



Top-Line Summary & Analysis

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Budget Reconciliation Bill Text

Updated Monday June 16th

The Wilderness Society strongly opposes the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee [budget reconciliation bill text](#) that was released late Wednesday night (June 11th, 2025) and updated on Saturday, (June 14th, 2025). The bill includes a range of extraordinary giveaways aimed at privatizing public lands and advancing energy dominance at the expense of public lands and resources.

KEY TAKEAWAYS ON THE PUBLIC LAND SELL OFF TITLE:

- The bill puts over 250 million acres of public lands across 11 western states at risk of being sold off. It mandates that up to 3 million acres **of Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands** be sold in the next five years, and it gives the secretaries of the interior and agriculture broad discretion to choose which places should be sold off, including areas nominated but “any interested party” which could include major land speculators or foreign companies and governments. This, just weeks after bipartisan outrage over land sell off text threatened passage of the House bill. That provision was ultimately removed from the House bill and should be removed from the Senate accordingly.
- The bill directs what is likely the **largest single sale of national public lands in modern history** to help cut taxes for the richest people in the country. It trades ordinary Americans’ access to outdoor recreation for a short-term payoff that disproportionately benefits the privileged and well-connected.
- **Public lands eligible for sale in the bill encompass** local recreation areas, wilderness study areas, inventoried roadless areas, critical wildlife habitat and big game migration corridors.
- By removing the definition of valid existing rights that specifically included grazing lands, the updated language makes land with grazing permits eligible for sale, which are widely considered to be authorized uses of public land. Although undefined

“valid existing rights” are still excluded, that term is now best understood to encompass property interests like oil and gas leases, rights-of-way, or perfected mining claims.

- The bill’s process for selling off lands runs at breakneck speed, demanding the nomination of tracts within 30 days, then every 60 days until the mandatory multi-million-acre goal is met, **all without hearings, debate or public input opportunities.**
- The bill sets up relatively under-resourced state and local governments to lose open bidding wars to well-heeled commercial interests. It also **fails to give sovereign Tribal Nations** the right of first refusal to bid on lands, even for areas that are a part of their traditional homelands or contain sacred sites.
- The public lands sell-off provision **masquerades as a way to provide more housing**, but it lacks safeguards to ensure land is used for that purpose with no mechanism to enforce covenants and the Secretary having broad discretion to decide what constitutes housing or “infrastructure to support local housing need”. Research suggests that [very little of the land managed by the BLM and USFS](#) is actually suitable for housing.
- Land agencies already have ways to identify public lands for uses like housing if it serves community needs. Jury-rigging a new way to force such “disposal” as part of the budget reconciliation process sets up a **precedent to quickly liquidate huge chunks of America’s treasured lands** in the future whenever politicians have a pet project to pay for.
- National Monument lands may also be at risk from this proposal. In a Department of Justice opinion released last week, the Trump Administration dubiously claimed the unprecedented legal authority to revoke national monument protections. If they were to attempt to follow through on this, another 13.5 million acres of our most cherished public lands could be threatened with sell-off.

Explore the [webmap here](#)

State	Total Acreage Available for Sale	USFS Acreage Available for Sale	BLM Acreage Available for Sale
Alaska	82,831,388	15,944,525	66,886,862
Arizona	14,423,967	8,421,847	6,002,121
California	16,682,607	11,170,196	5,512,411
Colorado	14,352,632	9,384,415	4,968,217
Idaho	21,685,823	13,287,959	8,397,864
Nevada	33,580,624	3,527,280	30,053,344

New Mexico	14,312,074	6,479,502	7,832,572
Oregon	21,745,380	9,889,298	11,856,082
Utah	18,746,709	6,096,360	12,650,349
Washington	5,371,690	5,027,438	344,252
Wyoming	14,940,234	5,311,119	9,629,116
Total	258,673,128	94,539,939	164,133,190

KEY ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS:

1. The bill makes eligible for sale over 250 million acres of BLM and National Forest lands. Lands in 11 states are eligible for sale including: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The bill prohibits the nomination or sale of lands designated for conservation or historic preservation purposes (Wilderness Areas, National Monuments, Historic sites, etc.) but leaves on the disposal table administratively designated areas like ACECs, WSAs, Inventoried Roadless Areas, and critical habitat. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior will have 30 days to solicit nominations for lands to be sold from “any interested parties” and must publish a list every 60 days of lands eligible for sale until they’ve sold a minimum of .5 percent but up to .75 percent of BLM and National Forest lands – or between 2.02 and 3.04 million acres. The entire sell-off must be completed within 5 years. While sold lands must be used for housing or “infrastructure to support local housing needs,” those restrictions are without any enforcement.
2. The bill represents and oil and gas industry wish list, including mandated quarterly oil and gas lease sales, lower royalty rates, non-competitive leasing, requirements to offer for lease any and all parcels nominated by industry, and prohibitions on adding mitigation measures to protect resources from damage.
3. Four mandated lease sales that would turn-over to industry the sensitive coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge under highly permissive terms set by the first Trump Administration.
4. Multiple massive 4-million-acre mandated lease sales in the Western Arctic’s National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska again under highly permissive terms from the first Trump Administration, while bypassing the ongoing notice and comment process to repeal the long-standing surface management regulations that protect special areas within the Reserve.

5. Fast-tracking the Ambler Road to facilitate a mining district in Arctic Alaska.
6. Mandating massive timber sales on our national forests and BLM lands – ratcheting up the amount of board feet sold each year and mandating long-term contracts with private companies to log. This could result in more than 11 billion board feet of additional timber sold over the next ten years on Western national forests alone – more than doubling logging above current levels.
7. Rescinding unobligated funds from the Inflation Reduction Act to land management agencies.
8. Establishing set acreage rates and capacity fees for wind and solar projects on public lands that differ from current rates (and likely increases capacity fees significantly) and repealing the Secretary’s discretion to reduce rates (as previously allowed by the Energy Act of 2020). Mandating at least one geothermal lease sale per year in states with pending nominations. Requiring revenue sharing for wind and solar projects (50% to federal Treasury, 25% to states, 25% to counties).
9. Fast-tracking coal leasing on federal lands by streamlining environmental reviews and lease approvals; reducing the royalty rate from 12.5% to 7%; and mandating that the Department of the Interior make available for coal leasing a minimum of 4 million additional acres in the Lower 48 and Alaska.