

# Pinto Valley Mine

## Final Environmental Impact Statement

### Errata

### August 2021

The Pinto Valley Mine final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released on April 9, 2021. Publication of the final EIS and draft ROD initiated the public objection process under 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 218, which concluded on May 24, 2021. On August 9, 2021 the Regional Forester issued an objection response letter that included instruction for the Tonto National Forest to make several clarifications and corrections in the final ROD and/or in an errata to the final EIS. This errata documents corrections to the text of the published final EIS based on the objection response letter. These corrections are consistent with direction given in Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 10, Section 18. The corrections identified in this errata sheet did not require substantial changes in the proposed action, nor was it considered significant new information under 40 CFR 1502.9(c). As a result, the Tonto National Forest Supervisor determined that a supplement or revision of the Pinto Valley Mine final EIS was not necessary.

The sections below identify the corrections to the final EIS with strikethrough identifying deleted text and underline identifying added text.

#### **Volume I page 3-452 of the final EIS, Section 3.21.4.1, “Water resources – Analysis Methodology and Assumptions”**

- ~~The Forest Service acknowledges the limited information~~ The Forest Service recognizes that additional baseline data collection is desirable to better understand impacts related to stream flows in Pinto Creek, how stream flows have specifically been affected by historical and ongoing operations at the Pinto Valley Mine, pre-mining baseflow records, groundwater and surface water interactions, and other information and to inform potential additional mitigation of impacts. The Forest Service considered collecting additional baseline data for these items as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process for the Pinto Valley Mine EIS. In some cases, the additional data is not available (e.g., pre-mining baseflow records). In other cases, the additional baseline data collection would have required substantial effort and time to install the required monitoring equipment and to monitor conditions long enough to provide useful baseline and trend information for the EIS. The additional time to install equipment and monitor conditions would have extended the Pinto Valley Mine EIS schedule to the point that the mine would have run out of tailings storage capacity prior to completion of the NEPA process, resulting in a shutdown of the mine and loss of up to 690 employees. As such, the Forest Service proceeded with utilizing the best available existing information for the EIS to avoid potential

shut down of the mine. In cases where additional baseline information and monitoring is ~~required to~~ desirable to better understand mine-related impacts, the Forest Service has included monitoring and mitigation measures in appendix H, “Environmental Protection Measures, Monitoring, and Mitigation,” that provide for a mechanism to collect additional data to inform subsequent adaptive management and potential additional mitigation.

**Volume I page 3-263 of the final EIS, Section 3.9.4.6 “Geology, Minerals, and Geotechnical Stability – Environmental Consequences, Tailings Dam Breach Run-Out Analysis”**

- If a failure of Tailings Storage Facility No. 3 or Tailings Storage Facility No. 4 embankments and release of tailings and tailings-impacted fluids were to occur, wildlife and riparian vegetation along Pinto Creek and portions of the West Fork of Pinto Creek and Horrell Creek that provides important habitat for wildlife would be washed away by downstream slump or flow of materials, or exposed to toxic constituents within the tailings and tailings-impacted fluids. Depending on the location, mode, and size of the failure, effects ~~on vegetation~~ could extend as far as Roosevelt Lake, affecting vegetation, water quality, and potentially contaminating associated fisheries, aquatic habitat, and potable water supply. Affected riparian and upland areas may remain barren, take a long period of time to reestablish, or be reestablished by a different mix of species due to accumulation of heavy metals in the soils, which would decrease the suitability of riparian habitats to support native species. Uptake of heavy metals by plants could contribute to bioaccumulation in food chains.

**Volume IV pages J-106, J-107, J-126 of the final EIS, Attachment B of Appendix J, “Draft EIS Comment Report”, Response to Comment Document #259 (Comment Number C-009 and C-014) and Response to Comment Document #259 (Comment Number C-004)**

- The final EIS presents the best available existing information on water resources. The Forest Service recognizes that additional data collection is ~~necessary~~ desirable to better understand impacts and to inform ~~appropriate~~ potential additional mitigation of impacts

**Volume I, Chapter 3 and Volume III, Section 4.4 of the final EIS, Mitigation Measure Terminology for Tribal Resource Mitigation Measure (and other document locations where this measure is referenced)**

- Mitigation Measure ~~TR-1~~ TB-1: Tribal Monitors

**Volume I, Chapter 3 and Volume III, Section 4.4 of the final EIS, Mitigation Measure Summaries**

- Based on the objection response letter instructions, the following minor modifications were made across the mitigation measure summaries presented in Volume 1 Chapter 3, “Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences” and in Volume III Section 4.4, “Proposed Monitoring and Mitigation Measures.” These changes are also reflected in the final ROD.
  - Change occurrences of “would” to “will” to remove the conditional tense of application of the mitigation measures and to clarify that the mitigation measures are commitments.
  - Addition of the following text to mitigation measure summaries to ensure that there is a commitment to work with the Forest Service to develop and implement mitigation measures to the extent feasible based on the results of monitoring.

- “Based on the results of monitoring, Pinto Valley Mining Corp. would work with the Forest Service to develop and implement appropriate mitigation measures that would minimize potential effects to National Forest System lands and resources, to the extent feasible.”

**Volume I, Chapter 2 pages 2-61, 2-62, and 2-66, Chapter 3 page 3-254**

- In the final EIS, the estimated new surface disturbance on National Forest System land for Tailings Storage Facility No. 4 was reported as 102 acres. There are a variety of project features that overlap the Tailings Storage Facility No. 4 proposed disturbance area (e.g., access road, pipeline, power line). To avoid double counting surface disturbance, the disturbance for those features that overlap Tailings Storage Facility No. 4 was reported under those features and not included in the disturbance area for Tailings Storage Facility No. 4. To clarify this, the following changes were made that are also reflected in the ROD
  - In table 2-11 (page 2-61), changed the Tailings Storage Facility No. 4 surface disturbance from 102 acres to 126 acres to reflect the total disturbance area for this facility, which includes areas where other features overlap the disturbance footprint.
  - In section 2.3.3.2.5, “Tailings Storage Facility No. 4” (page 2-66) changed the reported surface disturbance for Tailings Storage Facility No. 4 from 102 acres to 126 acres.
  - Added the following footnote to table 2-11 to clarify that the total surface disturbance area on National Forest System land (229 acres) accounts for features that overlap and does not double count those acreages
    - There are a variety of project features that overlap and occur in the same disturbance area (e.g., access roads, pipelines, tailings disposal facilities, etc.). The 229 acres of total surface disturbance on National Forest System land accounts for project features that overlap the same disturbance area and does not double count disturbance for overlapping features.

**Volume I, Chapter 2 page 2-65**

- For the proposed action, Pinto Valley Mining Corp. also identified ~~three~~ two new potential borrow sources on National Forest System lands and one existing material stockpile totaling 171 acres that could be available to perform future reclamation of existing or proposed disturbances at Pinto Valley Mine on National Forest System lands