Chris Otahal  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management  
Barstow Field Office  
2601 Barstow Road  
Barstow, CA 92311  
caftirwin@blm.gov


Dear Chris Otahal,

The undersigned groups respectfully request an extension to the comment period for the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Desert Tortoise Translocation DOI-BLM-CA-680-2009-0058. We request a 60-day extension of the comment period for this important proposal.

The EA is based in part on a new translocation plan prepared by the United States Geological Survey that is attached as an appendix, and also includes 2 maps that have not been previously released to the public. Translocation is a complex and controversial issue that is fraught with potentially deadly implications for the federally and state threatened desert tortoise. Allowing only a mere fifteen days for the public to review this EA and the associated scientific documents is entirely inadequate. We believe at least an additional 60 days are needed to allow for meaningful public review and comment on the new proposal.

We appreciate your agencies’ serious consideration of our request and look forward to your response. Please consider this request especially in light of the significant public interest in the previous translocation effort and in the conservation of the beleaguered and declining desert tortoise.

Sincerely,

Ileene Anderson  
Biologist/Desert Program Director  
Center for Biological Diversity

Michael J. Connor, PhD  
California Director  
Western Watersheds Project

Sidney Silliman, PhD  
Conservation Committee  
San Gorgonio Chapter – Sierra Club

Jeff Aardahl  
California Representative  
Defenders of Wildlife

Terry Weiner  
Imperial County Projects and Conservation Coordinator  
Desert Protective Council

Drew Feldmann  
Conservation Chair  
San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

Terry Frewin  
Chair - Desert Committee  
Sierra Club