



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #MKE-17-058

TITLE: Opposing the Reversal of Mineral Withdrawals that Would Adversely Impact Tribal Lands, Waters, Resources, or Native People

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WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, because the link of Native peoples to their lands is fundamental to their identities, cultures, and populations, the NCAI has historically prioritized lands and resources issues; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, largely at the request of Tribes and other stakeholders, the prior Administration withdrew 1,006,545 acres of public lands near the Grand Canyon from new uranium and other hard rock mining claims, to protect the region and the Colorado River from environmental degradation; and

WHEREAS, Congressional members have urged the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to review mineral withdrawals made during the previous Administration and lift those that they feel are without merit; and

WHEREAS, the mining industry has been advocating for the Administration to lift mining moratoriums and allow mineral exploration on federal lands; and

WHEREAS, expanded uranium mining near the Grand Canyon poses a threat to the health, safety and environmental integrity of the Grand Canyon region and all 40 million people who depend on Colorado River water; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining at the Grand Canyon and in other areas would pose significant risks to the waters on which nearby tribes rely, and threaten their very existence as a people.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) hereby opposes any efforts by the Administration or Congress to reverse mineral withdrawals that would negatively impact tribal lands, natural resources, cultural resources, tribal water rights, or Native people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2017 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee, WI, Oct 15, 2017 - Oct 20, 2017, with a quorum present.



Jefferson Keel, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary