



For Immediate Release
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Date: February 22, 2019
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Western Caucus and Local Stakeholders Condemn Grijalva Land Grab & Energy Security Sabotage



WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, members of the Western Caucus released statements condemning legislation expected to be announced at a [Grand Canyon event tomorrow](#) hosted by U.S. Representative Raul Grijalva (AZ-03) that seeks to impose a one million-plus acre land grab in Northern Arizona and permanently prohibit mining and other multiple-use activities on this massive swath of land:

Chairman Paul Gosar (AZ-04): "Once again, Rep. Grijalva is pursuing his misguided quest to permanently lockup more than a million acres in Northern Arizona, harm education, kill jobs, infringe on private property rights and undermine American energy security. Rep. Grijalva's attempt to mislead the American public on the issue of uranium mining by claiming Republicans and industry want to destroy the Grand Canyon is laughable at best. Uranium was recently placed on the critical minerals list. The area far outside the Grand Canyon that Grijalva is trying to permanently ban constitutes the bulk of a 326,000,000 acre uranium reserve, the subsurface of which contains significant portions of what is by far the largest tract of uranium deposits in the entire nation, in addition to the highest grade of uranium deposit in the nation by a factor of six. There is no reason America should be importing 97% of our uranium necessary for domestic reactors from countries with Russian influence when we have an ample supply here at home that will create good-paying jobs and be mined under higher standards that protect our environment. Nuclear energy is the most reliable form of clean energy and produces nearly 20 percent of our

electricity. At a time when we should be celebrating the Centennial of the Grand Canyon, Rep. Grijalva's bogus effort distracts from what should be a joyous bipartisan celebration."

Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce: "Efforts to halt resource exploration and extraction are misguided, short-sighted and unfortunately driven by a non-science-based, emotional agenda. Unlike those pushing these radical agendas, I have been in a resource mine, Arizona 1 on the Kaibab. Equally or more important than national security interests, our country's natural resources support local, high-wage jobs of all facets, including engineers and extraction experts, many of whom come from our Arizona native communities. We continually shake our head at those who wish for merely ideological reasons to kill sound employment opportunities for northern Arizonans."

American Farm Bureau President Stefanie Smallhouse: "Arizona's farmers and ranchers know better than most the importance of wise stewardship of our land. The unprecedented land grab Rep. Grijalva proposes is the opposite of wise stewardship. It would prevent the wise use of some of Arizona's most precious and valuable resources without offering any meaningful protection, since the land in question is already protected by a number of federal Acts and other land use regulations. In a state where only 18.1 percent of our land is under private control, additional restrictions on the use of our resources is the last thing we need."

President of Wiita Mining and Exploration Craig S. Wiita: "H. L. Mencken once said 'The urge to save humanity is almost always a false front for the urge to rule' in a nutshell. That's what we have here. A land grabbing, job-killing government overreach attempting to restrict our public lands."

Energy Fuels Resources (USA) Inc. Chief Operating Officer William Paul Goranson: "The EIS associated with the withdrawal did not conclude that modern mining would result in any significant impacts to the Grand Canyon, but recommended that further studies be undertaken. The 20 yearlong, 1 million acre mineral withdrawal was intended to provide time to perform those further studies. The Chairman's rush to make this withdrawal permanent while increasing the area will pre-empt the scientific process and result in an unnecessary permanent withdrawal that is not supported by any scientific evidence. The area covered by the current withdrawal is known to have some of the richest copper grades in the U.S., and has the potential to be a significant future resource of rare earth metals that can be mined in a manner that is fully protective of the environment and the Grand Canyon. Both of these minerals are necessary if our country continues its goals of increasing utilization of renewable energy."

Kane County, Utah Commissioner Andy Gant: "The proposal to close mining permanently well outside the Grand Canyon National Park will have severe consequences for our local economy but more importantly for the nation. Currently, the 98 domestic nuclear reactors which provide 20% of America's electricity are relying on 97% foreign sourced uranium, most of it from Kazakhstan and Russia, not to mention that our own Navy will in time, be facing the same import problem. The breccia pipe uranium on the Arizona Strip which is managed by the BLM field office in St. George, Utah has a stellar track record of being environmentally safe to mine and is fully reclaimed in accordance with our environmental laws. It is the highest grade ore in the continental U.S. and is a vast reserve which the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI)

estimates contains enough high grade uranium to provide electrical power the state of California's 40 million people for 22.5 years. With a solid environmental record and a national need for this nuclear fuel, now is exactly the wrong time to lock up these important reserves for our national security and for our local economy."

