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COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES

June, 23 2026

Wendy Eikenberry  
Manager of Groundwater Mining and Industrial Permits  
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality  
1110 W. Washington St. #160  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Ms. Eikenberry,

I am writing regarding Pinyon Plain Mine, located within the south parcel of Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument, to increase aquifer alert levels and water quality limits for arsenic. I am deeply concerned by this request and what it could mean for public health and environmental oversight.

Monitoring wells are one of the most important tools we have to understand whether mining activities are affecting water resources. They provide a critical line of accountability for communities, Tribal Nations, and regulators alike. That role is especially important in the region around the Grand Canyon, where groundwater systems are complex and scientific understanding continues to evolve. As I understand it, additional studies and analyses help determine whether the elevated arsenic levels are naturally occurring or the result of mining activity has not yet been completed. Therefore, the company's claim that these increases are naturally occurring remains unverified.

For the Havasupai Tribe and other communities who rely on these waters, confidence in this system is not optional—it is essential. Public concern about the impacts of uranium mining in this region is already high. Any effort to change established alert levels without thorough scientific review, transparency, and meaningful public engagement risks weakening trust in both the operator and the agencies responsible for protecting public health and the environment.

We cannot allow regulatory standards to shift in response to contamination without first understanding its cause. Doing so risks creating a situation where compliance is adjusted to fit worsening conditions, rather than preventing those conditions from occurring in the first place. That approach undermines the very purpose of environmental safeguards.

There are also long-term implications to consider. If elevated arsenic levels are assumed—without sufficient evidence—to be naturally occurring, that determination could shape future decisions about remediation, reclamation, and post-closure responsibility. Should later evidence show a link to mining activity, it may become more difficult to ensure full accountability. The consequences of that would

ultimately fall on groundwater resources, drinking water supplies, and sensitive springs within the Grand Canyon watershed.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to deny this request unless and until the operator can provide clear, scientific evidence demonstrating that the observed increases in arsenic are entirely natural and unrelated to mining operations.

In addition, I request that any proposed amendment of this nature be subject to a formal public comment period, to ensure transparency and meaningful opportunity for input from affected communities, Tribal Nations, and the general public.

If such evidence is developed, I further ask that it be made publicly available in a transparent manner and communicated in language that is clear and accessible to the communities most directly impacted.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued commitment to protecting Arizona's water resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adelita S. Grijalva". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Congresswoman Adelita S. Grijalva  
Arizona's 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District