



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Elise Lange, [elise@azwildlife.org](mailto:elise@azwildlife.org), 602-320-6051

### **Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni — Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument Will Safeguard Indigenous Communities, Waters, Wildlife, and Outdoor Recreation**

*The National Monument designation protects a place that is too precious to mine*

(August 8, 2023) — Creation of the nearly 1-million-acre Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni — Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument will safeguard Indigenous communities, water supplies, wildlife populations, and outdoor recreation from harmful uranium mining. The Arizona Wildlife Federation applauds the Biden Administration for listening to and working with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, conservation organizations, the Grand Canyon Tribal Coalition, Arizona businesses, community members, and Arizona residents to enact these long-overdue protections – and to uphold its commitments to free, prior, and informed consent and other legal obligation to the Tribes. The Tribal Coalition, which has shown tremendous knowledge and leadership in advocating for these reforms, includes representatives of the Havasupai Tribe, Hopi Tribe, Hualapai Tribe, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, Moapa Band of Paiutes, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Navajo Nation, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Yavapai-Apache Nation, Pueblo of Zuni, and the Colorado River Indian Tribes.

"The Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni — Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument protects water that is vital to the existence of wildlife, Indigenous communities, and 40 million other users downstream. This new designation also safeguards outdoor recreation activities so that future generations can continue to hunt, fish, hike, and raft on the lands and waters that surround this natural wonder," said Scott Garlid, Executive Director of the Arizona Wildlife Federation, "We are grateful to the Biden Administration and Arizona's Congressional delegation for creating a reasonable designation that assures the Grand Canyon watershed will be both protected and actively enjoyed."

"Generations of Indigenous Peoples and other residents of Arizona carry with them the mistakes of dangerous uranium mining. The creation of the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni — Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument cannot make them whole, but it will help spare future generations of people and wildlife from irreparable harm," said Collin O'Mara,

president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. “We will continue to work with the Grand Canyon Tribal Coalition and Biden Administration to steward this landscape and ensure it is managed for the benefit of people and wildlife alike.”

“The Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni — Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument is a sportsman’s paradise that supports a world-renowned mule deer herd,” said Michael Cravens, Advocacy and Conservation Director for the Arizona Wildlife Federation, “Therefore, protecting this region from the detrimental effects of uranium mining has been a long-term priority of the sporting community. Declaring this iconic landscape a National Monument, along with preserving access for sportsmen and women and keeping authority over wildlife management in the capable hands of our Arizona Game and Fish Department, not only successfully protects this region from the toxic effects of uranium mining but also preserves the imperative connection that people have to the land.”

*The [Arizona Wildlife Federation](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating, inspiring, and assisting individuals and organizations to value, conserve, enhance, manage, and protect wildlife and wildlife habitat. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)*