



ALASKA MINERS
ASSOCIATION

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February 8, 2017

Senator Lisa Murkowski
Senator Dan Sullivan
Alaska Delegation

Dear Senators Murkowski and Sullivan:

The Alaska Miners Association writes to urge quick action to repeal the Bureau of Land Management's Planning 2.0 Rule via the Congressional Review Act.

The BLM published in the Federal Register new draft planning regulations titled Planning 2.0, citing the intent to "enable the BLM to more readily address landscape-scale issues...and to respond more effectively to environmental and social change."

Prior to Planning 2.0 being introduced, BLM conducted its land planning process through land and resource management plans (RMPs) as mandated by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Adopted in 1976, the Act changed BLM's mission from land disposals to land retention and management for "multiple use and sustained yield." Over the years, and certainly significantly compounded in the last decade, the land planning processes underneath BLM have grown to be substantially more lengthy, more confusing, and burdensome for stakeholders to engage in. Plans are intended to stand for 20 years, but development and updates take 5-7 years and many are re-opened and re-evaluated several times during their lifetime. Plan documents are uneven, incomplete, and NONE are peer-reviewed, and most include little or no geology, energy, or mineral development information. Working citizens, State regulators, industry representatives, and average Alaskans struggle with reading, comprehending, and providing meaningful comment on multi-hundred-page plans. As a result, the majority of comments received by BLM are from paid environmental groups and NGOs – not representative of the citizenry and taxpayers as a whole.

Planning 2.0 was purported by the agency to fix the broken land management and planning process. It did exactly the opposite. The rule undermines local input, takes away the public planning process at a local level, reduces comment period timelines, puts control of planning to managers outside of Alaska and employs a method of landscape planning, far exceeding the agency's authority under FLPMA.

AMA urges you to take up Planning 2.0 under the Congressional Review Act and vote to disapprove this rule. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deantha Crockett
Executive Director