



September 13, 2017

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Rep. Gosar’s Grand Canyon Bison Management Act Passes Committee and Incorporated into Sportsmen Bill

Washington, September 13, 2017 | [Faith Vander Voort](#) | [0 comments](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Congressman Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S. (AZ-04) released the following statement after the Grand Canyon Bison Management Act was adopted by the House Natural Resources Committee as part of the SHARE Act, a bill to increase opportunities for America’s sportsmen and women:

“The Grand Canyon Bison Management Act is absolutely vital to preserving the natural wonder that is the Grand Canyon,” stated **Congressman Gosar**. “The carrying out of this bill will not cost the American taxpayer a dime, and it would significantly impact the longevity of our national park.”

“Over the past several years we have seen inefficient management plans peddled by out of touch Washington bureaucrats. It’s time the Park Service stopped leeching off the American people and begin to deal with the overgrown bison population in the Grand Canyon National Park. In coordination with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, this act will rein in Washington bureaucrats and empower State-level managers and volunteer hunters,” said Congressman Gosar.

“While the National Park Service plan has some components that are a step in the right direction, it will surely face endless litigation while a growing bison herd continues to damage valuable Grand Canyon National Park resources,” **Arizona Game and Fish Commission Chairman Jim Ammons** said. “This federal legislation will allow Arizona Game and Fish Department and Park Service

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managers to apply the best wildlife management practices to effectively manage the bison herd immediately. Right now, Grand Canyon National Park simply cannot properly manage the unhealthy growth of the herd without this legislative fix.”

Background

The Grand Canyon National Park has a bison problem that has reached borderline epidemic proportions over the last few years as the National Park Service (NPS) has assessed and evaluated the problem to an exhausting degree, all the while ignoring a commonsense solution.

The bison residing in the Grand Canyon National Park are no ordinary bison. They are a crossbreed between bison and cattle that have migrated from the Kaibab National Forest and found sanctuary inside the Grand Canyon National Park, protected from hunters. The non-native animals are wreaking havoc on Park lands, eating native grasslands and polluting wetlands with their waste. A Fox News article documenting the devastation caused by the bison in the Grand Canyon National Park can be found [HERE](#).

After years of prodding from Congressman Gosar and his colleagues, Arizona wildlife officials, and the public, the NPS finally began to recognize the need to reduce the population density of the bison herd. The Agency conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the management alternatives and on May 09, 2017 released an Initial Bison Herd Reduction Environmental Assessment. The text of the 201-page NPS EA can be found [HERE](#).

On September 6, 2017, the NPS issued a “Finding of No Significant Impact” (FONSI) authorizing the Park to proceed on developing a management plan to quickly reduce bison population density. The document indicated the Agencies intention to utilize skilled public volunteers, however it fell short in assuring that these volunteer hunters could remove and keep the full bison – including the meat, head, hide and horns.

On June 22, 2017, Congressman Gosar introduced [H.R.3005 – the Grand Canyon Bison Management Act](#), a bipartisan bill that authorizes volunteer hunters to cull bison inside Grand Canyon National Park and to take home the meat, head, hide, and horns. Specifically, the bill directs the Park Service to collaborate with the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD) to use state-licensed skilled volunteers to assist in the reduction of bison which will bring relief to the Park’s beleaguered resources. The tags sold for these bison would result in significant revenues for state and conservation coffers. The bill also clarified that bison meat is not ‘federal surplus property’ and that the full bison is allowed to be removed from the park.

Cosponsors of H.R. 3005 include: **Rep. Trent Franks (AZ-08), Rep. Tom O’Halloran (AZ-02), Rep. David Schweikert (AZ-06).**

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The amendment which passed the House Natural Resources Committee on Wednesday September 13, 2017 is derived from the text of H.R. 3005.

The text of the 86 page FONSI can be found [HERE](#)

In the 114th Congress, Representative Gosar initially attached a similar bill, H.R. 1443, to H.R. 2406 by passing an amendment during markup when the bill passed the House Committee on Natural Resources in October 2015. It was then included in Title XV of the SHARE Act, the 114th Congress' Sportsmen's Package, and passed the House on February 26, 2016. Read more [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

The following organizations have expressed their support for the Grand Canyon Bison Management Act: AZ Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation; Anglers United; AZ Antelope Foundation; AZ Bass Federation Nation; AZ Big Game Super Raffle; AZ Bowhunters Association; AZ Catfish Conservation Association; AZ Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation; AZ Chapter of Safari Club International; AZ Council of Trout Unlimited; AZ Deer Association; AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Society; AZ Elk Society; AZ Flycasters Club; AZ Houndsmen; AZ Outdoor Sports; AZ Shooting Sports Education Foundation; Christian Hunters of America; Coconino Sportsmen; Kahuna's Kida Mohave Sportsman Club; Outdoor Experience 4 All; South Eastern Sportsmen Club; Southwest Wildlife Foundation; SRT Outdoors; The BASS Federation; Valley of the Sun Quail Forever; Xtreme Predator Callers

The full text of the amendment can be read [HERE](#).