



# Tennessee Lands Unsuitable for Mining Petition

North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area

## **Draft Petition Evaluation Document and Environmental Impact Statement**



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## **Welcome!**

### **Purpose of the Hearing**

Inform you about the petition

Provide Information on the alternatives analyzed in the Draft PED/EIS

Provide the results of our analysis to this point

Get your input on the PED/EIS

## **We look forward to receiving your comments**



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## Hearing Agenda

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Greeting and Registration
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Informal Poster Session
6:30 p.m. – 6:40 p.m.	Welcome/Rules of Conduct
6:40 p.m. – 6:55 p.m.	PowerPoint Presentation
6:55 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Public Comments

**Sign-up for the public comment portion is underway now at the Welcome table.**



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## Origin of the Petition

- Tennessee's governor originated in September 2010
- Surface Mining law allows anyone to petition
- OSMRE will make a recommendation
- Secretary of the Interior will make the final decision



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## Basis of the Petition

The petition area may be designated unsuitable for mining if:

- incompatible with existing state/local land use plans or programs
- may affect fragile/historic lands
- significant damage to important historic, cultural, scientific, and esthetic values and natural systems



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## Effects of the Petition

- 600 feet of either side of certain ridgelines
- 67,000 acres, across 505 miles of ridgelines



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## Requirement of the Law

- Develop a Petition Evaluation Determination (PED)
- Develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- OSMRE has combined these the two documents



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## Petition Evaluation Determination

- evaluates the merits of the petition



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## OSMRE has determined

- incompatible with Wildlife Action Plan/Wildlife Conservation Strategy
- mining could significantly damage fragile lands, damage fish and wildlife habitat, and harm high quality recreational areas



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## Environmental Impact Statement

- Evaluates six alternatives, including the state's petition
- Analyses the impacts to the economy, society, and the environment from any of the alternatives



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## Environmental Impact Statement

- Alternative 1 - the “no-action” alternative
- OSMRE would recommend the Secretary deny the petition



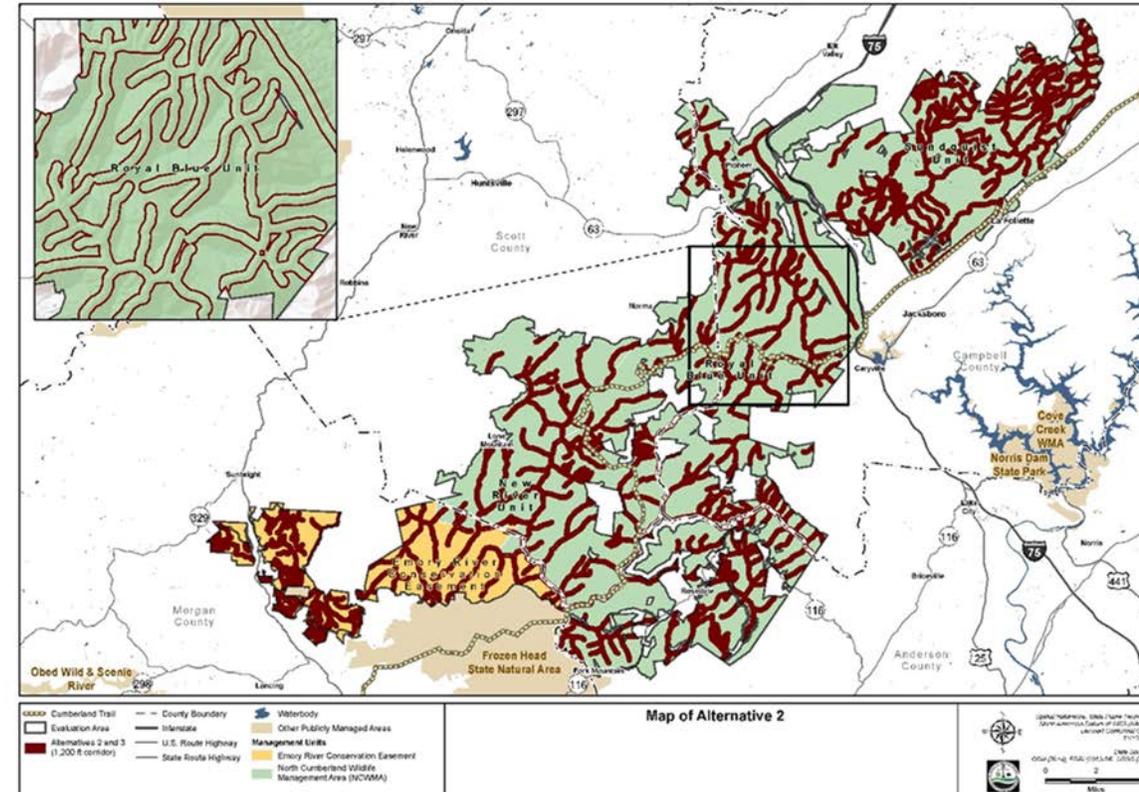
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# Environmental Impact Statement

