

**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 8, 2023

The Honorable Joseph Biden  
President  
United States of America  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Tracy Stone-Manning  
Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Chief Randy Moore  
United States Forest Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear President Biden, Secretary Haaland, Director Stone-Manning, and Chief Moore:

The House Committee on Natural Resources (the “Committee”) seeks information from the Executive Office of the President (“EOP”), the Department of the Interior (“DOI”), Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”), and the United States Forest Service (“USFS”) on the recent announcement of the creation of a Baaj Nwaavjo I’tah Kukveni Grand Canyon National Monument (the “BNGC National Monument”).

On July 12, 2023, Rep. Raúl Grijalva introduced H.R. 4580, *To designate the Baaj Nwaavjo I’tah Kukveni Grand Canyon National Monument in the State of Arizona*, which would permanently withdraw over 1 million acres of public land from mineral entry in Arizona.<sup>1</sup> A mere six days later, on July 18, 2023, BLM and USFS held a community meeting on H.R. 4580 and the then proposed BNGC National Monument.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> H.R. 4580, 118<sup>th</sup> Cong. (2023), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/4580/actions?s=1&r=64&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22congressId%3A118+AND+billStatus%3A%5C%22Introduced%5C%22%22%5D%7D>.

<sup>2</sup> *BLM and USFS to Host Community Meeting for Proposed National Monument Near Grand Canyon*, THE KINGMAN MINER (Jul. 11, 2023), [https://www.kdminer.com/news/blm-and-usfs-to-host-community-meeting-for-proposed-national-monument-near-grand-canyon/article\\_e91d1bba-205e-11ee-97bf-9b227c7fe3c5.html](https://www.kdminer.com/news/blm-and-usfs-to-host-community-meeting-for-proposed-national-monument-near-grand-canyon/article_e91d1bba-205e-11ee-97bf-9b227c7fe3c5.html).

On August 8, 2023, in another strident abuse of the Antiquities Act,<sup>3</sup> President Biden announced the creation of the BNGC National Monument.<sup>4</sup> H.R. 4580 and the BNGC National Monument would permanently withdraw the richest and highest-grade uranium deposits in the United States<sup>5</sup> from mining—deposits that are far outside the Grand Canyon National Park.

The BNGC National Monument and the corresponding mineral withdrawal comes at an inflection point for our country in an age of geopolitical uncertainty—the federal government must decide whether to increase domestic mining and secure our mineral supply chain or serve at the mercy of foreign adversaries for decades to come. Sadly, Congressional Democrats and the Biden administration have apparently chosen the latter as the BNGC National Monument and the corresponding mineral withdrawal threatens America’s long-term energy, economic, and national security.

Nuclear power contributes nearly 20 percent of the electricity generated in America.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, nuclear power is the largest “zero-emission”<sup>7</sup> energy source in the United States<sup>8</sup> and accounts for more energy production than wind, solar, and hydropower combined.<sup>9</sup> As such, the former head of the Environmental Protection Agency and President Biden’s first White House national climate advisor, Gina McCarthy, stated that nuclear energy is “absolutely essential” for meeting President Biden’s emissions goals.<sup>10</sup>

Uranium is a metal integral to making fuel for nuclear energy reactors.<sup>11</sup> Uranium occurs naturally in low concentrations in soil, rock, and water.<sup>12</sup> Despite the integral role nuclear energy and uranium play in powering our country, the United States is currently reliant on foreign imports to meet our uranium needs. Indeed, in 2021, the United States was required to import 95 percent

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<sup>3</sup> See *Hearing Memo on Examining the Biden Administration’s Efforts to Limit Access to Public Lands before the Subcomm. on Oversight and Investigations of the H. Comm. on Natural Resources*, 118<sup>th</sup> Cong. (May 24, 2023), [https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hearing\\_memo\\_sub\\_on\\_oi\\_ov\\_hrg\\_05.24.23.pdf](https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hearing_memo_sub_on_oi_ov_hrg_05.24.23.pdf) (detailing President Biden’s abuse of the Antiquities Act to promote a radical eco-agenda supported by far-left activists at the expense of on-the-ground stakeholders).

<sup>4</sup> *FACT SHEET: President Biden Designates Baaj Nwaavjo I’tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Aug. 8, 2023), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/08/08/fact-sheet-president-biden-designates-baaj-nwaavjo-itah-kukveni-ancestral-footprints-of-the-grand-canyon-national-monument/>.

<sup>5</sup> *Uranium in America*, URANIUM PRODUCERS OF AMERICA, [https://www.theupa.org/uranium\\_in\\_america/](https://www.theupa.org/uranium_in_america/) (last visited Aug. 8, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> *Nuclear*, DEP’T OF ENERGY, <https://www.energy.gov/nuclear> (last visited Aug. 8, 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Office of Nuclear Energy, *3 Reasons Why Nuclear is Clean and Sustainable*, DEP’T OF ENERGY (Mar. 31, 2023), <https://www.energy.gov/ne/articles/3-reasons-why-nuclear-clean-and-sustainable> (“Nuclear is a zero-emission clean energy source”).