Mohave County Supervisor Buster Johnson: "Current uranium mining meets high standards for protecting the environment and public. Not mining the uranium will naturally contaminate the environment and threaten our health. We can remove the natural threat, protect our environment, stop reliance on Russia for our nuclear security and create \$29 billion in economic benefits by opening up the mining."

Tusayan Town Manager at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon Eric Duthie: "Tusayan believes this is federal overreach to appease special interest groups who do not represent the views of the many life-long residents who cherish and manage the Grand Canyon."

Vice-Chairman for Indian Affairs and Oceans Don Young (AK-At Large): "As Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, I have serious concerns over Chairman Grijalva's plan to federalize more than one million acres surrounding the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon should be - and will continue to be - protected under numerous federal statutes and regulations regarding uranium mining. The areas surrounding the Grand Canyon are essential to the energy independence of America, as well as our national security and have no connections to the land or watersheds in the Grand Canyon. If the Democrats and supporters of the Green New Deal are serious about combating carbon emissions, supporting nuclear energy must be seriously considered. This is another instance of federal overreach and stands in the way of resource development, which is key to ensuring energy independence, creating high-paying jobs and bringing economic prosperity to resource-rich regions across our great nation. This bill is activism disguised as environmentalism."

Chief Regulatory Reform Officer Andy Biggs (AZ-05): "Mining is a cornerstone of Arizona's history and western tradition. Prohibiting uranium mining in Arizona hinders our economic freedom and ability to utilize U.S. sourced components for national security capabilities. I stand with Chairman Gosar, the northern Arizona community, and my colleagues from the Western Caucus in opposing this unconstitutional land grab."

Congressman Pete Stauber (MN-08): "Mining is critical to this nation's security and economic development. This politically-driven mineral withdrawal would not just hamper our standing globally, but would rob local economies of high-wage jobs. Just like mining precious metals in Northeastern Minnesota, mining uranium in Arizona can and will be done safely. I support the efforts of my colleagues to continue the responsible development of America's natural resources."

Congressman Duncan Hunter (CA-50): "This is misinformation. The Grand Canyon is already protected by multiple acts of Congress to defend against mining and this would be in the surrounding area where there are plenty of mining claims. Given that the majority of the world's Uranium is produced outside of the United States, the importance of Uranium within the scope of national security - especially with Russia's continued development of intermediate-range nuclear

weapons remains paramount. The United States must not rely on foreign nations especially on a matter of such great importance."

Dwight & Andrea Kadar and Mike Schroeder of Arizona Liberty and Concerned Citizens for America, Arizona Chapter: "Here we go again. In 2015-16, the citizens of rural Northern Arizona spoke out loudly against the Grand Canyon Watershed and Sedona Verde Valley Red Rock National Monuments. And the answer, Congressman Grijalva, was NO! Grijalva's legislation brings up the same unanswered questions as before: Who regulates private property within the withdrawal area? Which agency of law enforcement has jurisdiction on this land? What happens to State Land? Who controls the water? Are individual rights protected such as water claims, mineral claims, or grazing leases? Is access for hunting, camping or fishing restricted or cut off? Will roads be closed? Congressman Grijalva, the answer is still NO! Keep your hands off Arizona land!"

Background:

On Saturday, February 23rd, Representative Raul Grijalva (AZ-03) is hosting [an event](#) outside of his district with extremist environmentalists groups and others in the Grand Canyon. The Southern Arizona Congressman is expected to unveil legislation that seeks to authorize a permanent one million-plus acre land grab in Northern Arizona and permanently prohibit mining and other multiple-use activities on this massive swath of land.

