



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
St. Paul District



March 11, 2014

Kathryn Hoffman, Staff Attorney  
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St. Paul, MN 55101

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Scott Strand, Executive Director  
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy  
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**RE: NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement Request for Comment Period Extension**

Dear Ms. Hoffman and Mr. Strand:

Thank you for your letter dated March 5, 2014, requesting an extension of the public review and comment period for the NorthMet Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). Your email requests a 30-day SDEIS comment period extension from 90 days to 120 days.

The Co-lead Agencies have carefully considered the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy's request and supporting rationale. As we noted in previous correspondence, a 90-day comment period is on the longer end for both federal and state EISs. The Co-lead Agencies' decision to provide 90 days for public comment reflects our recognition that the SDEIS is a complex document and a review period enabling the public to comment on the SDEIS is needed. The comment period is not designed to provide for extensive independent analyses of the project's technical documents in addition to the SDEIS.

Prior to and during the SDEIS comment period, the Co-lead Agencies have sent the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy supporting information related to the SDEIS, as well as preliminary drafts of the SDEIS itself. Your request appears to be based on a desire to have additional time so that you can review multiple drafts of technical documents that were used in the preparation of the SDEIS. While it is certainly your prerogative to review these documents, they are not the focus of the environmental review public comment period.

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Therefore, the Co-lead Agencies will not be extending the comment period. The public comment period for the NorthMet SDEIS will end on March 13, 2014, as previously announced. The Co-lead Agencies look forward to receiving and considering comments from the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy and other parties.

Thank you again for your correspondence.

Sincerely,



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