



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians  
Resolution #REN-19-001

**TITLE: Opposing Mining on Public Lands and Around the Grand Canyon  
without Tribal Nations' Free Prior and Informed Consent**

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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**, the lands and natural and cultural resources encompassing and surrounding the Grand Canyon region are the sacred homelands of the Havasupai Tribe, Hopi Tribe, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Northern and Southern Ute Tribes, Hualapai Tribe, Zuni Pueblo, and Navajo Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, the homelands of these and other tribal nations contain significant cultural resources, including lands and resources of cultural and historic significance and springs whose waters have long been used in sacred ceremonies; and

**WHEREAS**, similar to the federal lands and water resources of other tribal nations, the federal lands on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon overlie aquifers that are the sole source of water for the Havasupai Tribe, providing the water that flows through and to various water sources within the Tribe's reservation and its surrounding traditional homelands; and

**WHEREAS**, these lands also contain significant uranium deposits; and

**WHEREAS**, uranium mining, and other types of mining, as an industry, has an established history of contaminating resources on tribal lands; and

**WHEREAS**, contamination of this aquifer would be devastating for the Havasupai Tribe and for all people who rely on the Colorado River; and

**WHEREAS**, Articles 18 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) declares that “Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights...as well as to maintain and develop their own Indigenous decision-making institutions”; and

**WHEREAS**, Article 25 of UNDRIP states that “Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard”; and

**WHEREAS**, Article 32 of UNDRIP mandates that states consult with tribal nations “in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources”; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman Grijalva, Chairman of the House Natural Resource Committee and Arizona Representative, has introduced H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Protection Act to prevent mining on public lands around the Grand Canyon.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) supports the passage of the Grand Canyon Protection Act to ban mining activities on federal lands that impact tribal natural and cultural resources unless tribal nations have given their free prior and informed consent; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI supports legislation drafted in coordination with, or at the request of, tribal nations to protect tribal natural and cultural resources from the harmful impacts of mining activities; and

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

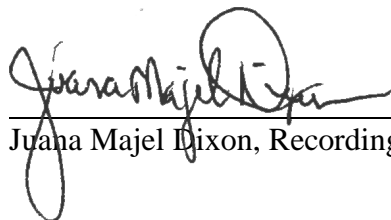
#### CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2019 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Nugget Casino Resort, June 24-27, 2019, with a quorum present.



Jefferson Keel, President

**ATTEST:**



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary