

Buckeye Water Conservation & Drainage District

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April 25, 2013

Congressman Raul M. Grijalva
Third District, Arizona
1511 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Re' HR 1348 – Great Bend of the Gila River National Monument

Dear Congressman Grijalva,

We are writing to express our concern over your proposed legislation that would create a new national monument in and around the Gila Bend area.

We are an irrigation district that has drawn our existence from the Gila River since 1886. Water is our life blood and we are extremely concerned about the impact that this would have for us to continue our operations as they have existed for over 100 years, including historically returning flow back into the Gila River. Agriculture is and will continue to be the economic driver in this area, and any mandates that affect this could be detrimental to the existing economy.

Only 17.6% of Arizona is in private ownership. This legislation would invariably diminish development opportunities for private property owners in the future by limiting access via roads, utilities, energy transmission and also hinder existing land use on state and federal lands in this area.

We do agree though that vegetation management is necessary in the Gila River and ask that you continue the work that Congressman Pastor started with the Tres Rios project. The Gila River from the confluence of the Agua Fria to Gillespie Dam has become overrun with salt cedars and tamarisk that threaten our lands and livelihood by the impact they have diverting flows, flooding due to backwater effects and frequent fires.

We would encourage you to work through the existing laws on the books to protect archeological sites and not paint with such a broad brush.

Sincerely,



Ed Gerak, General Manager

CC: Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick, First District, Arizona
Congressman Ron Barber, Second District, Arizona
Congressman Paul Gosar, Fourth District, Arizona
Congressman Matt Salmon, Fifth District, Arizona
Congressman David Schweikert, Sixth District, Arizona
Congressman Ed Pastor, Seventh District, Arizona
Congressman Trent Franks, Eighth District, Arizona
Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema, Ninth District, Arizona