

Principles to Permanently Protect the Grand Canyon

If you have been lucky enough to travel to the Grand Canyon, you will likely always remember the unparalleled natural beauty, from the jagged red cliffs to the winding Colorado River. Visitors from around the world come to admire our national treasure that is now facing a growing threat. Mining companies know that it is against the law in most cases to set up operations in the Grand Canyon, or any national park for that matter. Yet, incredibly, the current mining law that has been around for 135 years does allow mining operations right next door to our national parks. In the past five years, mining companies have staked more than 1100 claims at the edge of the Grand Canyon, and with the price of gold increasing; the number of claims continues to grow.

Mining companies use a range of toxic chemicals to extract gold, silver, copper, and other minerals from the earth. In one mining process cyanide is poured over mounds of earth to extract low grade ore. This combined with other operations has led to fish kills, dead birds around mines, and fenced off areas of contamination. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has estimated that hardrock mining is the number one source of toxic pollution in the United States and that it has contaminated 40 percent of western watersheds.

Given the rush to stake mining claims at the edge of the Grand Canyon and other national treasures, there must be a process to prevent the worst effects of toxic mining from permanently damaging these lands that belong to all Americans.

- The government must have the authority to stop any mine that would damage the natural resources of Grand Canyon National Park or other national parks.
- A set of sensitive lands around the Grand Canyon and in other important areas must be placed “off-limits” to future mining activities, like national forest roadless areas.
- Mining companies should pay a royalty for mining activities on public lands to provide a source of money to clean up the nearly 500,000 abandoned mines along the Colorado River and across the country.
- The practice of selling our public lands for pennies on the dollar to companies for mining or unrelated development must end. The public lands at the edge of the Grand Canyon and around the country should stay in public hands.
- Local governments, tribes, and citizens need the ability to designate certain areas unsuitable for mining, if they find it will negatively impact their communities. This will allow for other sensitive locations to be protected from toxic mining pollution.
- Where mining is deemed appropriate on our public lands, mining companies must have a comprehensive and thorough plan to return the land to its original state and to assure that water pollution will not need ongoing treatment. With the number of new claims surrounding the Grand Canyon, this would ensure that toxic mining does not pollute this American treasure for decades to come.

To save the Grand Canyon and other public treasures for future generations, we need to protect all national parks and sensitive lands from the toxic affects of hardrock mining.

National Groups

Earthworks

Environment America

Environmental Working Group

Sierra Club

Arizona

Environment Arizona

California

Environment California

Planning and Conservation League

Colorado

Audubon Society

B&H Sports

Base Mountain Quill Angler

Base Mountain Sports

Blue Quill Angler

Center for Native Ecosystems

Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition

Colorado Conservation Alliance

Colorado Environmental Coalition

Edge Ski, Paddle, & Pack

Environment Colorado

E-Town

Fine Print

Great Divide Ski, Bike, & Hike

Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Mo Henry's Trout Shop

Mountain Angler

Mountain West Strategies

Oil & Gas Accountability Project

Pew Environment Group

Pete Kolbenschlager, Colorado Representative

Photography for Conservation

San Juan Citizens Alliance

San Luis Valley Ecosystem Project

Ski Base East

Thorne Ecological Institute

Wilderness Workshop

Florida

Breamfish Association

Broward Audubon

Environment Florida

Florida GLEE Green League of Broward

Florida Wildlife Federation

Gulf Coastkeepers

Loxahatchee River Coalition

Miami Sierra Club

St. John's Riverkeeper

Indiana

Artists United Against Injustice

Citizens Action Coalition of IN Valley

Watch, Inc.

**Director of Admissions at Trinity School
at Greenlawn**

**Head of School at Trinity School at
Greenlawn**

Hoosier Environmental Council

Indiana University

Professor Michelle Verges

Just Goods

Lifestyle Design

Michiana Community Currency

Save the Dunes Council

University of Notre Dame

Professor Jackie Smith

Maine

Alaska Wilderness League of Maine

Cool Kittery

ME PIRG Students

Sierra Club, Maine

USM Outing Club

York Energy Efficiency Committee

Maryland

Alliance for Sustainable Communities

Chesapeake Sustainable Business Alliance

Maryland PIRG

Patuxent Riverkeeper

Massachusetts

Berkshire Natural Resources Council
Charles River Recreation, Inc.
Clean Water Action Massachusetts
Friends of Mount Everett

Michigan

Clean Water Action, MI Division
Division Ecology Center National
Environmental Trust
Eastern Michigan Environmental Action
Council
Michigan Environmental Council
Michigan LCV
Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

Minnesota

Alaska Wilderness League of Minnesota
Alliance for Sustainability
Clean Up River Environment
Mankato Area Environmentalists
Minnesota Ornithologists Union
Minnesota Waterfowls Association
MPIRG Minnesota Council of Trout
Unlimited
Save Lake Superior Association
Southeastern Minnesotans for
Environmental Protection

Montana

Clark Fork Coalition
Pew Environment Group
Anna Swanson, Montana Representative
Sierra Club – Montana Chapter
The Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Nevada

Great Basin Group of the Sierra Club
Great Basin Resource Watch
Green Dream Enterprises
Intentional Wellness Conference
Natural Resources & Environmental
Science UNR
Professor Dr. Glenn Miller
Nevada Conservation League
Nevada Environmental Coalition
Nevada Nuclear Waster Task Force
Open Wisdom Institute

New Hampshire

Chuck Roast Mountainwear
Environment New Hampshire
NH Trout Unlimited
Solar Nation
St. Johns Stewardship of the Earth Cmte
Toxics Action Center Campaigns
UNH Organic Gardening Club

New Jersey

Edison Wetlands Association
Environment New Jersey
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association
Hackensack RiverKeeper
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Environmental Federation
New Jersey Federation of Sportsmen's
Clubs
New Jersey Highlands Coalition
Salem County Watershed Task Force
Sierra Club, New Jersey

New Mexico

Amigos Bravos (NM)
Animal Protection of New Mexico
Environment New Mexico
Gila Resources Information Project
New Mexico Environmental Law Center
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
Pew Environment Group
Gregory Green, New Mexico Representative
REP America

North Carolina

Environment North Carolina
Wild South

Ohio

Cuyahoga County Rivers group
Environment Ohio
Izaak Walton League of America, Ohio
Division
League of Ohio Sportsmen
Ohio Climbing and Repelling
Ohio Game Fishing
Ohio Parks and Recreation Association

OSU Environmentalists
Rails to Trails
Rivers Unlimited

Oregon

Environment Oregon
Friends of Forest Park
Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Hells Canyon Preservation Council
Kalmiopsis Audubon Society
Native Fish Society
Oregon Natural Desert Association
Pew Environment Group
Erin Anderson and Jamie Hogue, Oregon
Representatives

Pennsylvania

Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper
Republicans for Environmental
Protection
PennEnvironment

Rhode Island

Clean Water Action of Rhode Island
The Apeiron Institute for Environmental
Living
Environment Rhode Island

Vermont

NWF Northeast Natural Resource Center

Virginia

Virginia Forest Watch

Washington

Adventure Trading
Avanti Racing Cycling Team
Ben Bridge Jewelers
Feathered Friends
Lands Council
Outdoor and More
Recycled Cycles

Wisconsin

Audubon Society