

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Parts 91, 93, 121, and 135**

[Docket No. 28537, Notice No. 96-11; Docket No. 28653, Draft Environmental Assessment]

RIN 2120-AF93

Special Flight Rules in the Vicinity of Grand Canyon National Park

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking and draft environmental assessment; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: This action extends the comment period on Notice No. 96-11, Special Flight Rules in the Vicinity of Grand Canyon National Park from September 30, 1996, to November 14, 1996, and also extends the comment period on the companion environmental assessment on the same subject from October 4, 1996, until November 18, 1996. These extensions were directed by the Congress in the Federal Aviation Authorization Act of 1996. The extensions of the comment periods will allow interested persons additional time to comment on the rulemaking proposal and draft environmental assessment.

DATES: Comments on Notice No. 96-11 must be received on or before November 14, 1996; comments on the environmental assessment (EA) must be received on or before November 18, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments on Notice No. 96-11 should be mailed in triplicate to:

Federal Aviation Administration, Office of the Chief Counsel (Attention: Rules Docket, AGC-200), Docket No. 28537, 800 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20591. Comments on the draft EA should be addressed to the same address, but directed to Docket No. 28653. Comments may be examined in room 915G on week days, except on Federal holidays, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For Notice No. 96-11 contact Mr. Neil Saunders, Airspace and Rules Division, ATA-400, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20591 Telephone: (202) 267-8783. For the draft EA contact Mr. William J. Marx, Division Manager, ATA-300 Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Ave., SW Washington, DC, 20591 Telephone: (202) 267-9367.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 26, 1996, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued Notice No. 96-11; Special flight Rules in the Vicinity of Grand Canyon (61 FR 40120). Comments to Notice No. 96-11 were to be received on or before September 30, 1996. On August 21, 1996, the notice of availability of the draft EA was published in the Federal Register (61 FR 43196). Comments on the draft EA were to be received on or before October 4, 1996.

By letter dated August 6, 1996, the Helicopter Association International requested that the FAA extend the comment period for Notice No. 96-11 for 30 days. HAI stated that the vast changes in the special flight rules

require adequate time for tour operators, park visitors, and others to fully comprehend the implications of the proposal. Likewise, Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters requested, by letter of August 28, to extend the comment period for 45 days, saying that the proposed rule is very complex, with many options that could affect vendors, tour operators, and international visitors. The United States Air Tour Association also asked for a 45-day extension, noting that the notice contemplates significant action and that the series of substantive questions would require extensive research to answer. The Havasupai Tribal Council requested a 90-day extension in order to consider comments at their October 12 tribal meeting. Members of Congress requested an extension for reasons similar to those cited above.

The Federal Aviation Authorization Act of 1996 directed that the Secretary of Transportation, acting through the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, take such action as is necessary to provide 45 additional days for comment by interested persons on the special flight rules in the vicinity of Grand Canyon and the draft EA. This notice announces that 45-day extension of the comment periods.

Issued in Washington, DC, on October 11, 1996.

Jeff Griffith,

Program Director for Air Traffic Airspace Management.

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