

I am a Dripping Springs Valley (the proposed site of the Oak Flat containment pond) resident, and I want my voice heard! I see all considerations when assessing the viability of mining Oak Flat as falling into the following three categories, any one of which is reason enough to pass the "Save Oak Flat Act."

Genocide: Chi'chil Bildagoteel (Oak Flat) is an historic and current sacred site of the Apache and other tribes. My understanding (I am not Apache) is that the Apache are intrinsically tied to this place as it is experienced as the home of the deities that guide them. It is where they convene with those deities, and the only place in which they can do so and have done so for centuries. It is not a question of property rights as that in itself is a construct relentlessly imposed by colonialist culture on many indigenous cultures. The Apache are a part of Chi'chil Bildagoteel as are the waters that flow through it, the ravens that circle above it, the Oak trees that reach into and through it as a community of interconnected beings interacting. This community includes the rocks and minerals. The question of compromise is ludicrous in the face of religious rights. It is equivalent to saying that if spinal fluid were required to power our vehicles, it may be permissible to harvest people's nervous systems and leave them paralyzed so long as we didn't kill them. The copper no more belongs to the US Government than do those nervous systems. The Apache relationship to Chi'chil Bildagoteel was established well before the US Government. It is absurd that US Government Representatives can imagine themselves to have the right to extract from that community to offer what was never theirs to foreign corporations. Stripping that Holy Place from the Apache is an act of violence and genocide. (Please see: <http://apache-stronghold.com/spiritual.html>)

Femicide: As a high school teacher and mother, I am well aware of the difficulties our young women have finding firm footing in a culture that persistently undermines their agency. I have been thoroughly impressed by the sense of groundedness and determination that I have witnessed in Apache women. It seems that much of this is anchored in their culture and specifically in their Rites of Passage, Sunrise Ceremony. I have been honored to attend several of these ceremonies at Chi'chil Bildagoteel, the only place to receive the blessings of the deities of that land. As it was explained to me, the community prepares for months and the ceremony lasts for days for each girl entering womanhood. I have witnessed approximately 200 community members in attendance participating in and supporting this ritualized transitional moment in a woman's life. I wonder what it would be like if all girls were given that kind of acknowledgment from their community. Not only does handing Chi'Chil Bildagoteel over to foreign prospectors deny Apache girls their right to practice their religion and in so doing become Apache women, but it endangers their safety. The correlation between Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and the proximity of extractive industries is a well established travesty. It is our responsibility to do everything in our power to protect against this. Instead, the US Government is endeavoring to promote it by becoming party to the proposed land exchange. (Please see: <https://www.colorado.edu/program/fpw/2020/01/29/violence-extractive-industry-man-camps-endangers-indigenous-women-and-children>)

Ecocide: The environmental impacts of the proposed Oak Flat mine stretch far beyond Oak Flat itself. It is understood that the mine would destroy Oak Flat, less known is the devastation that it would cause to the areas from which would be stolen, the 40,000 acre feet of water per year required by the mine (the same rate of usage as that of Tempe, AZ with its population of 180,000 people). This, at a time of ever increasing drought threatening Arizona's access to Colorado River water, (California holds senior water rights over Arizona) will further compromise access to what precious little clean water remains. Already, a planned development project is threatened by the proposed mine, and Queen Creek is fighting for water rights that would devastate Arizona farmers. As if that is not enough reason to end this preposterous proposal, the toxic mine tailings would be sent via pipeline over approximately 20 miles of rugged territory to the Dripping Springs Valley where they would sit atop the pristine Dripping Springs Aquifer and be held in an unlined pond by a nearly 500 foot dam similar to the one that breached in Brazil killing 19 people and poisoning 400 river miles. That dam was designed and built by BHP Billiton, one of the two transnational companies of which Resolution Copper is a Subsidiary. In the Environmental Impact Statement, Resolution Copper acknowledges that the tailings may remain toxic for 250 years, of which they will be monitoring them for 80. It is not a matter of if, but when, these toxins will make their way into the Middle Gila River Basin and points downstream. Whose responsibility will that be, and how could it ever be met? It is the responsibility of the US Government right now to ensure that that will not happen as there is no amount of tax payer money that would be sufficient to mitigate that damage. (Please see: <https://azminingreform.org/issues/>, <https://www.cap-az.com/departments/planning/colorado-river-programs/water-supply-and-water-rights>, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-48194377>, <https://www.resolutionmineeis.us/documents/final-eis>)

Currently, Resolution Copper does not have a site secured for the tailings. The proposed Skunk Camp site in the Dripping Springs Valley is 65% protected Arizona Land Trust Lands. The Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) has stated clearly that this proposed site "is highly likely to adversely impact the Trust," and that they prefer the Silver King site. The ASLD stands to lose over \$536,640,000 in revenue. As Arizona Public Education is the chief beneficiary of the ASLD Trust, the donations that Resolution Copper has made to the Town of Superior in the name of education, pale in comparison to what this project will cost the students of this state. Further, the ASLD recognizes the potential groundwater loss to ranchers downstream and the supposed mitigation difficulties associated with the over 300 sites of cultural resources that will be impacted, including an estimated 70 burial sites of which it can be assumed most are Hohokam. (Please see: <https://www.resolutionmineeis.us/documents/final-eis> Appendix R-43).