



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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

In reply refer to:
2300(AZ9100)
AZA-035138

October, 2011

Dear Reader:

Attached is the Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Arizona Strip District Office and the U.S. Forest Service, Kaibab National Forest. The BLM prepared this document in collaboration with 15 federal, state, local, and tribal cooperators in an effort to provide an objective analysis of the Proposed Action and Alternatives based on the best available science. This FEIS has been prepared on behalf of the Secretary of Interior to inform his decision whether or not to withdraw lands in the vicinity of the Grand Canyon from the Mining Law of 1872. This FEIS was developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, implementing regulations, the BLM's NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1), and other applicable laws and policy.

This FEIS has been prepared in response to the Secretary of the Interior's proposed 20-year withdrawal of approximately 1 million acres of federal mineral estate in northern Arizona from the location and entry of new mining claims under the General Mining Law of 1872 [30 United States Code 22-54] subject to valid existing rights, for a period up to 20 years. The proposed withdrawal area consists of approximately 1,006,545 acres of federal mineral estate, which underlies about 626,678 acres of public surface managed by the Arizona Strip Field Office, 355,874 acres of National Forest System surface managed by the Kaibab National Forest, 4,204 acres of surface administered by the Arizona State Land Department, and 19,789 acres of privately owned surface. As of July 2009, these lands were segregated for up to 2 years from location and entry of new mining claims. On June 27, 2011, the Secretary of Interior published an Emergency Withdrawal which will expire on January 20, 2012, to allow the lands to remain closed to location and entry during the completion of the NEPA process. Supporting information for this EIS is available on the project web site at: <http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/mining/timeout.html>.

The FEIS contains an environmental analysis of four Alternatives. Alternative A is the No Action alternative, under which there would be no withdrawal; location and recordation of mining claims would continue. Alternative B, the preferred alternative, is also the Proposed Action to withdraw 1,006,545 acres from location and entry under the General Mining Law of 1872 for 20 years, subject to valid existing rights. Alternative C is a smaller withdrawal of 650,333 acres. Alternative D is a further reduced withdrawal of 295,991 acres. A summary of changes made between the Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and FEIS is included in section 1.5.4. Section 5.6 of the FEIS contains

responses to public comments received on the DEIS which was released for public comment on February 18, 2011.

Upon release of the FEIS to the public, in accordance with 40 CFR 1506.10, the Secretary of interior may make a final decision after 30 days have elapsed. At such time, the Department of Interior will issue a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD will be available to all parties through the Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal project page at: <http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/mining/timeout.html>, or by mail upon request. If the Secretary's decision includes a withdrawal, a Public Land Order will be published in the Federal Register, which will implement the Secretary's decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott R. Florence". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Scott R Florence, Arizona Strip District Manager
Bureau of Land Management