

Copper Flat DEIS Comments:

- Section 2.1.4.1 Reclamation Material: this section seems out of place as a heading under Waste Rock Disposal Facility. This section would seem better located under Section 2.1.8 Growth Media, Section 2.1.9 Borrow Areas or 2.1.15.9 Plant Growth Media and Cover Materials.
- p. 2-23, Table 2-5: A reference/citation of where this data was obtained should be provided because this table shows a substantial increase in the available reclamation material compared to the estimates provided in the report by Stetson Engineers, Inc. entitled “Order 1 Soil Survey of Permit Area” dated September 14, 2011 (provided by THEMAC as appendix 6-A to the Baseline Data Report).
- p. 2-24, Table 2-7: This table for the estimated number of employees needed in year 1 of the Proposed Action is the same as Table 2-18 for year 1 of Alternative 1. It seems likely to this reader that the estimated number of employees needed for Alternative 1 (an accelerated rate of mining) would require additional employees compared to the Proposed Action.
- p. 2-40, Table 2-12: top dressing cover requirements. This table ties to Section 2.1.15.9, Page 2-39, of the DEIS which states:

“...poor development of topsoil (top dressing) at the site would require the evaluation of alternative sources and types of materials for use as reclamation cover. The estimated volumes of salvageable cover material available in areas to be newly disturbed or re-disturbed by the project are shown in Table 2-5, above.”

- Table 2-12 states the volume of top dressing cover needed, but Table 2-5 and Section 2.1.15.9 don't provide enough information to determine if the volume of required top dressing is available on site.
- Table 2-12 does not provide the assumed thickness of top dressing required. Page 2-37 under the heading of Acid Rock Drainage, provides a total thickness of up to 36" of cover materials, but Table 2-12 doesn't describe what portion of the 36" is top dressing. Granted, this could be back-calculated from the information provided, but it shouldn't be necessary for the reader to do this.
- p. 2-87, Section 2.4: The last sentence of this section states that “the mine area would be reclaimed according to BLM standards, and to NMED [emphasis added] requirements, pertaining to disturbances associated with site exploration. “MMD” should be substituted for NMED; NMED does not typically regulate exploration disturbance, but MMD does.

- p. 3-25, Table 3-9: the superscripts of 1 and 2 and not explained in the notes at the bottom of the table.
- p. 3-34 through 3-36, rapid infilling of the pit: natural infilling of the pit to its natural static water level is anticipated to take a period of decades to centuries (page 3-34, 3rd paragraph and page 3-35, 1st paragraph). Since natural infilling is so slow, and rapid infilling with fresh water from the production wells is anticipated to take 6 months to a year (page 3-34, 3rd paragraph), it seems likely that the water placed in the pit will leak back into the surrounding andesite aquifer; the pit water level will have a higher head than the water level in the andesite aquifer. It seems likely that the water level in the pit will therefore progressively go down due to evapotranspiration and until equilibrium with the surrounding static water level is reached. This scenario isn't described in the DEIS nor whether NMCC will continue to introduce water to the pit until static water level equilibrium is reached. The DEIS isn't clear as to whether the use of this "make-up" water is accounted for in the DEIS alternatives.
- p. 3-128, Table 3-25: Bendire's Thrasher does not have a dot indicating that it is either a recorded species or a species likely to occur in proper habitat.
- p. 3-180, Figure 3-29: There is something fragmented about this photo – it looks like two images partially superimposed on each other.
- p. 3-180, Figures 3-30, 3-31, and 3-32: These photos are pixelated and should be clear for the Final EIS.