

Court keeps ban on new mining claims around Grand Canyon

December 12 2017, by Felicia Fonseca



This Feb. 22, 2005, file photo shows the North Rim of Grand Canyon in Arizona. A federal appeals court ruling keeps in place an Obama administration ban on new hard-rock mining claims around the Grand Canyon. (AP Photo/Rick Hossman,File)

A U.S. appeals court has kept in place an Obama administration ban on new mining claims around the Grand Canyon.

The decision Tuesday comes as a U.S. House committee hears testimony on access to minerals on public land.

The U.S. Forest Service under President Donald Trump said weeks ago it would review the 20-year ban. The 2012 moratorium covers more than 1 million acres rich in high-grade uranium reserves outside Grand Canyon National Park.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision upholds a lower-court ruling.

The National Mining Association had argued the ban was irresponsible public policy and violated federal laws. A spokesman for the group says it's disappointed with the ruling and is reviewing its options.

Conservationists say the ban protects water resources.

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