

**From:** Tonto National Forest <[SM.FS.TontoWebmail@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.TontoWebmail@usda.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 22, 2025 11:47 AM  
**To:** FS-Tonto Webmail <[SM.FS.TontoWebmail@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.TontoWebmail@usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** Tonto National Forest Contact Form Inquiry

Submitted on Tue, 07/22/2025 - 18:47

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

**Your Name**

Kelsey Erickson

**Your email address**

[REDACTED]

**Subject**

Objection to DROD for Oak Flat Land Transfer

**Comment/Questions**

Hello,

I'm objecting to the DROD for Oak Flat Land Transfer to Resolution Copper for the following reasons...

1. The land transfer is a violation of the Religious Freedom Act. Oak Flat is a sacred site for the Apache who still practice ceremonies there. Chi' Chil' Bilda'goteel as they call it is the spiritual birthplace of their people. As such it must be protected in order to respect their religious rights.
2. The copper mine would utilize billions of gallons of water over the course of the operation. Given the desert environment and increasing drought periods, this an outrageous amount of water that Arizona cannot afford to allocate for mining. Such an act could drastically impact the nearby community of Superior, causing drought refugees in the near future.
3. Rare species exist at Oak Flat. Coatimundis are at the northern extent of their range in Oak Flat. Ocelots have also been observed in this area. Emory Oak, a traditional food source for the Apache, is abundant in Oak Flat for which it was named. If the Resolution

Copper mine were to be built, all these species would be adversely impacted.

4. National Security Threat. Granting ownership of this land to Resolution Copper, an Australian company financed by China, is a foolish decision that allows foreign nations to extract our resources with impunity. I'm shocked that a Xenophobic President such as Trump would welcome China to take a large parcel of our land to meet their copper demands. It's as if he's aiding them to exert more global control by giving our resources to them.

5. Impact to recreation. People across the country and the world revere Oak Flat as a world-class climbing area. There's even a yearly Bouldering contest that is hosted there. In addition it is a popular place for hikers, bikers and birdwatchers. The jobs it would temporarily create is not worth the loss of recreational tourism that Oak Flat creates.

I've spent several months at Oak Flat supporting the Apache Stronghold in their efforts to protect it. I have never felt more connected to a place before and will never forget stumbling upon a group of coatis springing down from the Emory Oaks there. I hope that you will do what you can to preserve this sacred space. The land transfer not only hurts the Apaches but all of us who require water to live. Arizona simply cannot afford to allocate such a massive water budget to a foreign mining corporation that couldn't care less about U.S. citizens who will suffer from these severe environmental impacts.

Please let me know how I can officially submit this DROD objection to the Tonto National Forest Service.

Thank you,  
Kelsey Erickson  
Cornell University B.S. in Natural Resources '13



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