

STATEMENT OF CRAIG S. WIITA,
PRESIDENT OF WIITA MINING AND EXPLORATION
CONCERNING THE PROPOSED GRAND CANYON WATERSHED NATIONAL
MONUMENT, FOR A PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION WITH CONGRESSMAN PAUL
GOSAR, KINGMAN, ARIZONA, MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2016

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We do not need Washington imposing more restrictions on the mining industry. Currently mine permits in the US take 3-7 years and the costs incurred deplete 1/3 of the in ground reserves. My personal experience with this, for an open pit gold mining operation we are currently over two million in expense and 18 months into the permitting process. This is for an operation that uses only water for separation, with a concurrent reclamation process that reduces the size of our footprint annually, reclaiming the property with mature vegetation grown by local students for scholarships. The mining industry could put over three million Americans back to work, with good paying jobs, but the current federal government just keeps putting more and more hurdles in our way.

The modern mining industry is not your grandfather's mining industry. Today we look for a sustainable operation with no permanent damage to the land, in a lot of instances we actually protect the aquifer by safely removing naturally occurring impurities in the ground like arsenic, and mercury.

We need to stop relying on China and other nations to supply our needed minerals and elements and produce them right here in the good ole USA. Currently in the USA we cannot mine rare earth elements, China will not sell us rare earths in the raw form, instead we have to buy the completed circuit boards from them that are used in night vision goggles, for our troops, our military jets and helicopters control panels, and consumer electronics. As a nation, mining is critical to our independence and think of the jobs we can create, not only in the mining industry, but manufacturing.

Stop the Washington land grab and over-regulation of one of the industries that America was built on and let's move into this millennium with mineral independence. These are public lands and it is up to us to keep them that way not Washington.

Sincerely Craig S. Wiita

President Wiita Mining and Exploration