



*Amidst Speaker election delays, House Republican leadership*

*wastes no time advancing agenda to give away our nation's public lands*

Notwithstanding historic delays in electing a Speaker, House Republican leadership has wasted no time in declaring war on our shared public lands. The Wilderness Society opposes and urges all Members of Congress to oppose two opening week attacks in the [House Rules package](#).

**ATTACK #1 – Rule change that would make it easier to give away public land**

The proposed House Rules package would grease the skids to give away our nation's shared public lands, with a change to make it easier to dispose of public lands by completely ignoring the costs of these transfers for taxpayers—or the value of these lands to the public. Rules requiring spending offsets would be abolished, meaning that regardless of the tremendous value of these lands to the public and taxpayers, Congress could simply ignore that and would no longer have to find spending offsets for bills that give away federal land at significant cost to the American public. When the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress (2017) attempted a similar rule change it faced [intense backlash](#) resulting in proposals to give away public lands [being withdrawn](#). We urge the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress to not repeat the mistakes of the past.

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**ATTACK #2 – Bill to lease more federal lands and waters to profit-driven oil companies**

The Rules Package also advances legislation to force the Administration to lease more of our public lands and waters to big oil companies at a time when our nation should be transitioning to a clean energy economy. Specifically, the *Strategic Production Response Act* would require that all non-emergency drawdowns of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) be accompanied by a plan to lease a percentage of federal lands for fossil fuel production in line with the percentage of oil scheduled to be released from the SPR, capped at 10%.

So, for example, if the Administration plans to release 30 million barrels from the SPR – roughly 8% of current stocks—it would need to also develop a plan to lease 8% more federal lands and waters. For context, the federal government has jurisdiction over approximately 640 million acres onshore and over 2.5 billion acres in the Outer Continental Shelf, meaning an 8% drawdown of the SPR could be read to require the Administration to devise a plan to offer up as much as 250 million acres—an area more than twice the size of California and five times the combined size of all U.S. national parks—to big oil companies.

We believe our public lands should benefit all communities in our country—not just the highest bidders. We urge Members of Congress to oppose this misguided and dangerous bill.

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