

HOUSE DEMOCRATS PROMOTE THREE PARTISAN FEDERAL LANDS BILLS

H.R. 2181, the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act of 2019:

According to [Committee Republicans, H.R.2181](#), Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act of 2019, would permanently ban federal oil and natural gas leasing on roughly 316,000 acres of land in New Mexico. This would have a deeply negative long-term economic impacts on the State of New Mexico, eliminate key revenue sources for future public investments, and undermine a range of economic activities associated with responsible energy development. This bill would have the following impacts:

- In fiscal year 2013 the combined revenues from oil and gas for the four counties that are near the proposed moratorium area was \$198.2 million.
- This permanent ban would also jeopardize the financial future of thousands of Indian allottees by making it virtually impossible for them to develop the energy resources they own.
 - The bill claims not to affect allottee mineral rights, but the reality is that many allottee lands are surrounded by federal lands that would be withdrawn by this legislation.
 - This will create significant access and extraction complications for the Indian allottees along with any companies they partner with and will lead to a de facto extraction ban on their lands.
- During markup of H.R. 2181, several amendments offered by Republicans seeking to address flaws in the bill were rejected on largely party line votes.
 - Among these was an amendment offered by Congressman Paul Gosar that would have delayed implementation of this legislation until the Department of the Interior is able to properly confirm that this withdrawal will not adversely affect mineral rights held by Native Americans in the area.
 - Also offered at the markup was an amendment from Congresswoman Liz Cheney that would have simply provided recognition for the Navajo allottee opposition to the bill by adding one line to the bill's findings section.
 - These amendments were rejected by Committee Democrats, and the legislation advanced without a single Republican vote.

H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act:

According to [Committee Republicans, H.R. 1373](#), the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, would permanently lock up approximately 1 million acres of public lands in Northern Arizona. This mistitled and misguided land grab solely impacts lands far outside the Grand Canyon and concerns the largest tract of uranium deposits in the country. The uranium that is contained in the area is high grade and necessary to help expand the domestic supply of uranium. In 2017, 93 percent of U.S. demand for uranium was met by foreign imports, [despite](#) a large domestic supply. Making this land permanently out of bounds for mineral development is a clear threat to American energy security. Furthermore, this bill would have the following impacts:



- This bill would have significant economic implications for the people in Northern Arizona. There is enormous potential for good-paying mining jobs that would be made possible by responsible uranium development in this area.
- Arizona produces \$6.6 billion in nonfuel minerals, which makes it the [second largest](#) State in the production of minerals for the United States. Restricting access to parts of a mineral-rich State will not only hamper the economic progress of the State, but the national security of the United States.
- Furthermore, removing the potential for mining in this area would include restrictions on mining on tens of thousands of State Trust lands which help fund schools and hospitals in Arizona.
- During markup of H.R. 3195, several amendments offered by Republicans seeking to address flaws in the bill were rejected on largely party line votes.
 - Among these was an amendment to ensure national security concerns were considered, an amendment to exempt lands in Congressman Gosar's district from the bill, and a delay until the U.S. begins obtaining 30% of its uranium from nonhostile sources.
 - An additional amendment would have required assurance that this legislation would not adversely affect jobs available to Native Americans, other minorities, and women.
 - All of these amendments were rejected by Committee Democrats, and the legislation advanced without a single Republican vote.

H.R. 823, the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act:

According to [Committee Republicans, H.R. 823](#), the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act, creates land restrictions for approximately 400,000 acres of land in Colorado in the form of new wilderness, recreation and conservation areas. This bill would have the following impacts:

- Among the primary criticisms of this legislation is the drastic reduction of areas open for motorized recreation use.
 - The bill offers only 28,000 acres for motorized access versus the roughly 400,000 acres of new wilderness and closures.
- Rural county commissioners have raised economic concerns about the areas this bill will remove from multiple-use designation.
 - Instead of a legislative mineral lease exchange, which is supported by the impacted county and would enable energy companies to develop federal minerals in other areas, this bill offers a blanket mineral withdrawal in the Thompson Divide area with zero compromise.
- Finally, in a State with significant wildfire risk, this bill would further reduce acres that have been identified as suitable for forest management by approximately 8,000 acres.
- During the markup of H.R. 823, several amendments offered by Republicans seeking to address major flaws in the bill were rejected on largely party line votes.
 - Among these was an amendment offered by Congressman Doug Lamborn that would have ensured that the important military readiness training conducted at the High Altitude Aviation Training Site in Colorado would not be adversely impacted by this legislation.

As anyone can see, House Democrats have chosen to push partisan federal land legislation rather than work with the Committee Republicans to craft bipartisan legislation. These three bills will hurt the local economies, weaken our national security, and adversely affect American jobs.