henry C. Munoz Sr., Chairman of the Concern Citizens and Retired Miners Coalition and an Arizona Mining Reform Coalition board member, of Superior, Arizona said, "With Arizona entering its 21st year of a long-term drought and the potential to pollute and deplete the town of Superiors water supply, how can anyone let this happen, considering it would be a failed mining experiment? The east valley municipalities of Queen Creek, Gilbert, and San Tan area beware, this project would wipe out your water supply. The project itself will consume 40,000 acre feet of water a year which is the same as Tempe, Arizona ,which has a population of 180,000 people."

The Coalition will continue to thoroughly examine the FEIS and the DROD and will vigorously pursue all avenues to make sure this failed experiment is ended before any damage is done.

PO Box 43565, Tucson, AZ 85733 • (520) 777-9500 • [info@AZminingreform.org](mailto:info@AZminingreform.org)

ARIZONA MINING REFORM COALITION