RESOLUTION NO. 2024 – 09

A RESOLUTION OF THE COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OPPOSING URANIUM MINING AND HAULING IN THE VICINITY OF THOSE PORTIONS OF GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK AND BAAJ NWA AVGJO I’TAH KUKVENI – ANCESTRAL FOOTPRINTS OF THE GRAND CANYON NATIONAL MONUMENT AND THEIR WATERSHEDS AND AIRSHEDS THAT LIE WITHIN COCONINO COUNTY, ARIZONA

WHEREAS, President Joe Biden designated the Baaj Nwaavjo I’tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument on August 8, 2023 recognizing the area sacred to many Tribal Nations and renowned for its natural, cultural, economic, scientific, historic, and recreational value; and

WHEREAS, nearly one million acres, that includes more than 3,000 cultural and traditional lands and lands sacred to many indigenous tribes affiliated with the Grand Canyon as well as 12 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, all of which are forever protected by this designation from future mining claims; and

WHEREAS, in recognition that the National Monument prohibits additional mining claims, there are more than 2,000 existing uranium mining claims within its borders filed since 2003 that are not impacted by the National Monument’s designation and uranium mining prohibition; and

WHEREAS, uranium mine operations in Coconino County have left a legacy of long-term contamination, especially on tribal lands, that continues to harm the health of residents of Coconino County and continues to threaten contamination of air, creeks, streams, and aquifers, endanger wildlife and potentially threaten the Colorado River; and

WHEREAS, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, in recognizing the dangers of uranium mining, has long opposed uranium development in the vicinity of the Grand Canyon and its watersheds and adopted various resolutions through the years opposing uranium mining on or near Grand Canyon National Park; and

WHEREAS, the Pinyon Plain Mine sits just south of Grand Canyon National Park, within the boundaries of the new National Monument, and is situated directly above the sole source of agricultural and drinking water for Supai Village, home of the Havasupai people in the Grand Canyon; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that the mining and hauling of uranium from Pinyon Plain Mine increases the risk of contaminating the water of the Havasupai people and the complex network of springs and groundwater in the Grand Canyon, and threatens the Havasupai people’s homeland; and

WHEREAS, the Pinyon Plain uranium mine near Tusayan will soon begin trucking uranium ore to a mill in southern Utah using routes through Coconino County, potentially threatening air quality and the health and welfare of those along the travel routes including tribal lands, ranch lands, and the greater Flagstaff area; and
WHEREAS, uranium mining within the boundaries of the National Monument has no meaningful benefit to the Country’s quest for energy independence and given it is incompatible with cultural values, poses a substantial environmental risk, threatens tribal lands and the homeland of the Havasupai people, and threatens irrevocable harm to the Grand Canyon’s aquifers, springs, and streams.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The County Board of Supervisors is reaffirming its long history of opposition to uranium mining and hauling on or near Grand Canyon National Park and urges that the mine be closed.

2. At the minimum, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors urges the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct robust and frequent water and air quality monitoring oversight at the Pinyon Plain Mine site and along the hauling routes.

3. The Coconino County Board of Supervisors further requests that robust monitoring data be published and reported monthly to the public.

4. The Coconino County Board of Supervisors requests a re-evaluation of the mine’s existing Environmental Impact Statement from the 1980s to ensure that it complies with current scientific knowledge and meets current environmental, health, and safety standards taking into account the latest research and hydrogeology.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 20th day of February 2024, by the Coconino County Board of Supervisors.

AYES: 5
NOS: 0
ABSENT: 0

COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Patrice Horstman
District 1 Supervisor

Jeronimo Vasquez, Chair
District 2 Supervisor

Adam Hess
District 3 Supervisor

Judy Begay, Vice Chair
District 4 Supervisor

Lena Fowler
District 5 Supervisor

Resolution 2024-09
Approved February 20, 2024