

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON PROPOSED APACHE LEAP SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA  
PLAN AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOREST SERVICE, TONTO NATIONAL FOREST

The Tonto National Forest (Forest Service) has prepared a proposed management plan for the Apache Leap Special Management Area (SMA) as directed by the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2015. As directed by the NDAA, the proposed plan was prepared in consultation with affected tribes, the Town of Superior in Pinal County, Arizona, Resolution Copper Mining LLC, and interested members of the public. The proposed plan establishes management direction in the form of desired conditions, management objectives, and standards for the approximately 807-acre SMA area in accordance with the NDAA and Forest Service planning requirements. The Responsible Official for the plan decision is Neil Bosworth, Forest Supervisor, Tonto National Forest.

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Forest Service is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) in support of the proposed management plan. The EA will assess whether there may be significant impacts from implementation of the proposed management plan.

A 45-day public comment period for the proposed plan and scoping for the EA will be open from March 17 to April 30, 2017. The proposed plan will be available for review and download at [www.ApacheLeapSMA.us](http://www.ApacheLeapSMA.us) on or before April 1, 2017. The proposed plan and supporting documentation will also be available for review at the Tonto National Forest Supervisor’s Office, 2324 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, AZ 85006.

The Forest Service is hosting an open house public meeting on April 4, 2017, at the Superior High School, Multi-purpose room, 100 Mary Drive, Superior, Arizona. The open house will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. with a presentation and question and answer session about the proposed plan beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Additional information regarding the project can be found on the project website at [www.ApacheLeapSMA.us](http://www.ApacheLeapSMA.us).

The proposed management plan is subject to the Predecisional Administrative Review Process under Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 219, Subpart B.

### **How to Comment and Timeframe**

Comments on the proposed plan and scoping for the EA will be accepted for 45 days from March 17 to April 30, 2017. Written comments may be submitted via mail to Apache Leap SMA Comments, P.O. Box 34468, Phoenix, AZ 85067-4468, or in person (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays) to: Mr. Neil Bosworth, Forest Supervisor, Tonto National Forest, 2324 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, AZ 85006. Electronic comments including attachments may be submitted by email in word (.doc), rich text format (.rtf), text (.txt), and hypertext markup language (.html) to [comments@ApacheLeapSMA.us](mailto:comments@ApacheLeapSMA.us).

Only individuals or entities who submit timely and specific written formal comments (as defined by 36 CFR Part 219.62) about this proposed plan will be eligible to file an objection under the Forest Service planning objection process (36 CFR 219). Comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project. Comments also will be available for public inspection and will be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity provider and employer.