



*****News Release*****

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Sierra Club Celebrates the One-Year Anniversary of the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni National Monument
There is still more to do to protect these sacred lands

Phoenix, AZ – Today, Sierra Club celebrated the one-year anniversary of President Biden's designation of the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument.

President Biden signed the proclamation to establish the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument on August 8, 2023, in a ceremony near Red Butte on the Kaibab National Forest. This was after years of advocacy for protection of the region led by Tribes, including the Havasupai Tribe. The Monument encompasses more than 900,000 acres near Grand Canyon National Park.

"Today, on its first anniversary, we celebrate and express deep gratitude for the establishment of the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni -- Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument," said Sandy Bahr, director of Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter. "Tribal nations, including the Havasupai, Representative Raúl Grijalva, Secretary Deb Haaland, local communities, and conservation organizations, were all instrumental in moving this forward. We appreciate the President hearing our voices and protecting these lands for future generations."

Tribes including the Havasupai Tribe, Hopi Tribe, Hualapai Tribe, Kaibab Paiute Tribe, Las Vegas Band of Paiute Tribe, Moapa Band of Paiutes, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Shivwits Band of Paiutes, Navajo Nation, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Yavapai-Apache Nation, Pueblo of Zuni and the Colorado River Indian Tribes were part of the Grand Canyon Coalition that urged President Biden to designate the national monument to protect the cultural and natural values of the region.

However, there is still work to do to better protect this area, including a strong management plan that centers Indigenous people and the closure of an existing uranium mine, the Pinyon Plain uranium mine. Despite the monument designation, Pinyon Plain was grandfathered in. This mine threatens to deplete and pollute the waters that feed the Grand Canyon seeps and springs that provide the sole source of drinking water for the Havasupai Tribe.

Currently, Tribal nations, environmental groups, and local communities are asking Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs and President Joe Biden to assist with closing this mine permanently.

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