

January 15, 2013

Kimberly Tamkun
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center
P.O. Box 190
Wellington, CO 80549-0190

Sent Via Email: FerretSHA@fws.gov

Dear Ms. Tamkun,

We, the undersigned twelve organizations, would like to request an extension to the current comment period that has been outlined for the reintroduction of the Black Footed Ferret. As published in the December 19, 2012 issue of the Federal Register (FWS-R6-E5-2012-N190; FF060E1600-123-FXES111600000D2), there is a 30 day comment period for the public to submit their comments on the issue. Due to the timing of the announcement's release during the busy holiday season and the nature of the issue, we respectfully request that you extend the 30-day comment period to 90-days, hence closing March 19, 2013.

The issue of reintroduction of a species in such a large swath of land is something that must be reviewed carefully and all aspects of the issue must be taken into account. The 12 states that have been listed as potential areas for reintroduction under the proposal are states heavily populated with family farms and ranches. It is our hope to ensure all of those who could potentially be impacted by this plan are made aware of the proposal and given the opportunity and time necessary to submit comments.

In order to generate the best possible representation of those residing and operating within the targeted area, we ask that the comment period be extended to a 90-day period. The greater the number of comments received, the better prepared the agencies will be to address this issue in the coming months.

Thank you for your consideration. We are more than happy to answer any questions or further comments you have regarding this request. Please direct any further questions to Kelly Fogarty at: 202-870-3867 or Mark Truax at 202-480-4166.

Respectfully,

American Agri-Women
American Sheep Industry
Association of National Grasslands
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of Forest Service Retirees
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
Public Lands Council
Safari Club International
Society for Range Management

United States Cattlemen's Association
Western Energy Alliance
Women Involved in Farm Economics

cc: Secretary Ken Salazar, U.S. Department of the Interior
Director Daniel M. Ashe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services