

STATE OF ARIZONA
Department of Mines and Mineral Resources

Position Statement

Mineral products are critical to a technology-intensive modern society. Arizona has one of the richest mineral endowments on the planet, especially for copper and molybdenum. “The process of producing, using, and recycling minerals could help society reach many other goals – providing jobs directly and indirectly, aiding in the development of national economies, and helping to reach energy and resource efficiency targets.” *

The Board of Governors of the Department of Mines and Mineral Resources supports the development of mineral resources on public lands in a manner that is consistent with the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 (and subsequent Acts of 1980 and 1984) and internationally adopted standards for sustainable resource development: promoting environmental stewardship, economic stability, and effective governance processes.

The statutes governing the Department of Mines and Mineral Resources task the Department with promoting the commercial development of the State’s mineral endowment. It is the position of the Board of Governors that the Department and Board are allowed to make public (oral and written) statements, render expert opinions, and publish factual reports pertaining to mineral exploration and development.

It is the position of the Board that any proposal for withdrawal of public lands from mineral exploration or development shall be supported by independent, fact-checked, and peer-reviewed studies of the sociological and local, regional and national economic impacts. An analysis should be performed of the cost-benefit factors involved, taking into account the effect on both short-term and long-term national security by the withdrawal of any potential mineral resources. The analysis should be conducted by a qualified person**.

The Board believes all parties involved in the discussion or reporting of restrictions placed on mineral entry must adhere to principles of transparency, accountability, factual arguments, and fiduciary responsibility for public and private monies expended in the deliberation of changes to law, policy, or practice.

Signed by the Board of Governors in March 2008

*Breaking New Ground, Mining, Minerals, and Sustainable Development (2002), The report of the MMSD Project, Earthscan Publications Ltd, London and Sterling, VA, 441 pp, p xiv, ISBN 1 85383 942.

** *A qualified person is an engineer, geoscientist, or other minerals professional who must have over five years of experience that is relevant to the type of analysis under consideration. It is preferred that said qualified person is registered with a regulatory organization (agency, board, or commission) which requires compliance with the professional standards of competence and ethics established by the organization, and has disciplinary powers, including the power to suspend or expel a member.*