



City of Flagstaff

May 16, 2016

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As a member of the Flagstaff, Arizona City Council and a third-generation resident of Flagstaff with deep connections to the lands and communities of northern Arizona, I respectfully request that you establish the Greater Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument to protect 1.7 million acres of public lands surrounding Grand Canyon National Park before you leave office.

I want to emphasize to you the importance of these public lands to me, to our northern Arizona communities, and to our local economy. The Kaibab National Forest and Bureau of Land Management Lands surrounding Grand Canyon provide important connectivity to the park for numerous wildlife species, plus protect key habitat and wildlife corridors for mountain lions and mule deer. These lands are part of the Grand Canyon's watershed and protecting them helps to protect drinking water for millions of people downstream.

The lands offer wonderful recreational opportunities for hiking, biking, climbing, and wildlife viewing, which are all important to our tourism-based economy in Flagstaff. My background in business management and sustainability provides an important perspective on how critical protection public lands is to our Flagstaff community and our economy. Grand Canyon National Park is an important part of the northern Arizona economy. In 2014 more than 4.7 million visitors to Grand Canyon National Park spent more than a half-billion dollars in communities near the park and supported 7,846 jobs in local communities. Research by Headwaters Economics found that the local economies surrounding 17 national monuments it studied, including those in Arizona, grew after the creation of each new national monument.

Outside Grand Canyon National Park, there are significant threats to the public lands, some of which also threaten the park itself. They include old growth logging, irresponsible off-highway vehicle use, and uranium mining. I am grateful that your administration established a temporary mineral withdrawal, which was strongly supported by the people of northern Arizona and has given protection to some of the lands. A national monument will give permanent protection to a great deal of the watershed and will help to protect our tourism-based economy as well.

The proposed national monument contains thousands of cultural sites and is highly valued and supported by representatives from the Hopi, Havasupai, and Hualapai tribes, the Navajo Nation, and the Intertribal Association of Arizona. I join them and the 80 percent of Arizona voters (as indicated in a recent poll) in support of this proposed national monument.

Please sign a proclamation that will create the Greater Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument, and make this national monument part of your legacy, part of our legacy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Coral Evans, Flagstaff City Councilmember

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The opinions and statements written above do not necessarily represent the position of the Flagstaff City Council.