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### **British Uranium Firm Sues U.S. for \$132 Million Over Grand Canyon Mining Ban**

WASHINGTON D.C.— On June 21<sup>st</sup>, British uranium firm VANE Minerals sued the United States in Washington’s U.S. Court of Claims over the Department of the Interior’s January 2012 decision to protect 1 million acres of public lands around Grand Canyon National Park from new uranium mining. VANE’s suit, which claims that uranium mining in Grand Canyon’s watershed “would have no adverse impacts,” seeks up to \$132 million from U.S. taxpayers. This is VANE’s second attempt to bring such a suit against the U.S.

“Leaders of the American Revolution would be horrified that British and foreign uranium firms might one day threaten our cherished national park,” said Roger Clark, Grand Canyon program director with Grand Canyon Trust, “and appalled that those companies are now claiming monetary damages for imaginary profits lost to protect Grand Canyon.”

VANE’s case threatens both the Grand Canyon mineral withdrawal and future mineral withdrawals to protect public lands. VANE seeks damages for mining claims it staked in the 1 million-acre withdrawal area that lack valid existing rights to mine. The withdrawal prohibits new mining claims and development on existing mining claims that lack valid existing rights. If the court accepts Vane’s arguments, precedent may be established that the Interior Department will face “takings” claims for any future withdrawal, even where, as here, all *valid* existing mineral rights have been protected. Government attorneys successfully moved to dismiss VANE’s first case making these claims in May.

“It is absolutely outrageous that a foreign mining corporation is seeking to pick the pockets of the American taxpayers to the tune of \$132 million because we are protecting Grand Canyon’s watershed from destructive uranium mining,” said Sandy Bahr, chapter director for the Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter. “The mineral withdrawal that prompted this lawsuit is strongly supported by Arizonans and people throughout the country.”

View VANE’s complaint [here](#).

#### Background

On January 9, 2012, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar ordered a twenty-year mineral withdrawal (the maximum allowed administratively) that prohibits new mining claims and development on existing mining claims that lack valid existing rights. Vane Minerals has not established valid existing rights for any of its mining claims in the withdrawal area. The withdrawal was achieved through an unprecedented and

formidable coalition of tribal, business, and civic leaders; hunting, fishing, ranching, and conservation groups; geologists, hydrologists, water resource managers, wildlife proponents, city, county, state, and federal elected officials; and hundreds of thousands of individuals who commented favorably on the proposed moratorium. Uranium industry attempts to overturn the withdrawal in Arizona's federal district court have thus far failed; tribes and conservation groups have intervened on the side of the government to support the protections.

According to VANE Minerals' website: "Since December 2004, VANE (US) LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of VANE, has aggressively acquired a uranium portfolio in the US. VANE (US) LLC has built up a considerable portfolio of projects, covering both strata-bound deposits in Utah and the unique high grade breccia pipe projects in Northern Arizona, where on part of the district VANE has a 50/50 Joint venture agreement with Uranium One Exploration (USA) ("U1") in which, in general terms, VANE does the exploration and U1 will do the mining."

(<http://www.vaneminerals.com/about/> accessed on 06/24/2013)

Uranium One's website states: "Uranium One Inc. is a Canadian-based company and is one of the world's largest publicly traded uranium producers.... With a 51% ownership stake, Uranium One's major shareholder is JSC Atomredmetzoloto (ARMZ) which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Rosatom, the Russian State Corporation for Nuclear Energy.

(<http://www.uranium1.com/index.php/en/> accessed on 06/24/2013)