

December 14, 2018
MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Attendees

Community Working Group members present:

Bruce Wittig – Queen Valley Fire Department
Hank Gutierrez - Superior Copper Alliance
Pam Bennett – Queen Valley Community Liaison
Jeff Bunkleemann – Central Arizona College
Anthony Huerta – Town of Superior
Fred Gaudet – Arizona Trail Association
Arlynn Godinez – Superior Unified School District Board / Maricopa County
Rick Cartier – Superior Chamber of Commerce alternate
Todd Pryor – Town of Superior
Jim Schenck – Rebuild Superior
JoAnn Besich – Superior Optimist Club
Lynn Martin – JF, JI Ranch
George Martin – JF, JI Ranch
Richard Matthews – Queen Valley Fire Department
Cecil Fendley – Queen Valley Water Board
Sylvia Werre – Top of the World
Mila Besich Lira – Town of Superior

Community Working Group members not present:

Karen Kitchayan Jones – San Carlos Apache Tribe
Roy Chavez - Concerned Citizens and Retired Miners
Fernando Shipley – Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center Board
Tweedy Armitage – Superior Historical Society
Pamela Rabago – Superior Chamber of Commerce
Tiffany Rowell – Superior community

Resolution Copper Company:

Hesston Klenk – Communities Manager

Facilitators – Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA):

John Godec, Debra Duerr

Speakers:

Vicky Peacey – Resolution Copper Company Senior Manager of Environmental & Permitting

Public Guests:

Melvin Werre – Top of the World
Elizabeth Butler – Friends of the Tonto National Forest

Introductions & Housekeeping

John Godec asked those in attendance to introduce themselves. He announced that Mayor Lira will be formally joining the Community Working Group, and the group welcomed her. Godec also introduced Elizabeth Butler who is visiting tonight as a member of the Recreation User Group (RUG).

Members reported on local news, including sports events. The Mayor said the airport grant for helipads was received. Several people hiked the new segment of the LOST and thought it was spectacular, better than expected. Judging of houses is going on tonight for a Superior Christmas lights contest.

Subcommittee Updates

The Community Monitoring Task Force conducted a well sampling yesterday. Jim Schenk, Bruce Wittig, and Fred Gaudet attended. Resolution provided a new pump and generator for the Castleberry well, which the task force appreciated. The sampling results will be forwarded to the CWG when complete. It was noted that the Martin well has not been able to be tested during recent samplings due to lack of adequate water level. It was pointed out that this well would not represent discharges to Queen Creek. Other potential sampling locations for future consideration were mentioned.

Community Monitoring Contract Discussion

Godec asked whether the CWG wants to renew the contract for Southwest Groundwater Consultants, and all agreed that they are very happy with them and would like to extend their contract. Resolution will be asked to do this. Vicky Peacey commented that this current effort has been to collect baseline data and to evaluate how the independent sampling process works. She said that other sampling locations can be explored. A CWG member mentioned that some people from the new tailings alternative locations might also be interested in participating or at least knowing that such an independent group exists.

Godec reported that the RUG will meet on January 9.

For the Community Heritage Project, Hesston Klenk said that he will be able to provide an update at the next meeting, as the proposal is due at the end of this year. It was noted that the Westland exhibit of West Plant artifacts and historical displays is ongoing at Boyce Thompson Arboretum until the Spring, and CWG members thought it is very well done.

Update on Resolution Copper Project Tailings

Vicky Peacey, Resolution Copper Company

Vicky noted that her presentation is given from Resolution's perspective as a participant in the Forest Service's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, not as a decision maker.

She reviewed the process of developing tailings alternatives over the past several years. The Mine Plan of Operation was the starting point for this analysis, and the CWG participated in reviewing and selecting the tailings site that was presented in this. She outlined the Forest Service factors for alternative comparison. These are: impacts to property values, safety concerns related to tailings impoundment, groundwater quality, surface water quantity, and others. Through the public scoping process many comments were related to tailings, and this drove development of a suite of alternatives all over the state; these included the open pits at

Ajo, Sierrita, San Manuel, Capstone, Freeport's Inspiration Project, and other existing mines. Undeveloped sites in the Superior region were also identified. The Forest Service did this to ensure that they did a thorough analysis and to make sure all possibilities were explored. For a number of reasons, existing mine sites were not proven to be feasible. Peacey said the Alternatives Analysis report was released in 2017 and can be reviewed for more detail on this process.

