

**Chairman Raúl M. Grijalva  
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands  
Legislative Hearing  
June 5, 2008**

**The Subcommittee will now come to order. Today we will receive testimony on six bills.**

**My legislation, H.R. 5583, the Grand Canyon Watersheds Protection Act, would withdraw approximately one million acres of Federal lands surrounding Grand Canyon National Park from future mining claims.**

**This Subcommittee held an oversight hearing on the impacts of uranium mining near the Grand Canyon in March of this year. Fourteen witnesses testified and nearly 300 people attended, most to express strong opposition to any more uranium mining in the area around the Park. This included very powerful testimony from five Indian Tribes about the tragic legacy of illness and death left by the uranium mining that has already taken place in the region.**

**Despite this horrific legacy and the potential impacts to one of the most treasured National Parks in the nation, the Forest Service is now pursuing a policy to allow exploration for uranium to proceed under categorical exclusions from the National Environmental Policy Act, which results in very limited environmental analysis and even less public involvement or**

**notice. At our oversight hearing, the Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park testified that not even the National Park Service was consulted on this latest uranium exploration plan.**

**This has got to stop. H.R. 5583 is necessary to prevent further degradation of the environment of the Canyon and especially to protect the people who live in and near the Canyon from the dangers of this radioactive metal. The legacy of uranium mining is still not behind us and until we have learned to safely mine and process this material, this is no place to be moving forward with new mines.**

**I'd like to welcome our witnesses who will testify on H.R. 5583 today, Former Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Rob Arnberger, and Roger Clark from the Grand Canyon Trust.**

**Our other bills today include H.R. 573, sponsored by my good friend Peter Visclosky of Indiana. This bill would expand the definition of lands that are considered "contiguous" to the boundaries of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore so that the National Park Service could accept several anticipated donations.**

**H.R. 3702 conveys approximately 10 acres of National Forest System lands in Montana to Jefferson County for use as a cemetery.**

**H.R. 3809 names a new management entity for the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Area, one of the nation's oldest Heritage Areas which has an exceptional track record for success and accomplishment.**

**H.R. 4199 would add two sites – the Wright family mansion, known as Hawthorn Hill, and the Wright Company factory – to the Dayton Aviation National Historical Park. The bill also includes provisions already passed by the House, including language that would rename this park at the request of the local community.**

**Finally, H.R. 4828 would add the significant battlefield site of *Resaca de la Palma* to Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Site. Palo Alto is the only National Park unit devoted to the history of the Mexican War and *Resaca de la Palma* was the site of a final push to move the Mexican Army to the other side of the Rio Grande. The legislation is sponsored by our Committee colleague, Representative Ortiz, and he is to be commended for his work on this excellent legislation.**

**I'd now like to turn to Ranking Member Bishop for any opening statement he may have.**