**From:** Shelly Rosenblum
**To:** Jeanne Geselbracht
**Cc:** John Hillenbrand
**Subject:** Re: Fw: FYI. From AZ clips - Forest Service approves Canyon uranium mine despite 26-year-old Environ. Review
**Date:** 07/18/2012 03:12 PM

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Thanks Jeanne. The estimated production of ore from the Canyon mine is below 100,000 tons making it too small for our rule about radon emissions to apply.

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The indoor environment is as fascinating and complex as the outdoor environment, but we spend 90% of our day indoors. The indoor environment is the human environment. Learn how to protect it at our website: http://www.epa.gov/iaq.

▼ Jeanne Geselbracht---07/18/2012 02:46:42 PM---FYI.... Jeanne Geselbracht

From: Jeanne Geselbracht/R9/USEPA/US
To: John Hillenbrand/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Shelly Rosenblum/R9/USEPA/US@EPA,
Date: 07/18/2012 02:46 PM
Subject: Fw: FYI. From AZ clips - Forest Service approves Canyon uranium mine despite 26-year-old Environ. Review

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FYI....

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-----Forwarded by Jeanne Geselbracht/R9/USEPA/US on 07/18/2012 02:45PM -----
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Subject: FYI. From AZ clips - Forest Service approves Canyon uranium mine despite 26-year-old Environ. Review

# Forest Service approves Canyon uranium mine despite 26-year-old Environ. Review

Ryan Williams, Williams News
July 17, 2012

The U.S. Forest Service announced last month that it will allow Denison Mines Corp. to begin excavating the Canyon Mine this fall without first updating the 26-year-old environmental impact statement for the uranium mine, located due south of Grand Canyon National Park on the Kaibab National Forest.

The Forest Service said no new public review or analysis is needed because there is no new information or circumstances relevant to its original analysis.

The Canyon Mine is located in the one million-acre watershed where new uranium mining was banned by the Obama administration in January. Although the so-called "mineral withdrawal" prohibits new mining claims and development on existing claims lacking valid existing rights, it allows development on claims whose existing rights are deemed valid - such as the ones the Forest Service just granted to Denison for the Canyon Mine based on "current economic conditions."

Four uranium mines within the withdrawal area, including the Canyon Mine, have been on standby status - neither operating nor reclaimed - since uranium-market downturns in 1992. One of those mines, Arizona 1, resumed operations in 2009.

According to the Center for Biological Diversity, uranium mining at the Canyon Mine threatens to contaminate and deplete shallow and deep aquifers that feed Grand Canyon's springs. State and federal agencies do not require deep aquifer monitoring to detect contamination plumes, they do not require remediation plans or bonding for correcting aquifer contamination if it does occur, and they cannot guarantee such damage won't occur.

"We now know uranium mining threatens permanent, irretrievable damage to Grand Canyon's watershed, yet the Forest Service pretends we've learned nothing in the past quarter-century," said Taylor McKinnon, public lands campaigns director at the Center for Biological Diversity. "This dangerous proposal should never have been approved back in 1986, and rubber-stamping it a generation later is an insult to the public, American Indian tribes and Grand Canyon National Park."

On the other hand, the American Clean Energy Resources Trust (ACERT) addresses not only the safety concerns and issues, but the economic impact of uranium mining as well.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) released in 2011 concluded that visitation to the park and tourist spending are not likely to be affected much by sustained mining operations. The study anticipates few interactions, if any, between the two groups. ACERT also points to economic studies that have shown that uranium mining could generate revenues equivalent to that of what the tourism industry currently generates in northern Arizona.

The other economic benefits ACERT indicates are jobs, tax revenues, and increased business for local, regional and national mining support vendors. They estimate a potential direct and indirect economic impact of over $700

million annually if up to six mines were actually in production during any given year.

As far as safety and environmental concerns, ACERT once again references the DEIS when the Center for Biological Diversity, the Grand Canyon Trust, and other opponents of uranium mining warn about excessive radioactive contamination of the Colorado River watershed as well as the concerns of the 25 million downstream users. ACERT denotes that the DEIS failed to point out a single "smoking gun" that would scientifically prove that mining operations over the past 30 plus years in northern Arizona have in any way contaminated the Colorado River watershed.

