



December 13, 2018

The Honorable Jon Kyl  
United States Senator  
218 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Flake  
United States Senator  
413 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Proposed Great Bend of the Gila National Monument, H.R. 6521**

Dear Senators Kyl and Flake:

On behalf of Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) and 27 of our member organizations, we are opposed to H.R. 6521, the Great Bend of the Gila National Monument Establishment Act!

We understand the bill's sponsor, Congressman Raul Grijalva, may be attempting slip this legislation into a must-pass spending package before Congress adjourns. We strenuously object to advancing this bill given the lack of Congressional hearings on the proposal, let alone any input from Arizona's sportsmen and women.

As you both know, Arizona has its share of National Monuments, in fact 18 in total and more than any other state in the Union. Hence we have firsthand knowledge and experience with the impact these monuments have on Arizona sportsmen and women, as well as all Arizona residents. While we are not opposed to National Monuments, we believe the intent of the Antiquities Act has morphed into something unintended by President Roosevelt in 1906.

The Act has been a powerful conservation tool, but we believe it should only be used in a thoughtful and inclusive manner, and only when necessary to achieve a greater measure of protection for land and resources than what they are currently afforded. The stated goal of this legislation appears to be providing additional protections to petroglyphs and other Native American cultural resources located along a 75-mile stretch of the Gila River corridor. While we support preservation of these resources, they are already protected under federal law.

National Monuments are special places for our country but we can ensure Arizona's beautiful landscape and abundant wildlife is properly managed and conserved by the continued cooperation and partnership of the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), without the necessity of another national monument designation.

In addition, we do not support adding another layer of federal management on lands that are

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currently managed by the BLM for multiple use, including grazing, mining, and outdoor recreation. A legislative proposal should not involve a top-down approach from Congress locking up 84,000 acres of public land without sufficient local consultation, input and support.

The multiple use policy of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) prohibits federal land management agencies from affecting the State's jurisdiction and responsibilities, and managers of public lands are mandated to provide multiple-use recreational opportunities on public lands to both present and future generations. The conversion of public lands to a special use designation like that of a national monument effectively curtails or limits the public's multi-use capability of that land. It also results in a net loss of wildlife resources and associated recreational and economic benefits. That unilateral action, absent public input, disenfranchises stakeholders and deprives local communities of a voice in the process.

As a consequence, we strongly encourage you to ask your Senate colleagues to stop H.R. 6521.

Thank you!

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Unmacht", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jim Unmacht

Executive Director

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) is a 501c-3 non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife conservation, habitat work, youth recruitment and retention, as well as educating sportsmen and women on issues important to their passions. AZSFWC consists of 43 member, affiliate, and associate groups that reach across the spectrum of hunting, angling, shooting, outdoor recreation and businesses from all across Arizona. Our member groups represent in excess of 10,000 sportsmen and women from Arizona.



**AZSFWC Member Organizations Opposed to the  
Great Bend in the Gila National Monument  
Establishment Act**

Anglers United  
AZ Antelope Foundation  
AZ Bass Federation Nation  
AZ Big Game Super Raffle  
AZ Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation  
AZ Chapter Safari Club International  
AZ Council of Trout Unlimited  
AZ Deer Association  
AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Society  
AZ Elk Society  
AZ Houndsmen  
AZ Outdoor Adventures  
AZ Outdoor Sports, Inc  
AZ Predator Callers  
AZ Shooting Sports Educational Foundation  
AZ Taxidermy Association  
Christian Hunters of America  
Coconino Sportsmen  
Kahuna's Kids  
Mohave Sportsman's Club  
Outdoor Experience 4 All  
Southwest Wildlife Foundation  
SRT Outdoors  
The BASS Federation  
Valley of the Sun Quail Forever  
Xtreme Predator Callers  
Yuma Valley Rod & Gun Club

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