## Alternative 2

- state's request with no modification
- all lands designated unsuitable for new mining
- 1200 foot wide corridor; 67,000 acres





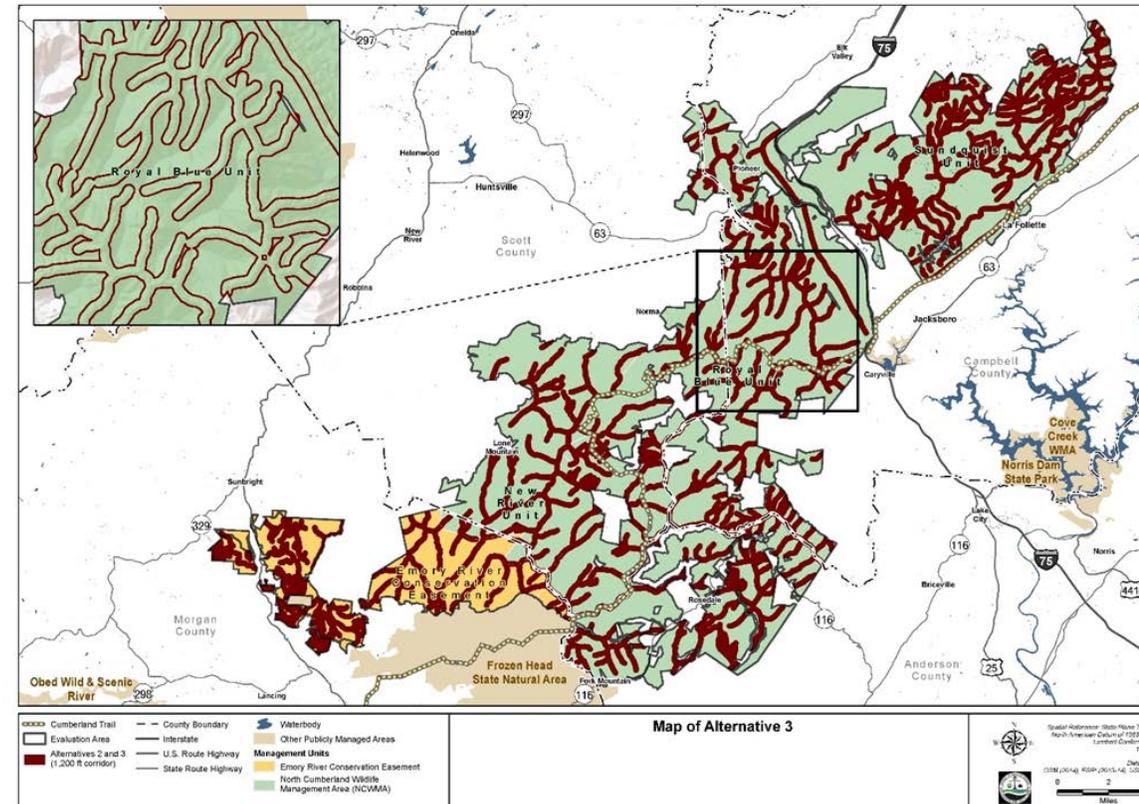
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# Environmental Impact Statement

Alternative 3, preferred alternative

- prohibits new mining in designated areas
- access to re-mine disturbed land
- operators required to reclaim





