

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-06

A RESOLUTION OF THE FLAGSTAFF CITY COUNCIL REAFFIRMING ITS SUPPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S 2012 ORDER TO WITHDRAW 1,006,545 ACRES OF FEDERAL LANDS SURROUNDING THE GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK FROM NEW URANIUM MINING FOR 20 YEARS

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, on January 9, 2012, the Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar signed Public Land Order No. 7787, "Withdrawal of Public and National Forest System Lands in the Grand Canyon Watershed; Arizona" (Grand Canyon Mineral Withdrawal), which withdrew 1,006,545 acres of federal public lands surrounding the Grand Canyon National Park from new uranium mining claims, which were authorized under the Mining Act of 1872, for a period of 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the Grand Canyon National Park, a World Heritage Site located 85 miles north of the City of Flagstaff, Arizona, is an integral part of the Northern Arizona landscape and plays an integral role in the tourism economy of the City of Flagstaff; and

WHEREAS, the Grand Canyon National Park attracts nearly six million visitors per year who contribute significantly to the Flagstaff tourism economy; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining threatens the Havasupai Tribe, which relies upon the clean and safe water of surrounding springs and the integrity of the land to sustain the physical, cultural, religious, and economic needs of its people; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining on federal public lands surrounding the Grand Canyon National Park will industrialize the landscape with roads, power lines, mining, trucking, fugitive dust, and intrusive lighting, noise, and infrastructure on publicly owned lands that have historically provided wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and outstanding opportunities for hunting and outdoor recreation; and

WHEREAS, the exploration and mining of uranium is known to cause serious, detrimental and irreversible human health and environmental impacts that directly conflict with the federal government's duty to manage the public lands for the protection and preservation of the places that possess cultural, religious and historic importance to Native people; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining in the Grand Canyon region has left a toxic legacy of polluted water, air, and soil at more than 500 highly contaminated mine and mill sites that remain un-reclaimed within the Navajo Nation and these sites increase the risk of disease and death of people living in communities throughout Northern Arizona; and

WHEREAS, the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 prohibits uranium development on the Navajo Nation "...to ensure that no further damage to the culture, society, and economy occurs because of uranium [mining and processing]"; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 the Flagstaff City Council adopted Resolution No. 2010-74 in support of the proposed Grand Canyon Mineral Withdrawal; and

WHEREAS, an unprecedented alliance of tribal, city, county, and state leaders, business interests, and ranchers, hunters, conservationists, and citizens came together to support Public Land Order No. 7787 that bans new uranium development on public lands that surround the Grand Canyon for 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 Grand Canyon Mineral Withdrawal mandated the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to complete studies to determine the effects of breccia pipe uranium mining on the region's environment, and specifically on the aquifers underlying the lands covered by the withdrawal; and

WHEREAS, to date, funding by Congress for the USGS studies has been grossly insufficient to complete initial baseline monitoring of groundwater and ecological relationships that are already being affected by the development of Canyon Mine, located six miles southeast of the Grand Canyon gateway community of Tusayan and which was previously permitted by the U.S. Forest Service in 1986; closed in 1991 prior to sinking its shaft; and reopened again in 2012, but has yet to begin hauling ore to the White Mesa Mill in Blanding, Utah; and

WHEREAS, the Flagstaff City Council believes that allowing Canyon Mine to continue mining before completing prerequisite baseline studies presents an unnecessary and immoral gamble with the safety of the residents of Supai, Tusayan, and other Northern Arizona communities and the 40 million people who rely on Colorado River water; and

WHEREAS, the Flagstaff City Council recently held a joint meeting with the Havasupai Tribal Council and shares its concerns about uranium mining in their watershed and sacred homeland, which they have been fighting to defend for too many generations; and

WHEREAS, the Flagstaff City Council recently adopted Resolution No. 2017-38, which expresses the Council's opposition to uranium mining and the transportation of uranium ore through the City of Flagstaff and Indigenous lands in the region, and reaffirms Flagstaff as a nuclear free zone; and

