

Environmental News

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**EPA and BIA extend wait period for final Environmental Impact Statement for proposed clean fuels refinery**

***Wait period extended to October 28, 2009***

(Denver, Colo. -- Oct. 2, 2009) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Interior-Bureau of Indian Affairs have completed the final Environmental Impact Statement for the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara (MHA) Nation's Proposed Clean Fuels Refinery on Fort Berthold Indian Reservation near Makoti in North Dakota.

Publication of the final EIS on August 28 initiated a 30-day waiting period that would have ended September 28. In response to requests for additional time to review the final EIS, EPA and the Department of Interior have agreed to extend the wait period an additional 30 days or until October 28. Extension of the wait period was published in the Federal Register today.

The federal agencies are accepting comments during the wait period, after which they can make their decisions on the proposed federal actions. Comments should be submitted to Steve Wharton at EPA no later than Wednesday, October 28.

The EIS evaluates, analyzes and discloses to the public potential environmental impacts of the MHA Nation's proposal to build a petroleum refinery and to produce buffalo forage on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation near Makoti, North Dakota. The MHA Nation has requested that BIA accept 468.39 acres of fee land into trust and that EPA issue a Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for the process water discharges associated with operation of the proposed refinery.

The final EIS and Response to Comments are available on the Web at:

<http://www.epa.gov/region8/compliance/nepa>

The public also may view hard copies of the EIS and NPDES permit at the following locations:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Great Plains Regional Office, 115 4th Avenue, SE, Aberdeen, SD.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Fort Berthold Agency, 202 Main Street, New Town, ND.
- EPA Region 8 Library, 1595 Wynkoop Street, Denver, Colo.
- Three Affiliated Tribes Governmental Offices, 404 Frontage Road, New Town, ND.
- Each of the MHA Nation's Segment Offices: Four Bears (Tribal Gov. Center), Mandaree, Shell Creek (New Town), Lucky Mound (Parshall), Twin Buttes (Halliday) and White Shield, and Rensch garage in Makoti, ND.