Chairman Gosar successfully fought of a nearly identical effort during the Obama Administration to unilaterally designative the land in question as a new, massive national monument under the Antiquities Act. This proposal was so extreme and unwarranted that even the Obama Administration failed to act on the request despite significant pressure from enviromental groups. At that time, [a scientific poll](#) conducted by Coleman Dahm and Associates found that 71.6% of Arizonans are opposed to the proposed Administrative designation of 1.7 million acres in Northern Arizona as a National Monument. At a field hearing on this land grab proposal in Kingman, Arizona there was significant local and state opposition expressed to this misguided proposal. A link to the field hearing that includes witness testimony, pictures etc. can be found [HERE](#).

The Western Caucus sent two letters to the Trump Administration asking them to investigate political withdrawals by the Obama Administration including the January 2012 political mineral withdrawal of 1,006,545 acres of federal mineral estate in the Arizona Strip for a period of 20 years. The Withdrawal is a 20 year temporary Secretarial action granted under the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) and can be overturned (Revoked) under that same authority. We are now 7 years into the Withdrawal. Click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) to view.

The breccia pipes that want to be utilized have no direct connection to the land or watersheds in the Grand Canyon. Modern uranium mining doesn't utilize open pits. The uranium industry, having learned from the mistakes of the go-for-broke Atomic Energy Commission Cold War mining mandate, reclaimed all post 1980 mines to pristine condition. Industry strongly supports EPA cleanup of left-over uranium on Navajo Reservation. Uranium mining of breccia pipes is environmentally sound and reclamation is stellar.

Northern Arizona Uranium Mining began in the late 1940s and celebrated accelerated through the Cold War Atomic Energy boom of the 1950s and 1960s. Economic benefits of mining accrued to Kane County, Garfield County & San Juan County, Washington Counties in Utah as well as Mohave & Coconino counties in Arizona.

Those benefits included hundreds of high wage jobs (\$75,000–125,00) (the best in the region) directly from mining but also the multiplier industries feeding the mining industry; Auto dealers, tire stores, hardware stores, defense etc. Historically, industry has hired many Navajo miners and truck drivers which will offset the loss of Navajo Generating station jobs.

The Arizona Wilderness Act of 1984 and the agreement between environmental Groups (Grand Canyon Trust) and the Uranium Industry resulted in 1.2 million acres of Wilderness areas being designated as buffer zones to the Grand Canyon National Park and a compromise on another 3 million acres of Arizona land addressed in the bill in exchange for allowing livestock grazing and uranium mining outside of those areas. Senators Goldwater-R, DeConcini-D, Garn-R and Hatch-R, along with Reps Mo Udall-D, John McCain-R, Bob Stump-R and Jim Hansen-R signed off on the compromise. President Ronald Reagan signed the Arizona bill into law on September 28, 1984. The Grand Canyon National Park is also already protected by the Grand Canyon Protection Act, Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act, as well as well as other protections through its designation as Grand Canyon National Park, and from the nearby 1.01 million acre Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument that was designated under the Antiquities Act against the will of many locals and representatives. The proposed national monument is miles away from the actual Grand Canyon itself. Any uranium operation will also have to comply with all state and federal environmental laws and go through the National Environmental Policy Act.

Furthermore, Uranium and depleted uranium are critical to the U.S. military and our national security. The U.S. military uses depleted uranium in armor plating for tanks, Phalanx gun systems, armor-piercing munitions and cruise missiles, naval propulsion reactors, as well as A-10s, Harriers and other military and civilian aircraft. The U.S. Navy cannot maintain its global presence nor maintain its nuclear deterrent against countries like Russia without uranium.

In 1986, the United States produced 100% of the uranium ore used in U.S. domestic nuclear reactors. Today in 2018, 3% is produced domestically with virtually all of the remaining fuel for domestic reactors produced in Kazakhstan, under heavy Russian influence. The U.S. desperately needs domestic uranium given this high 97% import penetration into domestic market. The U.S. Navy is fit-to-be-tied over the prospect of being dependent on Putin for uranium. The situation is untenable.

Americas' 98 nuclear power plants provide clean energy while generating electricity for one of every five U. S. homes and businesses. Nuclear energy has unmatched reliability in the U. S. electrical system. In 2014, as has been the case every year for the past decade, the nuclear industry's average capacity factor (a measure of efficiency) was an electric sector leading 91.7 percent.