

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2009

Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased that President Obama has chosen someone from a public land state who understands that when wisely managed, our multiple-use lands can contribute to our country's economic well-being while also providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and sound conservation. As you know, there are many well-meaning but misguided notions about public lands and some seem to believe that the only choice we have is between destroying the land or designating it as a wilderness, park or otherwise locking it up. In their zeal, some Members of the House previously resorted to an unconstitutional maneuver to circumvent the full legislative process to lock up lands outside the Grand Canyon and extinguish valid existing mineral rights. Sadly, this action took place in the Morris K. Udall Hearing Room. This room was, of course, named for the former Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, who in 1984 blessed, introduced, and declared "historic," the legislation that put in place a compromise that made these lands available for mineral exploration.

The uranium mining industry and the environmental community worked collaboratively to fashion legislation that was ultimately endorsed by the Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, National Audubon Society, Arizona Wildlife Federation, and the National Park Conservation Association. With critical areas protected under what became known as the Arizona Strip Wilderness Act, other areas were opened to uranium exploration. All sides recognized the importance of preservation and the concept of multiple use, and our ability to mine this critical resource safely.

Although the 2008 efforts of the House Natural Resources Committee to undo the Udall legislation ultimately failed, we expect the controversy over uranium near the Grand Canyon to continue. We recognize that there will be pressure on you and the President by some in Congress and some environmental groups to use executive powers to lock up over a million acres of Federal lands under the auspices of "preservation."

We readily recognize the need to protect the wonderful creation we have been blessed with that is the Grand Canyon. We also recognize that we can extract mineral resources to fuel our economy without harming nearby areas that we wish to protect. These are not mutually exclusive concepts. With this in mind, we ask that before the Department of the Interior or President Obama takes any steps either to withdraw lands near the Grand Canyon that potentially contain

uranium deposits or encumber these lands with a new restrictive land use designation, that you consult with the relevant agencies and provide us with the following:

- 1) How much uranium is contained in these lands and what percent of our domestic high grade uranium is found there;
- 2) How much energy can be created if these deposits were to be extracted;
- 3) What effect would this have on the American energy consumer;
- 4) How much uranium is domestically mined and from what foreign sources do we depend on to meet our uranium needs;
- 5) How close are these deposits to the Grand Canyon itself and to the Park boundary and;
- 6) Using best practices, what effect extraction of these uranium deposits would have on the preservation of the Grand Canyon.

Thank you for your help with this matter.

Bob Bly

Da-Itz

Paul C. Brown

Gynthia M. Lummis

Carl Albert

Long Lumber CO-5

Mike Colborn

Phil Zia

Kent Starks

John Boehner

Mr. Madeg

Cc: Secretary of Energy
Secretary of Commerce
Secretary of Defense

Signatories:

Rep. Rob Bishop

Rep. Doc Hastings

Rep. Paul Broun

Rep. Cynthia Lummis

Rep. Jason Chaffetz

Rep. Doug Lamborn

Rep. Mike Coffman

Rep. Jeff Flake

Rep. Trent Franks

Rep. John Boehner

Rep. John Shadegg