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ALCOM Public Affairs  
9480 Pease Avenue  
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Re: AOPA requests for extension of Comment Period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex

To Whom It May Concern,

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), representing more than 400,000 general aviation members nationwide, requests a 60 day extension to the comment period slated to close on June 7, 2012 for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) comment period.

Based on AOPA's participation during recent DEIS public meetings and the complexity of concerns raised by both the aviation industry as well as local communities impacted by the JPARC proposed changes, the current 70 day comment period is inadequate to allow for a comprehensive review and public input. The sheer volume and complexity of the JPARC initiative would typically necessitate a minimum of 90 days for public comment and while recognizing the military's desire to move ahead and remain on schedule, attempting to aggressively move forward without ample public review opportunity seems to negate the true spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

AOPA strongly suggests the Department of Defense offer an additional 60 days for public review of this complex and lengthy DEIS to ensure the public is offered time to provide substantive comments on the potential consequences of the proposed actions. While understanding the desire to adhere to a schedule and budget, there is no substitute for allowing an adequate and thorough public comment period - especially when the DEIS public comment meetings overlapped with a number of already scheduled community events precluding the public from participation at these public meetings.

AOPA looks forward to an extension of the comment period to allow for a thorough public review opportunity and to allow the aviation community and public to provide substantive feedback on this complex DEIS.

Sincerely,

Heidi J. Williams  
Vice President  
Air Traffic Services and Modernization