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Arizona Rep. Grijalva to Make Major Conservation Announcement Saturday at Grand Canyon

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK, *Ariz.*— Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.) will make a major conservation announcement Saturday about efforts to protect Grand Canyon National Park and nearby public lands from the dangers of uranium mining.

The Grand Canyon is a place of deep cultural importance to several regional American Indian tribes, a biodiversity hotspot and an international tourism destination. The canyon draws more than 6 million visitors annually and generates more than \$900 million for the local economy.

Uranium mining on public lands surrounding the park threatens to disrupt, deplete and pollute aquifers that feed springs and streams in the Grand Canyon. Mining also poisons wildlife, fragments wildlife corridors and industrializes iconic landscapes sacred to regional cultures.

Despite widespread public support for protecting the Grand Canyon, politicians have called for lifting a 20-year ban on new uranium mining in the region. The ban was enacted by the Interior Department in 2012 to stop new uranium mines across one million acres adjacent to the park.

“Uranium mining on lands surrounding Grand Canyon has harmed people, wildlife and the waters of the region,” said Sandy Bahr, chapter director for Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon Chapter. “Despite its known dangers and toxic legacy, mining interests and their friends in Congress and the administration are pushing for more uranium extraction. That

is why it is critical the region is protected now.”

“Grand Canyon is a living ecological and cultural landscape of immense richness and beauty. We must ensure that its connected habitats, waterways and aquifers are forever protected intact. The persistence here of past uranium mining impacts and the push today to massively expand uranium production and transportation tells us we should act at once,” stated Kelly Burke, executive director of Grand Canyon Wildlands Council.

“The Grand Canyon is an international icon and a biodiversity hotspot,” said Taylor McKinnon, senior campaigner with the Center for Biological Diversity. “The park’s centennial is a timely reminder of the need to permanently protect its aquifers, springs and adjacent lands from dangerous uranium mining.”

“The health of the Grand Canyon and the health of neighboring communities are jeopardized by nearby uranium mining,” said Mike Quigley, Arizona state director for the Wilderness Society. “They deserve to be protected.”

What: Rep. Raúl Grijalva, joined by local leaders, will make a major conservation announcement about protecting Grand Canyon National Park and public lands nearby.

When: Saturday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m.

Where: Mather Point, Grand Canyon National Park. This event may be moved inside to Shrine of the Ages if weather prevents an outdoor announcement.

Sierra Club is a national nonprofit organization with 64 chapters and more than three million members and supporters nationwide, 60,000 of whom are part of the Grand Canyon Chapter. Sierra Club’s mission is “to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth’s ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments.”

Grand Canyon Wildlands Council is a regional nonprofit organization bringing together conservation science, outdoor adventure, and advocacy to protect and restore wild Nature in the Grand Canyon Ecoregion.

The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.4 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.

The Wilderness Society is the leading conservation organization working to protect wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild places. Founded in 1935, and now with more than one million members and supporters, The Wilderness Society has led the effort to permanently

protect 109 million acres of wilderness and to ensure sound management of our shared national lands. Visit www.wilderness.org.

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