

STATEMENT OF GARY WATSON,  
MOHAVE COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF DISTRICT I  
CONCERNING THE PROPOSED GRAND CANYON WATERSHED NATIONAL MONUMENT, FOR A PUBLIC  
LISTENING SESSION WITH CONGRESSMAN PAUL GOSAR, KINGMAN, ARIZONA, MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2016

APRIL 11, 2016

Mohave County is one of the 4 original Counties in Arizona, encompassing over 13 thousand square miles of land and 150 square miles of water. We are the second largest County in Arizona and the fifth largest County in the contiguous United States.

You would think this would or should translate into Mohave County receiving a tremendous economic benefit from its abundance of natural resources. Unfortunately for Mohave County, less than 16 percent of this land is privately held. In addition to most of the land in Mohave County being in Federal hands, there are 18 official wilderness areas that are part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Mohave County also has a number of National Protected Areas. This means, most of Mohave County's natural resources economic potential is not controlled by Mohave County, and not even controlled by the State, but by the Federal Government. Most of our recreation is in Federal hands. Our hunting and fishing, our mining and our logging, and our ranching is in Federal hands. A large portion of our potential for economic prosperity is in Federal hands.

The Federal Government should be charged with managing its public land to the benefit and in the best interest of the County and State, our residents and guests. Special Federal Land Designations result in a net loss of wildlife resources, wildlife and recreational dependent economic benefits, limits on access and reduction of multiple-use Public Lands necessary for the conservation of wildlife and natural resource and wildfire management.

We have repeatedly called on the Federal Government to ensure the good stewardship of the land and preserve its multi-use for all to benefit. Mohave County is constantly fighting to stop the federal government from establishing more monuments, closing off public access, restricting hunting and fishing and limiting mineral development, ranching and logging, in their attempt to implement the misguided agendas of extremist environmental groups.

Mohave County is no stranger to the pressures of the Antiquities Act and the tremendous unilateral power a President has to control and lock down large areas of land with the stroke of a pen. Recently in 2000, the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument, a federal land grab in Northern Mohave County larger than the state of Rhode Island, was established by Presidential Proclamation. This designation killed most of this lands potential for multi-use management and subsequent benefit.

Mohave County is one of the poorest Counties in the nation. A portion of the responsibility for Mohave County's poor economic performance has to lie with and be a testament to the failure of the existing Federal Land Use Management programs and practices. The latest land grab attempt in Mohave County is the whopping 1.7 million acre Grand Canyon Watershed National Monument. This insanity has to stop. The Government's support of the misguided agendas of extreme environmental groups has to stop. The President's ability to abuse the 1906 Antiquities Act to lock away large areas of land, permanently losing any benefit and use from its multi-use status has to stop. Therefore I wish to proudly go on record that, by adoption of Resolution No. 2015-173, Mohave County stands with

Representative Gosar in support of his H.R. 3946, Protecting Local Communities from Overreach Act legislation which updates the 1906 Antiquities Act in order to protect property rights, water rights and jobs from presidential abuse of the Antiquities Act.