<sup>8</sup> *Nuclear*, CLEARPATH, <https://clearpath.org/policy/nuclear/> (last visited Aug. 8, 2023).

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> Timothy Gardner, *Biden climate adviser says existing nuclear essential for emissions goals*, REUTERS (May 18, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/business/sustainable-business/white-house-climate-adviser-says-existing-nuclear-essential-reach-emissions-2021-05-18/>.

<sup>11</sup> Jael Holzman & Hannah Northey, *Could Russia’s invasion of Ukraine revive U.S. uranium mining?*, E&E NEWS (Mar. 18, 2022), <https://www.eenews.net/articles/could-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-revive-u-s-uranium-mining/>.

<sup>12</sup> Office of Nuclear Energy, *Nuclear Fuel Facts: Uranium*, DEP’T OF ENERGY, <https://www.energy.gov/ne/nuclear-fuel-facts-uranium> (last visited Aug. 8, 2023).

of the uranium used by nuclear power plants.<sup>13</sup> Of that, nearly 50 percent of the uranium came from either Russia or Kazakhstan,<sup>14</sup> a landlocked former Soviet state that is bordered by Russia to the north and China to the southeast. Despite the war in Ukraine and ongoing sanctions against Russia, the United States continues to send \$1 billion a year to Russia's state-owned nuclear agency for enriched uranium.<sup>15</sup> America's reliance on foreign uranium imports leaves current and future nuclear plants in the United States vulnerable to disruption, especially from Russia, "which often yields energy as a geopolitical tool."<sup>16</sup>

The Committee is deeply concerned that the BNGC National Monument and corresponding uranium withdrawal increases America's reliance on foreign adversaries for minerals, threatening America's energy, economic, and national security for generations to come.

To assist the Committee with ensuring effective management of public lands and responsible development of America's mineral resources, please provide the following documents and information by August 30, 2023:

1. What are the positions of the EOP, DOI, BLM, and USFS on further reducing the domestic production of uranium when the United States is currently reliant on foreign imports for 95 percent of its uranium needs?
2. Please describe how permanently withdrawing the richest and highest-grade uranium deposits in the United States from mining would help the United States reduce its dependence on foreign adversaries for minerals.
3. Documents sufficient to show what stakeholders, small businesses, nonprofits, local governments, tribal entities, and state officials the EOP, DOI, BLM and USFS consulted with regarding the BNGC National Monument.
4. Documents sufficient to show the potential economic costs of the BNGC National Monument, including, but not limited to, costs to stakeholders, small businesses, nonprofits, local governments, tribal entities, or state governments.
5. All documents and communications regarding how the BNGC National Monument will impact management of impacted lands, including, but not limited to, transferring management from one federal agency to another.
6. All documents and communications regarding how the BNGC National Monument will impact mining in the area, including, but not limited to, uranium mining.

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<sup>13</sup> *Nuclear explained: Where our uranium comes from*, U.S. ENERGY INFO. ADMIN., <https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/nuclear/where-our-uranium-comes-from.php> (last updated July 7, 2022).

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> Max Bearak, *The U.S. Is Paying Billions to Russia's Nuclear Agency. Here's Why*, N.Y. TIMES (June 6, 2014), <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/14/climate/enriched-uranium-nuclear-russia-ohio.html>.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

7. Documents sufficient to show the analysis on the impacts the BNGC National Monument will have on stakeholders, small businesses, nonprofits, local governments, tribal entities, and state governments.
8. Documents sufficient to show potential alternatives to lessen the impact the BNGC National Monument will have on stakeholders, small businesses, nonprofits, local governments, tribal entities, and states.
9. Describe the process the EOP, DOI, BLM and USFS intend to pursue for gathering input from stakeholders, small businesses, nonprofits, local governments, tribal entities, states, and local residents.
10. Describe the consultation process in the creation of the BNGC National Monument.
11. Documents sufficient to list any nonprofits, nongovernmental agencies, and any individuals affiliated with any nonprofits or nongovernmental agencies that the EOP, DOI, BLM, and USFS consulted with regarding the BNGC National Monument. For any entities or individuals listed, please describe the nature of the coordination and provide any communications and/or documents related to the coordination.

An attachment to this letter provides additional instructions for responding to the requests from the Committee on Natural Resources. Please contact the Majority staff for the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee at (202) 225-2761 or [HNRR.Oversight@mail.house.gov](mailto:HNRR.Oversight@mail.house.gov) with any questions. Under House Rule X, the Committee on Natural Resources has “general oversight” of any matter relating to its jurisdiction, including the management of federal land and development of mineral resources. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Bruce Westerman  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations  
Committee on Natural Resources

Enclosure