

# State of Arizona



## House of Representatives Legislative Resolution

### Concerning the Loss of Multiple-Use Public Lands Due to Special Land – Use Designations

*WHEREAS*, Arizona's great strength lies in the value of its public lands, and the public's ability to access and utilize those lands for a variety of recreational uses, and

*WHEREAS*, nearly 50 percent of all land in Arizona is already under federal management and that more than 77 percent of Arizona's lands are restricted from public access and recreation. More than 10 million acres in Arizona is managed as some form of wilderness, and the state has more designated wilderness acreage than 47 other states, and more national monuments than any other state with a total of 18, and

*WHEREAS*, a unilateral Executive Order, is devoid of any public input process or consultation with related state level agencies and local governments. A unilateral designation of the Grand Canyon Watershed as a National Monument would erode the extensive cooperation and success that federal and state agencies in Arizona have achieved to date, and

*WHEREAS*, with 4.5 million acres, Arizona has the third highest total designated wilderness acreage in the U.S. This, coupled with an additional 5.8 million acres of special land use designations, which include National Monuments, National Parks, National Wildlife Refuges, National Conservation Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and Wilderness Characteristics Areas, has caused the systematic loss of recreational opportunities and erosion of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's (Department) ability to proactively manage wildlife on more than 10.3 million acres, and

*WHEREAS*, the Arizona Game and Fish Department has experienced restrictions resulting from special land use designations including project delays, increased costs, increased man-hours, and legal challenges. This ultimately leads to decreased efficiency and wildlife management authority in conserving Arizona's wildlife resources, and

*WHEREAS*, public land managers have a responsibility to the people of Arizona to ensure continued opportunities for multiple-use recreational activities. For example, the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) is the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) "organic act" that establishes the agency's multiple-use mandate to serve present and future generations. Once federal lands are converted to special use lands such as Wilderness and National Monuments, the FLPMA mandate no longer applies and those lands permanently lose multiple-use provisions, and;

*WHEREAS*, in spite of organic legislation emphasizing multiple-use of public lands, neither the US Forest Service or BLM have established any objectives for acreages of public lands to be maintained in full multiple-use, free from restrictive designations in Arizona, and

*WHEREAS*, the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 and the Federal Land and Policy Management Act of 1976 both legally prohibit the federal land management agencies from affecting the state's jurisdiction and responsibilities, and

*THEREFORE*, *be it resolved* by the Arizona House of Representatives of the State of Arizona:

1. That the Arizona House of Representatives does not support the continual conversion of public lands from multiple-use to land use designations that result in the net loss of wildlife resources, wildlife related recreational opportunities, and wildlife dependent economic benefit without expressed concurrence of the state of Arizona, and
2. That any existing land use designations be adequately funded by Congress and that any future land use designations including the proposed Grand Canyon Watershed National Monument, have express state and congressional approval before they are so designated by the President, and
3. That any proposed special land use designation analyze the cumulative impacts of further loss of public lands that provide for multiple-use and wildlife related recreational and economic opportunities, and
4. That a local state-based model for land designation that can communicate and highlight the value of specific landscapes based upon its value for wildlife conservation, economic development, providing recreation, and potentially for meeting other natural resource objectives based on priorities of various state interests, missions and jurisdictions is preferred, and
5. That any proposed special land use designation on federal lands analyze the impact to the state resources agencies ability to fulfill trust responsibilities to manage the state's natural resources and sovereign authorities.

*Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2015*

*David M. Gowan, Sr.*

*David M. Gowan*

*Speaker of the House of Representatives*

*District 14*