ACERT claims opponents of uranium mining need to realize that times have drastically changed and mining is not the same as it was in the 1950s and '60s. For the past 30 years in northern Arizona, a combination of new mining laws, enlightened attitudes and approaches, new technologies and methods of reclamation, close cooperation between mining companies and government regulators and the idea that good stewardship of the land is in everyone's best interest created a new mining ethic that led to successful, environmentally safe mining and reclamation that even the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarded as the model for the uranium mining industry.

In a statement released by ACERT, their official position is that the decision to withdraw nearly one million acres of public land surrounding Grand Canyon National Park is unnecessary, contrived, and without scientific merit.

The uranium industry has filed four separate lawsuits challenging the Obama administration's January decision to withdraw this public land surrounding Grand Canyon National Park.

Represented by attorneys at Earthjustice; the Havasupai Tribe, the Center for Biological Diversity, the Grand Canyon Trust, the National Parks Conservation Association and the Sierra Club are intervening in each of those lawsuits to defend the decision to protect these lands.

"It is impossible to imagine how the Forest Service, with a straight face, can say that no additional environmental analysis is required for Canyon Mine, when the analysis is totally dated - more than 26 years old - and when so much has changed," said Sandy Bahr, chapter director for the Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter, in an official press release. "This mine was and is hugely controversial as it threatens Native American cultural sites, groundwater and ultimately the springs of Grand Canyon, and numerous wildlife species. It is irresponsible to allow it to go forward without looking at these important issues and being honest with the public about the impacts."

Opponents of uranium mining feel uranium pollution already plagues the Grand Canyon and surrounding area. As a result, proposals for new mining have prompted protests, litigation, and proposed legislation. Because many feel new mines threaten to industrialize iconic and regionally sacred wild lands, destroy wildlife habitat, and permanently pollute or deplete aquifers, scientists, tribal and local governments and businesses have all voiced opposition to new mining.

"The Forest Service review ignores significant new evidence from the Orphan, Kanab North and other uranium mines that show how soil and water contamination can occur well beyond the mine sites," Roger Clark, Grand Canyon program director at the Grand Canyon Trust, said via a statement. "We are also disappointed that the review team did not include experts from the

U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service."

The impact of the Canyon Mine reopening will most likely have no effect on Williams, its land or water. The water supply for Williams is from surface water from lakes around town and different reservoirs the city has access to. In the summer time, when necessary, Williams also has two deep-water wells they draw from.

"I'm not anticipating any issues right now," said City Manager Brandon Buchanan, when asked if the Canyon Mine would affect Williams. "But it is something we'll continue to watch, of course."

The National Park Service has refused permission to allow the ore to be trucked through the national park along Highway 64 to Cameron; therefore the ore would be trucked south through Flagstaff, then north on Highway 89 to Blanding, Utah. There it would be turned to yellowcake, later refined several times more and ultimately sold to nuclear power utilities domestically and internationally.

As for haul routes, the state's environmental quality agency, its highway agency, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have "no requirements" and the EPA is "only concerned with radon emissions at the mine," the Forest Service states in the plans.

The Navajo Nation is opposed to uranium hauling through tribal lands.

The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 375,000 members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.

The mission of the Grand Canyon Trust is to protect and restore the Colorado Plateau - its spectacular landscapes, flowing rivers, clean air, diversity of plants and animals, and areas of beauty and solitude.

The Sierra Club is one of the oldest and most influential grassroots environmental organizations in the country with 1.4 million members and supporters. Their mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments.

ACERT is a coalition of concerned private citizens who, together with uranium exploration and mining companies, believe in the importance of maintaining a viable and environmentally responsible minerals industry that will continue to benefit the economic health and long range energy security of the United States. Their mission is to inform and educate both the public at large and our elected representatives about the multiple benefits of clean, affordable nuclear energy and the consequent need for continued domestic uranium exploration, mining and processing.

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