

Arizona's legislators' recently sent our Congressional Delegation a memorial asking they" refrain from passing any new legislation to withdraw any lands in Arizona from mining", and "that the Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service not limit public access to public lands under their jurisdiction for mining, grazing, recreation or other uses."

They actually deny ongoing consequences to wildlife, habitat, water resources, and people from poorly regulated, historical mineral extraction in Arizona, and don't call for reformation of the antiquated Mining Act of 1872, which regulates those activities. And, "lumping together" public access for mining, grazing, and "other" uses with recreation is "apples and oranges" when considering impacts on natural resources and public lands.

Not mentioned as "recreationists" are hundreds of thousands of Arizona hunters and anglers who finance most wildlife and habitat management in our state, and who bring in millions of dollars to local economies throughout the state. Not mentioned are certain irreplaceable fish and wildlife habitats and iconic landscapes that can't be jeopardized for short-term gains.

With unprecedented losses of fish and wildlife habitat and water resources occurring from all types of development, it's time to respect our natural legacy, and carefully balance development with conserving public lands to sustain clean water, and healthy habitats and wildlife.