

**Kimberly MacMillan**

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From: **Mark Compton** <[mcompton@nwma.org](mailto:mcompton@nwma.org)>

Date: Mon, Mar 21, 2011 at 4:23 PM

Subject: RE: Comment Period for the Draft N. Arizona Proposed Withdrawal EIS

To: [nazproposedwithdrawal@azblm.org](mailto:nazproposedwithdrawal@azblm.org)

Mr. Florence,

Attached please find a letter from the Northwest Mining Association requesting a 45-day extension to the public comment period on the Draft Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal EIS.

Thank you.

Mark Compton

Government Affairs Manager

Northwest Mining Association

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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:

The Northwest Mining Association (NWMA) hereby requests a 45-day extension to the public comment period for the Draft Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). On Feb. 18, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced the opening of a 45-day public comment period on the Draft EIS, set to expire on April 4. A 45-day comment period is insufficient to adequately analyze and provide meaningful comments on a document of more than 1,000 pages.

NWMA is a 116 year old, 2,000 member, non-profit, non-partisan trade association based in Spokane, Washington. NWMA members reside in 42 states and are actively involved in exploration and mining operations on public and private lands, including the area subject to the proposed withdrawal. NWMA's broad membership represents a true cross-section of the American mining community from small miners and exploration geologists to both junior and large mining companies. More than 90% of our members are small businesses or work for small businesses. Most of our members are individual citizens.

NWMA members hold numerous mining claims in the area of the proposed withdrawal and are directly and substantially impacted by the BLM's proposed action. The Draft EIS identifies as the preferred alternative the withdrawal of more than 1 million acres adjacent to the Grand Canyon National Park from operation of the Mining Law.

BLM's proposed action would have significant negative consequences for our members, our economy and the energy and mineral security of the United States. NWMA 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.

NWMA and our members will be submitting comments on the draft EIS. However, additional time is necessary to provide meaningful, substantive comments that will help the BLM make an informed final decision with respect to the proposed withdrawal. An additional 45 days is a modest and reasonable request.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. We look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Laura Skaer  
Executive Director