

Kimberly MacMillan

From: **Sweeney, Katie** <KSweeney@nma.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 21, 2011 at 9:39 AM
Subject: Request for Extension of the Comment Period
To: NAZproposedwithdrawal@azblm.org
Cc: ASFOWEB_AZ@blm.gov

Dear Mr. Florence,

The attached letter requests an extension of the April 4 comments period on the draft Northern Arizona proposed withdrawal environmental impact statement. As explained in our letter, the National Mining Association needs additional time to review the 1000+ pages of the draft EIS. I appreciate your consideration of our request.

Katie Sweeney

General Counsel

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KATIE SWEENEY
General Counsel

March 21, 2011

Scott Florence, District Manager
BLM Arizona Strip District Office
345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, UT 84790-6714

Re: Request for Extension of Public Comment Period on the Draft Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement (*76 Fed. Reg. 9594*)

Dear Mr. Florence:

On Feb. 18, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced the opening of a 45-day public comment period on the Draft Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS identifies the preferred alternative or proposed action as the withdrawal of over one million acres adjacent to Grand Canyon National Park from the operation of the Mining Law. The National Mining Association's (NMA) members have a significant interest in the exploration for, and development of, minerals on federal lands, including the vast mineral resources that would be subject to the proposed withdrawal.

NMA intends to provide substantive comments on the draft EIS. However, the current 45-day comment period for a document that exceeds 1000 pages is simply insufficient. The ability to review and analyze the draft EIS is crucial to NMA's effort to provide meaningful comments that need to be considered before any final decision is made with respect to the proposed withdrawal. Therefore, NMA requests an extension of the comment period for an additional 45 days from the current April 4 deadline.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202)463-2627 or ksweeney@nma.org.

Sincerely,

Katie Sweeney