

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8061

To prohibit a road construction project in the White River National Forest
in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2026

Mr. NEGUSE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To prohibit a road construction project in the White River
National Forest in the State of Colorado, and for other
purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Forest Resources Ac-
5 countability Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

8 (1) Forest Service staffing decreased by 6,000
9 between January 20, 2025, and December 31, 2025;

1 (2) since January 20, 2025, the reduced staff-
2 ing of the Forest Service has resulted in—

3 (A) 40 percent less hazardous fuels reduc-
4 tion projects nationwide;

5 (B) 22 percent less trails maintenance
6 projects nationwide; and

7 (C) significant reductions to science and
8 research that inform Forest Service manage-
9 ment of timber, fire, recreation, wildlife, water,
10 and natural resources on the 193,000,000 acres
11 managed by the Forest Service; and

12 (3) with limited staffing resources, the Forest
13 Service must focus on projects that address public
14 needs, including—

15 (A) wildfire risk reduction;

16 (B) forest treatments that reduce insect
17 and disease infestation;

18 (C) improving recreation opportunities, in-
19 cluding trail maintenance and permitting recre-
20 ation trips;

21 (D) maintaining and improving drinking
22 water resources;

23 (E) sustaining healthy wildlife populations
24 and habitat; and

1 (F) ensuring scientifically sound steward-
 2 ship of the health, diversity, and productivity of
 3 United States forests and grasslands to meet
 4 the needs of present and future generations.

5 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to protect
 6 critical winter wildlife habitat in the Federal land (as de-
 7 fined in section 3).

8 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECT**
 9 **IN THE WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST.**

10 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11 (1) FEDERAL LAND.—The term “Federal land”
 12 means sections 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30,
 13 31, 32, and 33 of T. 4 S., R. 82 W in the White
 14 River National Forest in the State of Colorado.

15 (2) PARCEL.—The term “parcel” means the
 16 680-acre parcel described on page 1 of the record of
 17 decision, known as the Berlaimont Estates parcel.

18 (3) RECORD OF DECISION.—The term “record
 19 of decision” means the record of decision for the
 20 Berlaimont Estates Access Road, dated March 2023.

21 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 22 the Secretary of Agriculture.

23 (b) ADEQUATE ACCESS.—In providing adequate ac-
 24 cess to inholdings within the Federal land, the Secretary

1 shall only provide access to reasonable and necessary
2 routes that are—

3 (1) in existence as of the date of the record of
4 decision;

5 (2) unpaved;

6 (3) seasonal; and

7 (4) limited to specific uses set forth in a special
8 use permit that ensures the access remains subject
9 to enforceable terms and conditions that will protect
10 the National Forest System.

11 (c) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary shall not approve
12 or issue any easement, special use authorization, or other
13 authorization to open, improve, authorize, permit, con-
14 struct, plan, or otherwise consider any utility corridor or
15 year-round road described in the record of decision or any
16 substantially similar road access project on the Federal
17 land.

18 (d) ADDITIONAL PROHIBITIONS.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—No Federal funds may be
20 used to open, improve, authorize, permit, construct,
21 plan, or otherwise consider any easement, special use
22 authorization, or other authorization allowing any
23 utility corridor or year-round road to be located on
24 the Federal land to access the parcel.

1 (2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection pre-
2 vents the use, in accordance with applicable laws
3 and regulations, of any Forest Service road existing
4 on the date of enactment of this Act by the Forest
5 Service, any owner of the parcel, or the public.

6 (e) LAND ACQUISITION FROM WILLING SELLERS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum extent
8 practicable, the Secretary shall acquire, through pur-
9 chase, exchange, or donation, from any willing seller,
10 the parcel.

11 (2) COORDINATION.—In carrying out para-
12 graph (1), the Secretary shall coordinate with the
13 State of Colorado, Eagle County, and local land
14 trusts to leverage non-Federal programs, authorities,
15 and resources in the efforts to acquire the parcel.

16 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after
17 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
18 shall submit a report describing the efforts of the
19 Secretary, the owner of the parcel, and the entities
20 described in paragraph (2) to—

21 (A) the Committee on Energy and Natural
22 Resources of the Senate; and

23 (B) the Committee on Natural Resources
24 of the House of Representatives.

1 (4) INCORPORATION OF LAND.—If the parcel is
2 acquired by the Secretary, the parcel shall be incor-
3 porated into the White River National Forest and
4 administered for the purposes of conservation of
5 wildlife and the enjoyment of present and future
6 generations.

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