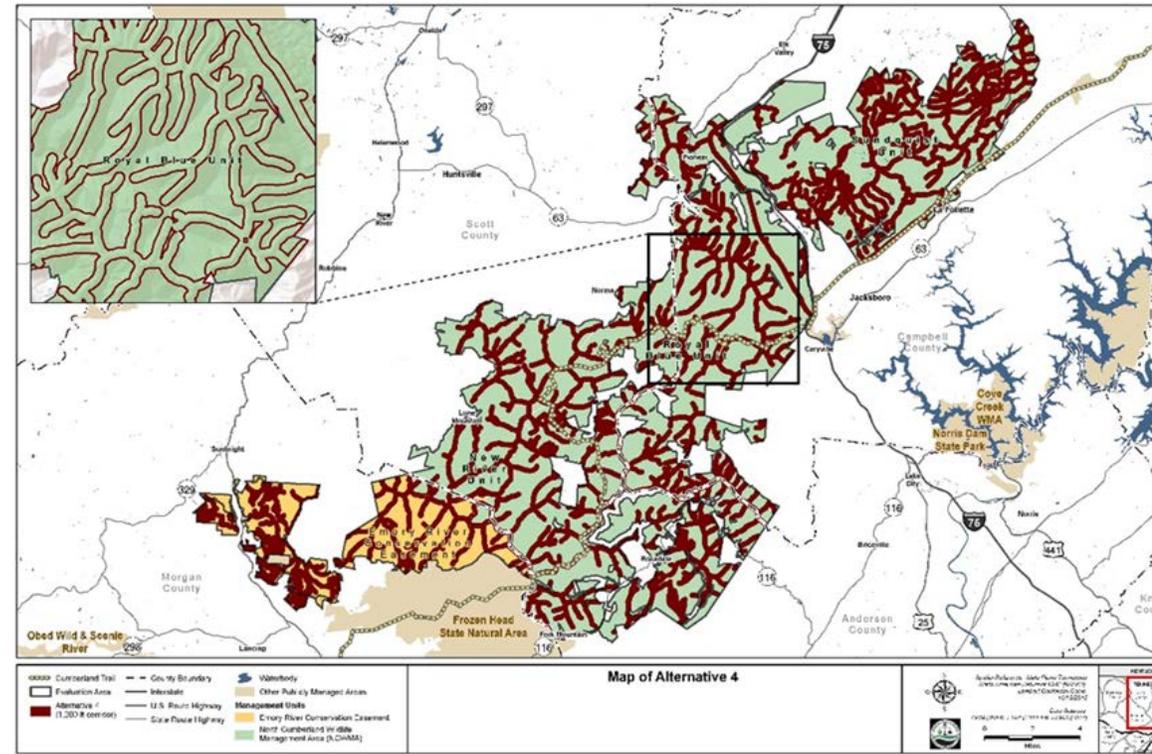
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# Environmental Impact Statement

Alternative 4, similar to preferred alternative

- allows for continuation of re-mining
- expands acreage to more than 76,000 acres





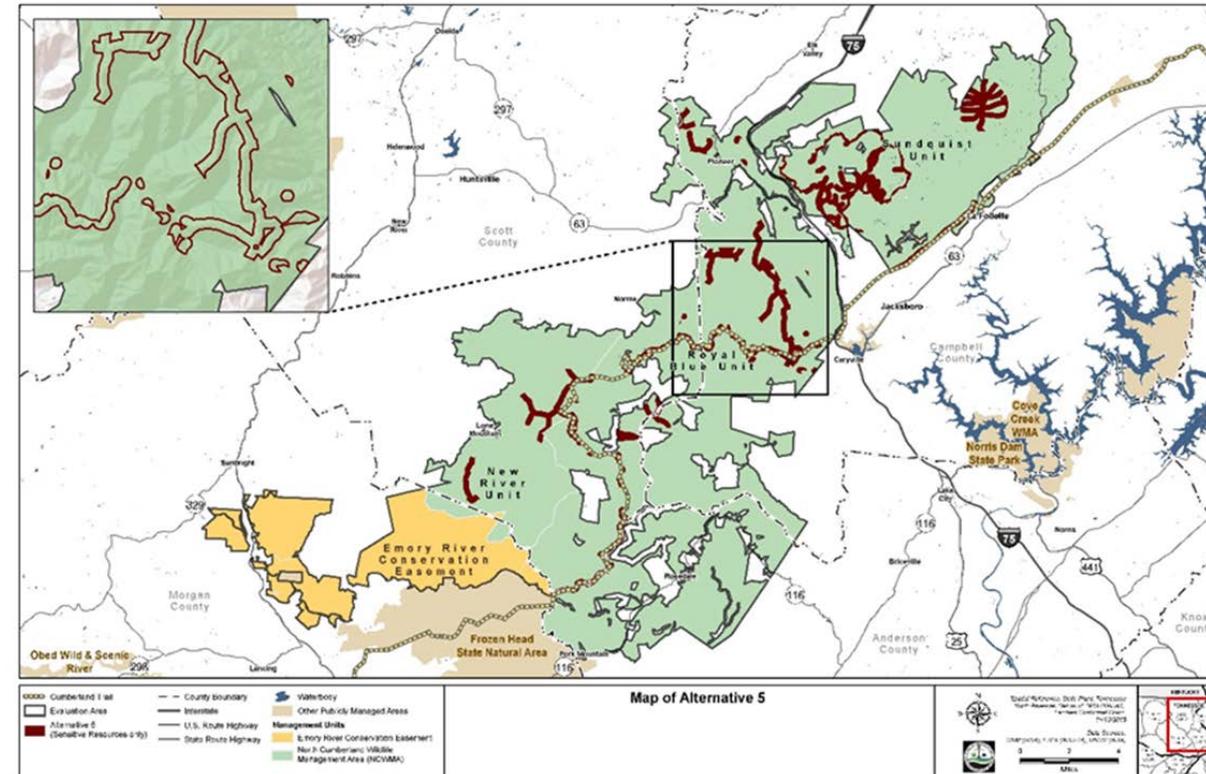
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# Environmental Impact Statement

