

Scoping Meeting to Discuss Potential Morenci Mine Settlement Restoration Projects - April 2013

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice and the State of Arizona settled a natural resource damage assessment claim with Freeport-McMoRan for natural resource injuries resulting from hazardous substance releases at the Freeport McMoRan Morenci Mine, a copper mining site near Clifton, AZ, in east-central Arizona (Figure 1). Hazardous substance releases caused injuries to migratory birds and terrestrial animals and their habitats.



Figure 1. Morenci Mine, Greenlee County, Arizona

A Trustee Council, consisting of representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and the Arizona Game and Fish Department will determine how the \$6.8 million settlement from Freeport McMoRan should be spent in order to restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent natural resources that were injured at the Morenci Mine through the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) program (43 CFR Part 11).

The settlement funds will be used to plan and implement wetland restoration projects for wildlife populations and their habitats in Arizona.

SCOPING MEETING

The Trustee Council will hold an informal public scoping meeting with interested stakeholders to identify and discuss potential restoration projects to compensate for injuries to natural resources at the Morenci Mine (Figure 2).

This scoping meeting is an opportunity for the public to learn about the injuries, criteria for potential restoration projects, to offer ideas for projects

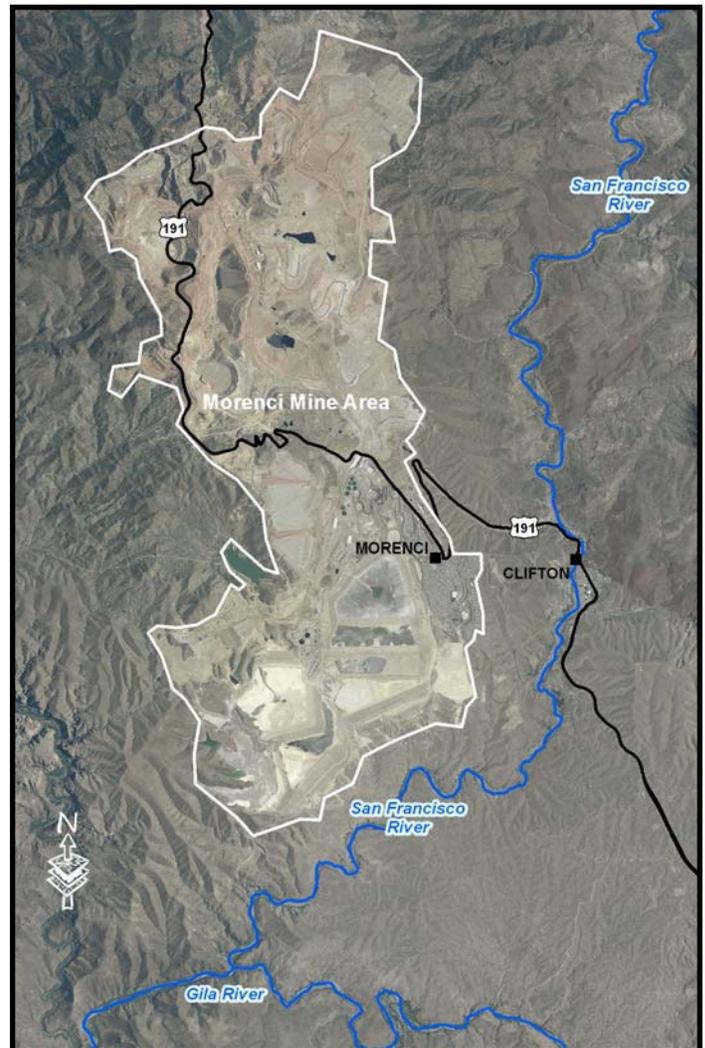


Figure 2. Morenci Mine study area, east-central Arizona.

and to learn how to submit proposals for project funding. Proposals for restoration projects are due April 30, 2013. For information on proposal criteria and scoring, please visit the following Web site: <http://www.azgfd.gov/NRDmorenciprojectsolicitation>

Interested stakeholders will be able to sign up for the project mailing list and will have the opportunity to comment on the draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment, when it is available.

After this scoping meeting, the Trustees will draft a restoration plan, which will describe the injuries

to natural resources, explain the restoration objectives and describe the preferred restoration projects to compensate for the injuries. When the plan is drafted, the Trustee Council will hold another public meeting and interested stakeholders will have the opportunity to review and comment on the Plan.

The scoping meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 9 at Eastern Arizona College in Thatcher. The agencies will have staff available to discuss the NRDAR program, the scoping process and how to receive information as the planning process moves forward. The scoping meeting will be held:

Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2013

Time: 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Location: Eastern Arizona College
615 N. Stadium Ave.
Thatcher, AZ 85552

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The deadline for submitting restoration project proposals, ideas or suggestions is Tuesday, April 30, 2013. Comments should be submitted in writing to:

Renee Wilcox, Project Manager
Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086
e-mail to: restorationplancomments@azgfd.gov