

## Kimberly MacMillan

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From: **Alex Thevenin** <[alex@azraft.com](mailto:alex@azraft.com)>  
Date: Tue, May 3, 2011 at 2:15 PM  
Subject: Uranium mining in Grand Canyon  
To: "[NAZproposedwithdrawal@azblm.org](mailto:NAZproposedwithdrawal@azblm.org)" <[NAZproposedwithdrawal@azblm.org](mailto:NAZproposedwithdrawal@azblm.org)>  
Cc: Sarah Luna <[lsarah@msn.com](mailto:lsarah@msn.com)>, "[laurielee@canyonexplorations.com](mailto:laurielee@canyonexplorations.com)"  
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Dear Scott:

Please ensure that the attached and linked op-ed to the *AZ Daily Sun* is included in the public comments record regarding uranium mining in Grand Canyon National Park. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

[http://azdailysun.com/news/opinion/columnists/article\\_bd552758-5f45-11e0-aef7-001cc4c03286.html](http://azdailysun.com/news/opinion/columnists/article_bd552758-5f45-11e0-aef7-001cc4c03286.html)

Best,

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## **Op-Ed: Protecting the Grand Canyon is Good Business**

By Alexandra Thevenin & Laurie Lee Staveley

As owners of Flagstaff-based Grand Canyon river rafting outfitters, we strongly support Interior Secretary Ken Salazar's ban on new uranium claims on one million acres around Grand Canyon National Park. The temporary ban should be extended to 20 years as it would under Alternative B in the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) out for public review now. Otherwise, uranium mining could have disastrous effects for the Grand Canyon and consequently, our businesses and others across the region.

Yet, you wouldn't know it by reading the draft EIS!

Although the report offers four alternatives that relate to the social, environmental, and cultural impacts of new mining on northern Arizona, the economic information presented is falsely inflated to also include mention of ore processing activities in Utah. Why would potential economic activity in Utah have any bearing on a discussion about the economic impacts of mining in northern Arizona—the point of the draft EIS?

Moreover, the sale of uranium dug up in Arizona and processed in Utah generates profits for a private company and its shareholders in *Canada*, another issue overlooked in the draft EIS, and therefore contributing to a misunderstanding about the economic activity related to mining here in northern Arizona.

A new report commissioned by the Grand Canyon Trust to assess the validity of economic arguments made in the draft EIS identifies these and other flaws in the government's economic analysis, going so far as to suggest that the document represents a "serious misunderstanding of economic impact theory."

Instead of profiting from new mining here, northern Arizona's tourism-dependent business communities would suffer when visitors are scared away from the Grand Canyon by truck traffic, dust, and fears of radiation pollution.

Grand Canyon National Park generates over \$680 million for northern Arizona every year. Statewide, tourism generates annual economic activity of more than \$16 billion, and tourism businesses account for **one in ten Arizona jobs**.

That includes thousands of our customers whose rafting trips along the Colorado or hikes on the Bright Angel Trail have kept our local businesses growing for years. As concessioners in the national park, our river trips provide the opportunity to experience the natural and human history of the region. We introduce people from around the world to the wonders in our own backyard, but we also believe that part of our role as outfitters and small business owners is to be stewards of the park, and to notify the public of environmental issues like this one that pose a risk to the place we all care about.

Moving beyond raw numbers, the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River define an outdoor lifestyle that connects us with our history and makes Arizona a great place to live and raise a family today. Add to that the priceless cultural, historic, and hunting and fishing traditions we

have enjoyed here for generations, and it is easy to conclude that allowing new uranium mining here is *a risk we can't afford to take*.

Alternative B in the draft EIS confirms what local elected officials, sportsmen, conservationists, American Indian Tribes, and business owners like us have been saying for years: uranium mining doesn't belong here.

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Note to editor: Public comments can be submitted before May 4:

<http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/az/pdfs/withdraw.Par.15542.File.dat/Newsletter-2.pdf>

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