Alternative 5 – partially grants petition

- protects certain targeted resources
- prohibits new mining in designated areas
- designates approximately 12,000 acres based on presence of sensitive resources





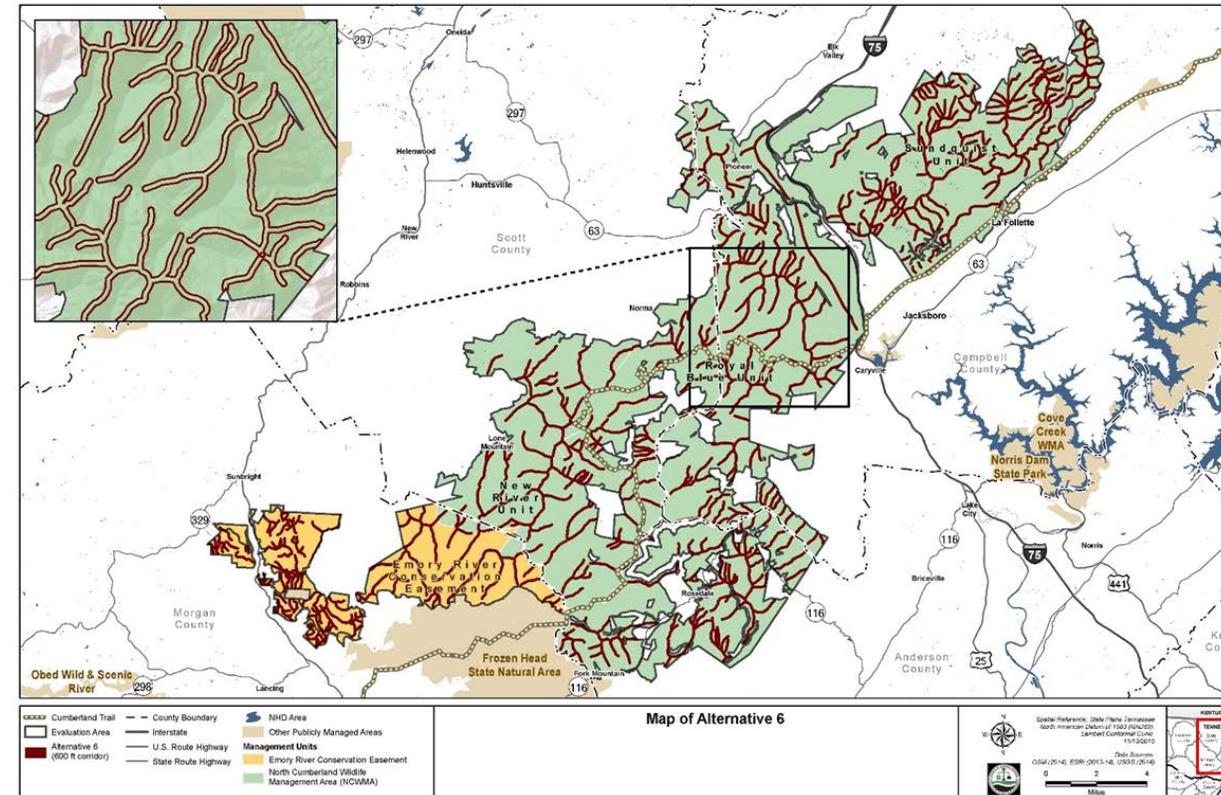
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# Environmental Impact Statement

Alternative 6 grants the state's petition in part

- prohibits new mining in designated areas
- designates a smaller ridge corridor
- 600 feet wide; approximately 39,000 acres





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## Coal Resource Analysis

Federal law requires OSMRE to identify/evaluate coal resources that may lie in the petition area