WHEREAS, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors' Resolution No. 2008-09 opposes "uranium development on lands in the proximity of the Grand Canyon National Park and its watersheds"; and

WHEREAS, the Tusayan Town Council's Resolution No. 2011-03-2302 supports the 2012 Grand Canyon Mineral Withdrawal; and

WHEREAS, the Hualapai Tribal Council's Resolution No. 67-2009 opposes uranium exploration and mining; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians' Resolution No. MKE-17-058 opposes the reversal of mineral withdrawals that would adversely impact Havasupai and other tribal lands, waters, resources, or Native people; and

WHEREAS, Hopi Tribal Chairman Herman Honanie released a public statement on November 7, 2017, expressing "profound regret" to a report the Trump administration was considering lifting the 20-year ban on uranium mining within the Grand Canyon watershed; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2017, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the National Mining Association lawsuit to rescind Public Land Order No. 7787 and affirmed the factual foundation and statutory authority of the 2012 Grand Canyon mineral withdrawal; and

WHEREAS, in reaction to the 9th Circuit's recent ruling, the National Mining Association said "It is now time for the Congress and the administration, working with the impacted states, to re-evaluate whether the withdrawal was justified based on the scientific, technical and socio-economic facts"; and

WHEREAS, the Mohave County Board of Supervisors, Arizona Congressman Paul Gosar, Utah Congressman Rob Bishop, and others continue to oppose the Secretary's 2012 20-year Grand Canyon mineral withdrawal and have called for its review by the Trump Administration; and

WHEREAS, Arizona's U.S. Members of Congress Tom O'Halleran, Raúl Grijalva, Kyrsten Sinema, and Ruben Gallego wrote to President Trump on November 8, 2017, urging him to not modify the Grand Canyon mineral withdrawal because, "it is our duty to safeguard the environment and the local economies that support our national parks;" and

WHEREAS, Arizona's Legislative District 7 State Representatives Eric Descheenie and Wenona Benally and State Senator Jamescita Peshlakai wrote to President Trump on November 8, 2017, urging him, "as indigenous people and Arizona state legislators" to, "please keep intact a ban on new uranium mines in the greater Grand Canyon region;" and

WHEREAS, when signing the mineral withdrawal, Secretary Salazar said: "People from all over the country and around the world come to visit the Grand Canyon. Numerous American Indian tribes regard this magnificent icon as a sacred place and millions of people in the Colorado River Basin depend on the river for drinking water, irrigation, industrial and environmental use. We have been entrusted to care for and protect our precious environmental and cultural resources, and we have chosen a responsible path that makes sense for this and future generations."


ENACTMENTS:

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FLAGSTAFF, COCONINO COUNTY, ARIZONA, AS FOLLOWS:

THAT the Flagstaff City Council reaffirms its support of Public Land Order No. 7787, which withdrew 1,006,545 acres of federal public lands surrounding the Grand Canyon National Park from new uranium mining claims for a period of 20 years, because such mining activity will almost certainly have a detrimental effect on the economic well-being of the City of Flagstaff and the Havasupai Tribe; and

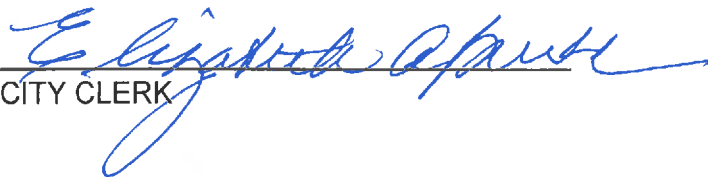
THAT it is hereby the official policy of the Flagstaff City Council that the 20-year Grand Canyon mineral withdrawal should remain fully intact until its expiration in 2032, and that the City Council shall use any means at its disposal to oppose any efforts to rescind or weaken the withdrawal before its expiration.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Flagstaff this 30th day of January, 2018.



MAYOR

ATTEST:



CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



CITY ATTORNEY