

Court keeps ban on new mining claims around Grand Canyon

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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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