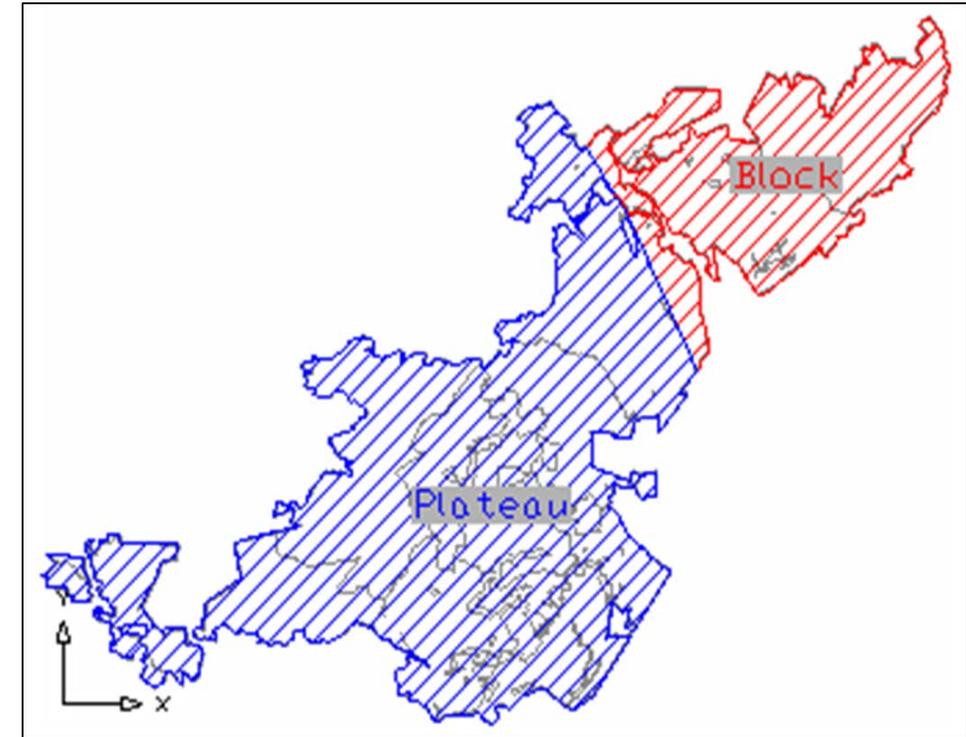
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## Coal Resource Analysis

Identified the following coal resources:

- The Cumberland Block (in red) has 5 coal seams
- The Cumberland Plateau (in blue) has 13 coal seams





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## Coal Resource Analysis

- 421 million tons of coal available in the petition area
- 255 million tons from surface mining
- 115 million tons from underground mining
- 49 million tons from auger mining
- 15 million tons from re-mining old areas



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## Coal Resource Analysis

- petition area mined for coal for more than 100 years
- mining likely to continue adjacent to the petition area
- average annual disturbance is about 112 acres per year
- average rate is expected to continue



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## Dangerous Highwalls

- about 391 miles of highwalls exist in the petition area
- highwalls may continue to pose a problem
- some alternatives would eliminate miles of highwalls

	Alternatives					
	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5	Alternative 6
Miles of Highwalls Present	391	202	202	220	30	108



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## Resource Topics Analyzed

- Earth Resources
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases
- Water Resources



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## Resource Topics Analyzed

- Wetlands
- Soils and Vegetation
- Fish and Wildlife including migratory birds



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## Resource Topics Analyzed

- Special-Status Species
- Land Use
- Aesthetics including visual resources and soundscapes



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## Resource Topics Analyzed

- Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice
- Cultural Resources
- Public Health and Safety



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## Conclusions of the Analysis

- petition area is a multi-use area
- surface mining in the petition area would be incompatible with existing state or local land use plans or programs
- surface mining could significantly damage fragile lands



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## Conclusions of the Analysis

- no major differences in environmental impacts between action alternatives
- rate of mining disturbs about 112 acres per year
- mining outside the petition area will continue to occur



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## Conclusions of the Analysis

- some benefits associated with re-mining and reclamation
- mining companies must comply with permitting procedures and perform reclamation
- the state has input on post-mining land use



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## Your Role in the Process

- examine the information provided in the draft PED/EIS
- submit your comments in a timely manner
- OSMRE will consider all comments received



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## Next Steps

- OSMRE will analyze all timely comments
- OSMRE will develop a final PED/EIS
- the Secretary of the Interior will make the final decision



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