



Protecting National Parks from Mining Threats – California

Mining on Public Lands and National Parks in California

Celebrated for their scenic beauty, abundant wildlife and cultural resources, California's national parks—from Redwood to Mojave National Preserve—are places to be protected and stewarded for future generations to experience. This is why national parks and newly designated conservation areas, such as Sand to Snow National Monument, prohibit *new* mining claims within their boundaries. Yet, there are still over **1,700 places** where mining activities remain possible within the boundaries of a national park or monument in California.



Unlike every other public land use, the specific location of mining claims is largely left up to the claim holder's choice. This drastically limits the ability of California's public land managers, like the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service, to protect high value conservation areas. **It also is why 70-percent of mining claims in California (over 16,000 total claims) are located within 30 miles of national parks and monuments in California.**

While a mine claim does not guarantee an active mine will develop, it is an exceedingly easy first step; a mine claim has a nominal annual fee and few restrictions considering potential harm to surrounding landscapes or communities. As a result, the claim system directly threatens clean air and water, wildlife habitat, connectivity and cultural resources conserved by parks and monuments. In 2023, **36 million** people visited California's national park sites, contributing **\$5.1 billion** in economic benefit to the state. Meanwhile, mine claim holders paid less than \$10 per acre to possess public lands with a mine claim. Commonsense changes to the mining laws are essential to protect California's national parks, monuments and local economies.

IMPROVING THE CLAIM SYSTEM TO PROTECT PARKS

National parks are places that bring us together even in divided times. Poll after poll shows Americans overwhelmingly support protecting national parks on both sides of the political aisle, united behind clean air, clean water, and healthy wildlife. NPCA is committed to securing bipartisan victories for the parks with commonsense mining law reform and mobilizing park supporters to protect these cherished landscapes. Now, more than ever, our parks need your help.

For more information:

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SPOTLIGHT

Mojave National Preserve

Located inside of Mojave National Preserve, a foreign mining company is working to re-open a gold and rare earth minerals mine that has been dormant since the 1990s, causing destruction to 100-year desert plant species in the process. Mining claims exist inside Mojave National Preserve because they were staked prior to the area's establishment. It's very possible this area would not have been open for mining claims if land managers and the public were provided a say in the location of mining claims and factored environmental and conservation considerations into land management decisions.

CALIFORNIA'S MINING CLAIMS BY THE NUMBERS

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CLAIMS LOCATED ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS	492,178
CLAIMS LOCATED ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS IN CALIFORNIA	23,664
CLAIMS WITHIN 30 MILES OF CALIFORNIA'S NATIONAL PARKS & MONUMENTS	16,275
CLAIMS INSIDE CALIFORNIA'S NATIONAL PARKS & MONUMENTS	1,708