

## Representative Gosar Congressional Field Hearing

Kingman, Arizona

April 10, 2016

Arizona is one of the fastest growing states, there is no denying our increasing need for jobs, especially in Northern Arizona. The majority of the job base is tourism, outdoor recreation and hunting. Grazing, logging and mining is also very important. The Forest Service, BLM and private lands make up the base or root that provides the livelihood for a large segment of the population here in Northern Arizona. We depend on the long term sustainable use of these lands. The proposed change to National Monument status for this huge chunk of the "base" is very concerning for many businesses, people and families. It is also alarming that Representative Kirkpatrick has asked the President to do it and did not take the time to ask the people who live and work here what we think.

People have said "don't worry it won't change a thing". If it won't change anything why in the world would you do it? What is not good about the current use of these lands? The Forest Service and the BLM have many professionals in all aspects of the planning, monitoring and management of this land. The Arizona Game and Fish department intensely manages all of the wildlife. Just the talk of this monument hinders investment in and maintenance of the infrastructure. I am talking about the roads, pinion/juniper invasion, logging the timber, mining and especially the water.

We are just now seeing a welcome comeback of the logging industry. The unpredictability of a timber supply is a killer for the industry. No logging means catastrophic wildfires, no stumpage fees for our counties and our schools, and less maintenance of the forest roads not to mention the lost jobs. If you get out in the woods in this area you would know that the most important thing is the water. It is everything. The area that I know is south of the Grand Canyon as I am a rancher there. There is only artificial water there. No creeks or permanent water. The wells, pipelines, drinkers and dirt tank are built and maintained for the most part by the ranchers. The Game and Fish does a little. Without this water there could be no wildlife or livestock. Most of the ranches are a combination of private and public land.

I have heard people say we need to "protect" the land. To them protection means restrictions on its use. Does this mean the land needs protection from the people who live and work there? The land is a piece of our livelihood and our future. How do you justify the restrictions of monument status to the recreationists, hunters, ranchers, loggers, miners and most of all, the communities within or adjacent to it. The Williams City Council voted unanimously on a resolution to oppose the monument. I don't have statistics or color brochures but I have lifelong local experience to know the land needs to be used and the people can and do use it wisely. Arizona has enough Monuments and National Parks.

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