

June 1, 2023  
The Honorable Joe Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

Arizona's hunting and angling organizations represent thousands of sportsmen and sportswomen across our state who share in a collective belief that healthy public lands are essential to sustaining our angling and hunting traditions. Arizona is blessed to be a sportsman's paradise. More than two million Arizona residents and nonresidents enjoy hunting and fishing here every year, contributing \$2.4 billion to the state's economy. To ensure these traditions can be passed along to the next generation, Arizona's sporting organizations work tirelessly to protect and restore habitat across the state for wildlife species such as elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, turkey, pronghorn, quail and Apache and Gila trout.

The undersigned Arizona hunting and angling organizations are writing to share our conditional support for designating the 1.1-million-acre Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni Grand Canyon National Monument (National Monument).

For background, in 2016 we opposed the 1.8-million-acre Grand Canyon Watershed National Monument proposal. A primary concern at the time was the unnecessary inclusion of the North Kaibab Ranger District, an area that was already permanently protected from mining. Also, there was no mention in the 2016 proposal of the strong heritage of hunting and fishing and necessary management activities needed to protect wildlife values such as what President Theodore Roosevelt described as "North America's finest mule deer herd." At that time, we proposed a smaller, 1.1-million-acre monument with more balanced objectives.

The Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni Grand Canyon National Monument now proposed by 11 Tribal Nations and sponsored by Arizona Representative Grijalva and Senator Sinema is very similar to our recommendation from 2016 and makes the 2012, 20-year mineral withdrawal permanent. Uranium mining around the Grand Canyon poses a serious risk to fish and wildlife and to the people who live in the region as well as those who enjoy fishing and hunting. Water in this area is scarce and small seeps and streams that are not visibly connected on the surface provide conduits for contamination to locations far from the original source.

The proposed national monument provides a balanced management approach. It prohibits future uranium mining and, in the process, protects and preserves exceptional fish and wildlife habitat as well as the quality of life and economic benefits the area provides to local communities, Tribal Nations, and water users downstream. It also honors the rights of Tribal Nations, recognizes the area's rich hunting and fishing heritage, and allows multiple-use activities like livestock grazing and timber harvesting to continue.

America's national monuments not only enable long-term conservation of cultural sites and scientifically valuable resources, they also can conserve some of the best hunting and fishing in America. To accomplish this objective, monument designations must be pursued in a way that addresses the priorities and values of sportsmen and sportswomen. Paramount in achieving this outcome is a process that is locally driven and transparent, incorporates science-based management, and ensures the conservation of important fish and wildlife habitat while upholding continued opportunities to fish and hunt within the boundaries of a proposed monument.

The following principles must be followed to maintain our support for this proposed national monument and associated management plan:

- The national monument boundary is limited to the proposed 1.1-million-acres and excludes the North Kaibab Ranger District.

- The monument proposal must be developed through a public process—one that includes anglers and hunters, as well as appropriate state, Tribal, and local governments.
- The monument proclamation must clearly stipulate that management authority over fish and wildlife populations must be retained by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.
- Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service lands must remain under the authority and jurisdiction of these multiple-use focused land management agencies.
- The monument proclamation must allow direct reasonable access for fishing, hunting, and wildlife management, including continued allowances for terrestrial habitat improvement and water developments.
- The input and guidance of Arizona anglers and hunters must be included in the national monument’s management plan.
- Important fish and wildlife habitat must be conserved.
- The monument proposal must gain support from local anglers and hunters.
- Hunting and fishing opportunities must be upheld and the historical and cultural significance of our outdoor traditions explicitly acknowledged in the monument proclamation.

In Arizona, eight past Presidents – five Republicans and three Democrats – have used the Antiquities Act of 1906 to protect historical and natural wonders. These protected places serve as economic engines for rural communities and the state as a whole. Sportsmen and sportswomen come from a broad range of backgrounds, but we are united in conserving fish and wildlife and sporting opportunities.

We respectfully ask you to incorporate the perspectives of the sporting community when designating the 1.1-million-acre Baaj Nwaavjo I’tah Kukveni Grand Canyon National Monument and offer our support in accomplishing this goal.

Sincerely,

Scott Garlid, Executive Director  
Arizona Wildlife Federation

Alan Davis, Chairman  
Arizona Council of Trout Unlimited

Justin Nelson, President  
Arizona Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

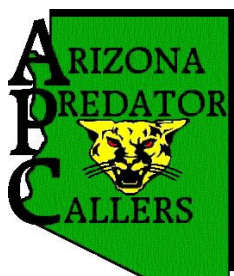
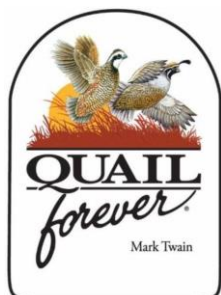
Steve Clark, Executive Director  
Arizona Elks Society

Terry Herndon, Chief Executive Officer  
Arizona Mule Deer Organization

Brian Lathrop, Vice President  
Valley of the Sun Quail Forever

John Doss, President  
Fly Fishers Arizona

Jerry Thorson, President  
Arizona Predator Callers



CC:

Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Honorable Deb Haaland, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior

Brenda Mallory, Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality

Honorable U.S. Senator Kirsten Sinema

Honorable U.S. Senator Mark Kelly

Honorable U.S. Congressman Raul Grijalva

Honorable U.S. Congressman Eli Crane