



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 15 2017

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
1329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Member Grijalva:

Thank you for your letter of November 3, 2017, regarding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Final Report Pursuant to Executive Order 13783 on Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth (report).

I appreciate your concerns. The Bureau of Land Management Public Land Order withdrew public and National Forest System lands in the Grand Canyon watershed from location and entry under the Mining Law of 1872 for a period of 20 years, subject to valid existing rights. This recommendation was listed 13th out of 15 recommended actions.

I also appreciate the numerous reasons you listed for the mineral withdrawal, as well as the work that went into collaborating with the Native American Tribes and leadership organizations. The Forest Service was a cooperating agency for the preparation of the Northern Arizona Proposed Withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement. The Bureau of Land Management was the lead agency and the Forest Service consented to the decision to implement the withdrawal. The Forest Service also values the protection of water quality and the importance of the outdoor economy in this area.

Executive Order 13783 required all executive agencies to review existing regulations, orders, policies, and other agency actions that potentially burden the development or use of domestically produced energy resources. The U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary is authorized to make, modify, extend, or revoke withdrawals on public or reserved Federal lands.

The recommendations included in the report you referenced in your query are for consideration and do not initiate a Federal action. Please see the enclosure for a detailed response to your questions.

Again, thank you for writing and for your interest in the management of your National Forests. If you have any further questions, please have a member of your staff contact our Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Perdue". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sonny Perdue
Secretary

Enclosure