

Kimberly MacMillan

From: **KRIS HEFTON** <khefton@msn.com>
Date: Tue, May 3, 2011 at 5:47 PM
Subject: Comment Letter on Proposed Withdrawal
To: azasminerals@blm.gov

Scott,

Please see attached letter. I preferred to not give personal information on the letter.
However, please feel free to contact me at this email or my cell at 549-5747.

Regards,

Kris

April 30, 2011

Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal Project
Mr. Scott Florence, District Manager
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Arizona Strip District Office
345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, UT 84790

RE: Comments on Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal

Dear Mr. Florence,

Paragraph 1 on Page ES-1 of the DEIS states, "The withdrawal was proposed in response to increased mining interests in the region's uranium deposits, as reflected in the number of new mining claim locations..."

This is a misleading statement and I would like to clarify the facts:

- 1) The number of new mining claims is about 1/3 of the number of claims that existed in the district in the early 1980s, at which time the Arizona Strip Wilderness Act of 1983 was implemented as a mitigating action.
- 2) The current proposed withdrawal is the result of various environmental groups including Grand Canyon Trust, Center for Biological Diversity, and the Sierra Club, lobbying Former Secretary of Interior, Dirk Kempthorne to withdraw the acreage. Secretary Kempthorne refused on the grounds that there was no evidence of long-term irreparable harm nor did an emergency condition exist. Upon being elected, President Obama appointed Ken Salazar to Secretary of Interior and he soon issued the segregation order and proposed withdrawal of the 1M acres. There is insufficient data to indicate to any reasonable authority that uranium exploration and mining activities would cause immediate or long-term environmental harm. Clearly, this illustrates the political involvement in this issue whereby a decision was made on subjective, rather than objective reasoning.
- 3) The environmental lobby base their recommendation and support of the withdrawal on preserving the Grand Canyon for recreation and tourism. Recently, these environmental interest groups have challenged tour company overflights of the Grand Canyon which resulted in public hearings in Phoenix. This is a direct contradiction to their reasoning for support of the withdrawal in favor of protecting the interest of tourists.

These facts should be placed in the DEIS. Mr. Florence, I sincerely hope that you, the BLM, and your boss recognize what is going on here and that your boss will make the

Kris K. Hefton
Tucson, AZ

correct decision with respect to the withdrawal. The correct decision is the No Action alternative (Alternative A). Any other decision will be detrimental as it will be based on political reasons. No counter can void this fact.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kris K. Hefton".

Kris K. Hefton
Tucson, AZ