Location alternatives were developed, as well as technical alternatives. Some of these are located on Forest Service lands (Silver King and Near West) and others are not. The Forest Service asked Resolution to submit design specifications to help in evaluating the alternatives. For example, only filtered tailings would be suitable for Silver King. The Peg Leg site is located on State Trust and BLM lands, and these agencies are strongly opposed to this alternative and proposed additional alternatives. One of these that was carried forward is called Skunk Camp which Resolution engineers thought was a feasible alternative. This site is located on the back side of the Ray Mine open pit and is on a mixture of State Trust and private lands. Resolution emphasized that they do not have any geotechnical data on either the Peg Leg or the Skunk Camp sites so need to do at least a fatal flaw analysis before the Draft EIS is released. They are hoping to get data to make this judgement by the end of February 2019.

Vicky detailed the specifications of the various tailings management options including tailings characteristics and dam types. She described the technologies available for tailings dam design. These include Upstream, Downstream, Centerline, and Modified Centerline, as well as the dry tailings alternative. The Forest Service said they will not accept the Upstream design.

She reviewed the alternatives that are under study in the EIS for tailings disposal. These are:

- Alternative 1 – no action
- Alternative 2 – Near West (wet, proposed) – This is the site identified in the Mine Plan of Operations. The intention was for “wet” tailings disposal. The Near West site has a couple of geologic areas that are “leaky”. To address this, Resolution has developed design options representing increasing levels of seepage control (levels 1-4). The level of design goes up to a 200-year 24-hour storm event plus the Probable Maximum Flood, far greater than is common in Arizona.
- Alternative 3 – Near West “dry” tailings
- Alternative 4 – Dry stacking at Silver King – not an operative or feasible technology
- Alternative 5 – Peg Leg – This design would include separate tailings and pyrite impoundments. Seepage collection would be challenging since the site is underlain by thick sand and gravel; therefore, no cutoff walls could be constructed, and the site would need low permeability liners and many pump-back wells.
- Alternative 6 – Skunk Camp – This site has steep topography and one central drainage area, so seepage control would not require as many collection points and would need only one pump-back well. The design would incorporate a full centerline dam for tailings and a full downstream dam for the pyrite tailings. Many surface water diversions would be needed here. About 20 residents live six miles away, with additional people farther away. Resolution has spoken with them, and they are concerned.

CWG members had the following questions and comments:

- Where is water reclaimed from at the Near West site?
 - Around the perimeter collected from drainage “fingers” into the tailings.
- Are these designs used in other locations?
 - The Donlin Project in Alaska is using a full downstream design in an earthquake zone. Kennecott Rio Tinto uses the centerline option, as does Asarco Ripsey Wash.
- Are the tailings wet?
 - Yes, but the water content can be varied by using certain technologies.
- There is a rumor that BHP will be recycling tailings to make blocks. Is this true?
 - Resolution representatives said that is not true; there is no such viable technology or markets available at this time. Resolution would never do this with pyrite tailings; the non-acid-generating tailings could conceivably be looked at for recycling in future.
- Can the Skunk Camp site be acquired by Resolution?
 - This would be very premature at this time since no drilling or testing has been done. It was pointed out that the price of the property may rise a lot if the site is picked in the EIS.
- Would a pipeline to these sites cross the Gila River?
 - A pipeline to the Peg Leg site would have to cross the Gila River somehow.
- Does the bottom of the dam follow the contour of the land, or do you need to level it off?
 - They will level off the upper level of sand and probably the weathered Gila conglomerate, which is porous. Existing drainages must be filled so the water doesn’t revert to those courses.
- What’s the difference in water content between the wet and dry tailings?
 - Vicky couldn’t recall but said that the difference isn’t significant (500,000 v. 600,000 acre feet, or so over the life of the project).
- Is the pyrite tailings a small part of the overall tailings?
 - Relatively, yes, the pyrite represents about 200 million tons versus 2 billion tons total. The pyrite is what produces acid rock drainage, whereas the other tailings do not.
- Are you trying to eliminate any seepage into the soil?
 - That is not possible, even with a plastic liner. But we can minimize it as much as possible to protect water resources.
- What is the failure potential/rate for a pipeline that would go all the way to Peg Leg or Skunk Camp?
 - Distance is the operative factor for cost for upfront capital expenditures, but the distance doesn’t matter as far as safety or failure potential. The pipeline would need to be buried to these alternative sites, whereas it can be above ground to Near West. There will be a pipeline protection plan submitted to the Forest Service for any pipeline.
- Do you need to keep animals away from pyrite tailings?
 - Yes, using non-lethal techniques; this is common to all tailings.
- Is the surety bond for post closure specific to this project or does it go into Superfund?
 - The surety bond would be earmarked just for this project, and has nothing to do with Superfund (CERCLA) accounts. The EPA has been involved in this planning all along. There will also be a system of early warning signals for problems.
- Who is opposing the Skunk Camp alternative?
 - Some of the folks that we’ve talked to initially at Dripping Springs seem to be concerned, and we expect that there will possibly be some opposition from the San

