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Dear*Secretary*

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The draft Environmental Impact Statement on the DM&E expansion project has recently been released. The STB has scheduled hearings in our area on November 1 and 2, 2000. We would have less than 30 days to comment at these hearings on a document that is over 2000 pages long, not counting the 404 permit applications to the Corps of Engineers and the amendments to the Forest Service plan that must be added to accommodate the DM&E proposal. I ask that you request the STB to reschedule the hearings after January 2001.

In addition to the short notice of scheduled hearings, the STB has allowed only 90 days for written comments to be submitted. I ask that you request the STB to extend the comment period by 180 days. Could any of us, including yourself, read and prepare a response to this complicated and lengthy document, in addition to job and family responsibilities, within a timeframe of less than 90 days? Please remember that the people affected most by this project are not familiar with the EIS format, and it may take us more time to study all the issues included in the scope of this document. The release of the EIS draft coincides with hunting season, harvest time, and marketing and weaning of calves.

In a free society, we must all be given the opportunity to express our views. All I ask is a fair and reasonable opportunity to review the information. The STB's timeframe is neither fair nor reasonable.

Sincerely

Don Fish