



U.S. Forest Service
Tonto National Forest
2324 East McDowell Road
Phoenix, AZ 85006
602-225-5200
www.fs.usda.gov/tonto
Twitter: [@TontoForest](https://twitter.com/TontoForest)

News Release

Media Contact: John Scaggs
602-225-5292
jscaggs@fs.fed.us



Forest Officials to Meet with Town of Superior, Discuss Apache Leap

PHOENIX, January 10, 2017 — For Immediate Release. Tonto National Forest officials will meet with the Town of Superior's mayor, town council and interested members of the public January 12 regarding establishment of the Congressionally-mandated Apache Leap Special Management Area.

The meeting will take place in the town hall auditorium located at 199 N. Lobb Avenue in Superior, Arizona, from 6 to 7 p.m. During the session, Forest Service officials will outline their responsibilities in developing a management plan for the area. The meeting also will give attendees a chance to provide input to help forest officials craft content for development of the management plan.

The Tonto National Forest (TNF) is preparing the management plan for the Apache Leap Special Management Area. Section 3003 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2015 establishes the Apache Leap Special Management Area as well as preparation of a management plan for the area. As part of a larger land exchange proposal between the government and Resolution Copper -- the operating company and project proponent for a proposed underground copper mine near Superior -- Resolution Copper will transfer its 110-acre Apache Leap parcel to the TNF. This parcel will be added to an existing 697-acre area of the TNF to form the 807-acre Apache Leap Special Management Area, which encompasses the Apache Leap escarpment, east of Superior.

According to TNF Project Manager Mary Rasmussen, the NDAA lists three Apache Leap Special Management Area purposes -- preserving the natural character of Apache Leap; allowing for traditional uses of the area by Native American people; and protecting and conserving the cultural and archeological resources of the area. The NDAA also allows the Forest Service to consider whether additional measures are necessary.

-- more --

“The finished plan will offer strategic direction for managing the land and resources within the special area boundary and a framework for guiding future decisions on site specific projects and activities,” Rasmussen said. “During plan preparation the Forest Service must consider whether additional measures are necessary to protect the cultural, archeological, or historical resources of Apache Leap.

“Based on feedback during previous meetings with affected Indian Tribes, the public and special interest groups, the Forest Service also is aware that recreational access and possible expanded recreational opportunities are important considerations,” she added. “We’re very interested in hearing from the Town of Superior and other parties on what else is special about Apache Leap and how the area should be managed for present and future generations.”

The TNF extended its timeline for people to provide written inputs on a draft plan to January 31, 2017. The public can submit inputs by mail to: Apache Leap SMA, P.O. Box 34468, Phoenix, AZ 85067-4468. Further information concerning the development of the management plan can be found online at www.ApacheLeapSMA.us.

The NDAA directs completion of the management plan by December 2017. A draft plan that incorporates inputs from stakeholders is planned for release to the public in February 2017 as part of an environmental review process. The public then will have an opportunity to comment on the draft plan.

--end--