



Forest Service News Release

Public Affairs Contact: John Scaggs

(602) 702-0597

john.scaggs@usda.gov

www.fs.usda.gov/tonto

Tonto National Forest releases final Record of Decision for Pinto Valley Mine project

PHOENIX, August 20, 2021 — For Immediate Release. Today the Tonto National Forest issued the final Record of Decision (ROD) for the Pinto Valley Mine project, retaining its selection of the proposed action as described in the final Environmental Impact Statement released on April 9, 2021.

Selection of the proposed action encompasses the following broad categories of actions that would extend the operational mine life by approximately 19 years:

- Consolidation and authorization of previously authorized activities and permitted disturbances on 537 acres of National Forest System lands at the Pinto Valley Mine that have expired. Power lines, pipelines, roads, and other facilities and infrastructure on National Forest System lands at the Pinto Valley Mine are integral to the mining operations at the mine. As such, their authorization is most appropriate under a consolidated mining plan of operations.
- Authorization of new operations on 229 acres of National Forest System lands including expansion of the Open Pit and Tailings Storage Facilities No. 3 and No. 4, and construction or relocation of linear features (access roads, electrical power transmission lines, pipelines).
- Authorization of existing legacy encroachments on approximately 29 acres of National Forest System lands from prior mine operators associated with activities appurtenant to mining, such as roads, an equipment laydown yard, storm water ponds, powder magazines, and a water pipeline and stand.

Appendix A of the final ROD includes a detailed description of the proposed action. The proposed action is specifically selected with the inclusion of the monitoring and mitigation measures included in appendix B of the final ROD. These monitoring and mitigation measures shall be considered as a required and necessary component of the proposed action.

Neil Bosworth, the Forest Supervisor for the Tonto, was the responsible official for the National Environmental Policy Act review of the proposed mining plan of operations and signed the final ROD on August 19, 2021.

“This final ROD documents my decision, along with the rationale for the decision and alternatives considered in reaching the decision,” Bosworth said. “It also includes a number of mitigation and monitoring measures that will provide a framework to address significant issues related to the continued operation of the mine, including water-related issues.”

“This document is the culmination of more than five years of work following the Tonto’s receipt of a mining plan of operations from Pinto Valley Mining Corp. in May 2016,” Bosworth said. “We concluded this journey with the help of federal and state partners, tribes, and the public – whose interest and feedback aided our analysis.”

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This decision under NEPA does not approve or initiate implementation of the mining plan of operations. Approval of a mining plan of operations is a separate action regulated under 36 CFR 228, subpart A. Section 7.0, "Mining Plan of Operations Implementation," in the final ROD provides additional information on the process for mining plan of operations approval and implementation.

Expansion of the mine is estimated to produce 2.4 billion pounds of copper and 23.7 million pounds of molybdenum. Copper is heavily used in industrial, agricultural and energy applications and is a common component of electronics.

Expansion also would extend about 690 jobs during mining operations. An estimated 100 employees would continue to support reclamation and closure.

Interested parties can view the final ROD, final EIS and related documents or download them from the project website at: <http://www.pintovalleymineeis.us/>.

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