



April 7, 2021

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

Greater Phoenix Leadership (GPL) has worked for over four decades to improve the quality of life and economic vibrancy for the greater Phoenix area and the State of Arizona. We represent over 100 Arizona CEO's and their nearly 300,000 employees across a diverse range of industries. We work to advance initiatives, public policies and projects that will build a stronger and better Arizona.

We have consistently supported the Resolution Copper project and the federal land exchange necessary to develop and operate the mine. This mine will have a significant and lasting impact on the economy of Arizona generating approximately \$61 billion in economic value to our state and creating thousands of good paying direct and indirect jobs. This will have a very positive impact on our state's priorities for education and infrastructure development.

While the economic impact of this project is important, so too are the environmental and stakeholder benefits. We have been very impressed with the conservation initiatives the company has embarked upon and the extensive consultation efforts to involve all key stakeholders in the process.

The parcels included in the Resolution Copper land exchange total 5,400 acres and have extensive conservation value. They include a parcel which spans over seven miles along the San Pedro River, one of the few remaining free flowing rivers in the Southwest. The San Pedro corridor is one of the most important riparian habitats in the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts. Other parcels transferring to federal ownership would be part of La Cienegas National Conservation Area. Parcels included in the exchange are home to dozens of threatened and endangered species, critical habitat, and riparian and aquatic ecosystems, which have long been recognized for their scarcity and overall contribution to wildlife diversity. Some of the properties contain river systems that are eligible for scenic designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act with habitat for native fish as well as rainbow and brown trout.

The Resolution Copper project will also protect parcels which are home to numerous Native American archeological sites, including petroglyphs, structure ruins, and grinding sites. The Apache Leap parcel, an area of sheer cliff faces and hoodoos contains some of the most significant Western Apache archeological sites in the region. The land exchange requires that the Apache Leap area be incorporated into a Special Management Area for permanent cultural heritage protection and administration by the Tonto National Forest.

The Resolution Copper project is the only Congressionally mandated land exchange requiring a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prior to exchange of title. The Tonto National Forest, several local communities in the Copper Triangle, stakeholders from three rural counties, nearly a dozen Tribes, multiple federal and state agencies all participated together to work with Resolution Copper during the comprehensive review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for almost a decade. Not only would the Town of Superior have the ability to grow and develop with additional land as part of the land exchange, the EIS also contains important mitigation measures to expand recreation and the diversity of the local Copper Triangle economy. Very importantly, with the cooperation of consulting Native American Tribes, the first of its kind tribal monitor program was created employing dozens of Native American tribal members to ensure a transparent assessment and cataloging of sacred and culturally significant sites.

The staff from the Tonto National Forest have worked tirelessly to produce a nearly 3,000-page Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) with hundreds of independent analyses and a decade of meaningful consultations, collaborations and consultations with Native American Tribes. We applaud the outstanding work by the Tonto National Forest, and we urge you to encourage the Administration to republish the FEIS in the very near future and move this most important project forward.

Sincerely,



Neil Giuliano
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Ron Klain
The Honorable Robert Bonnie
The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema
The Honorable Mark Kelly
The Honorable Ruben Gallego
The Honorable Tom O'Halleran
The Honorable Ann Kirkpatrick
The Honorable Greg Stanton