NEW MEXICO TECH

NEW MEXICO BUREAU OF MINE SAFETY

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from the USGS 2014 U.S. Net Import Reliance). One metal produced in the U.S. is a bright spot on this otherwise bleak mining horizon and that is copper where we produce 69% of our needs. We should encourage the production of this metal and not send our copper jobs abroad.

Sincerely,

Terence Foreback

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New Mexico State Mine Inspector

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LAS CRUCES, NM 88005

December 17, 2015

Mr. Doug Haywood
BLM Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Via Email: BLM_NM_LCDO_Comments@blm.gov

RE: Comments on Copper Flat Copper Mine Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft)

Dear Mr. Haywood and staff at BLM:

BLM staff has presented an outstanding and comprehensive study of the positive and negative effects of the Copper Flat Copper Mine (Copper Flat) in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. It is imperative to the citizens of New Mexico that an impartial study be made.

I would like to emphasize two key points in the study.

- Copper Flat is not a "green field project". This area has been disturbed by other activities including ranching and mining. Long term improvement of the area can be accomplished by the mining process.

- Sierra County suffers from an 11 to 24% poverty level (Draft p.3-278). Development of the property and the subsequent economic impact can be an enormous positive force for the County and to New Mexico. Much is made of the "boom and bust" cycles of mining and the impact on the miners involved. In answer I would point to the number living below the poverty level in Grant County of 3 to 10% (Draft p.3-278). This success is directly attributable to the history of mining and excellent wages paid to miners in the Grant County communities.

In addition I would like to make a point regarding our national economy and security. Mining jobs in the United States have increasingly been sent overseas because of the negative image that has been drawn on the industry and the Americans who are our miners. We currently import 100% of numerous vital materials including titanium, graphite and most of the platinum, palladium, rare earths, potash, garnet, silver and numerous other strategic materials important to our survival as a nation (information