Carlos community. However, these sites avoid seeps and springs that are present at Near West, and that is an important issue for Native Americans.

- Is there a point at which Resolution says that the price tag on an alternative is too much? Who makes that decision?
 - If the Forest Service asks you to use an alternative that's cost-prohibitive and would prohibit the viability of the project or involves an unproven technology you can say no, but these need to be real and documentable arguments.
- Where do we go from here? How does the final decision get made?
 - Resolution will tell the Forest Service if there are any technical fatal flaws from our perspective, based on upcoming site characterization. If so, those alternatives will be dismissed. Then a full impact assessment will be conducted on the remaining alternatives. Ultimately, the Tonto National Forest Supervisor will identify the preferred alternative. Resolution has told the Forest Service that it can live with any of these sites as long as there are no fatal flaws.
- Does Skunk Camp have the least opposition, for views etc.?
 - We don't really know yet, since it is a new proposal. When we mention tailings sites, the opponents there think of Asarco in Winkelman as the model; there is not a level of trust with Resolution yet. Peacey noted that everyone from Resolution to the Forest Service seemed to have missed this Skunk Creek site in the search for alternatives. It has some attractive aspects.

In summary, Vicky said that there are also alternatives being studied for the processing plant. Sites near San Tan and at the West Plant are being looked at.

Peacey reported that the Draft EIS is still planned to be released in May 2019, as far as Resolution knows. There will be a very long public comment period, much longer than usual. A Final EIS is scheduled for Summer 2020, followed by an objection period of unknown length. It was noted that the Rosemont Mine objection period lasted for three years.

Discussion of Additional CWG Members

It was suggested by some CWG members that residents from around Skunk Camp site should be invited to attend or join the CWG. From a logistics standpoint, Peacey noted that it takes about 1.5 hours to get there. Some CWG members thought a field trip this winter to Peg Leg and Skunk Camp would be valuable.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Future Meeting Planning & Next Meeting

Godec pointed out a list of potential CWG meeting topics that is included in the packets tonight. The group felt that the topic of socioeconomic effects is a large and critical one, and will probably take several meetings. This is something that the Town of Superior has been dealing with for some time, and the Mayor felt that they may need more time to work with Resolution

on this issue before discussing it at the CWG. The regional nature of socioeconomic impacts should also be recognized (Globe, Gold Canyon, etc.). Regarding discussion of water use and management, Godec told that group that he has not as yet been able to secure representatives from Central Arizona Project and Arizona Department of Water Resources, as requested by the CWG. He pointed out that at this time the agencies are in the midst of controversial drought management discussions. Tribal monitoring for cultural resources was suggested as a meeting topic but the group felt they had enough information about this.

For the January meeting, the group decided they would like to have a field trip to the Skunk Camp and Peg Leg tailings sites, which could be combined with a visit to area residents and/or invite area residents along. The facilitators will work with Resolution to schedule this. Therefore, no date was set for the next CWG meeting.