

## **RE: Selling Off Public Lands Must Be Removed from Reconciliation Text**

Dear Members of the Senate,

On behalf of our members, we, the 148 undersigned organizations, ask you to remove the unprecedented sell off of millions of acres of public lands in the budget reconciliation bill, the single largest attack on public lands in the history of this nation.

Chairman Lee wants to mandate the sell-off of millions of acres of public lands across 11 western states (UT, AK, AZ, CA, CO, ID, NV, NM, OR, WA, WY). His legislative text would target both Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service land, and **mandates the sale of between 2 million and 3 million acres of public lands**. Senator Lee refused to provide details of his plan for weeks, even to fellow Senate Republicans. After releasing the bill text on the evening of June 11th, it was clear why: he wants to avoid any meaningful debate or public process on public land sell-off attempts that are deeply unpopular across the political spectrum, so unpopular that a similar attempt in the House of Representatives fell flat.

We strongly oppose any attempts to recklessly sell public lands through legislative shortcuts like budget reconciliation, which bypass public input, environmental review, and accountability.

**Doing so threatens public access, undermines responsible land management, puts environmental values, cultural resources, and endangered species at risk along with clean drinking water for 60 million Americans and betrays the public's trust.**

**This bill will primarily benefit real estate developers and private-equity speculators rather than addressing real housing needs.** While Senator Lee attempts to make his bill more palatable by claiming that it will create opportunities for affordable housing, it does no such thing. **There is no requirement that any housing built in response to this bill be affordable or meet any affordable housing requirements.** There is no provision to prevent lands sold under Lee's bill from being developed into high-end vacation homes, Airbnbs, or luxury housing projects, which would be especially desirable near scenic or high-demand areas.

Selling off public lands is short-sighted, self-serving and irreversible. These lands belong to all Americans. **Once they're sold, they're gone for good--fences go up, access disappears and they are lost to the public forever.** Westerners and people across the country overwhelmingly support the protection of public lands and have consistently rejected attempts to sell them off. Time and again, the public has made it clear: our forests, desert lands and open spaces are not and should not be for sale.

**We urge all senators to oppose the final budget reconciliation if this language is not removed.**

Sincerely,

Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA)  
Center for Biological Diversity

Natural Resources Defense Council  
198 methods  
350 Bay Area Action  
[350.org](http://350.org)  
[Accountable.US/Accountable.NOW](http://Accountable.US/Accountable.NOW)  
Alaska Wilderness League  
Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance  
Alliance for the Wild Rockies  
Amigos De Los Rios  
Animal Defenders International  
Animal Welfare Institute  
Anza Trail Foundation  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Arizona Faith Network  
Arizona Trail Association  
Amargosa Conservancy  
American Friends Service Committee  
American Hiking Society  
American Rivers  
Back Country Horsemen of America  
Back Country Horsemen of Utah Mountain Ridge Chapter  
Back Country Horsemen of Utah Southwest Chapter  
Back Country Horsemen of Utah San Rafael Chapter  
Back Country Horsemen of Utah Uintah Basin Chapter  
Back Country Horsemen of Utah Wasatch Front Chapter  
Bay Area Third Act  
California Environmental Voters  
California Native Plant Society  
Californians for Western Wilderness  
CalWild  
Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund  
Climate Justice Alliance  
Climate Relations LLC  
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life  
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks  
Colorado Wildlands Project  
Conservation Colorado  
Conservation Lands Foundation  
Conservation Northwest  
Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship  
Conserve Southwest Utah  
Continental Divide Trail Coalition  
Creation Justice Ministries  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Dolores River Boating Advocates  
Endangered Habitats League  
Environmental Protection Information Center  
Earthjustice  
Earthworks  
Ecoflight  
Evergreen Action

Food & Water Watch  
Forest Keeper  
Forests Forever  
FOUR PAWS USA  
Friends of Big Ivy  
Friends of Nevada Wilderness  
Friends of the Amargosa Basin  
Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness  
Friends of the Clearwater  
Friends of the Earth  
Grand Canyon Trust  
Grand Staircase Escalante Partners  
Great Basin Water Network  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
Greater Hells Canyon Council  
Greater Yellowstone Coalition  
GreenLatinos  
Healthy Ocean Coalition  
Heartwood  
High Country Conservation Advocates  
High Desert Back Country Horsemen Chapter  
I Heart Pisgah  
Idaho Conservation League  
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute  
John Muir Project  
Justice Outside  
Kettle Range Conservation Group  
Klamath Forest Alliance  
League of Conservation Voters  
Los Padres ForestWatch  
Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America  
Mount Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center  
Native Ecosystems Council  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Nature for All  
Nevada Conservation League  
New Mexico Wild  
Next 100 Coalition  
North Country Trail Association  
Northcoast Environmental Center  
Ocean Conservation Research  
Oregon League of Conservation Voters  
Oregon Natural Desert Association  
Oregon Wild  
Oregon-California Trails Association  
Pacific Crest Trail Association  
Park County Environmental Council  
Partnership for Policy Integrity  
Physicians for Social Responsibility Sacramento  
Protect Our Winters  
Public Citizen

Quiet Use Coalition  
Resource Renewal Institute  
Rocky Mountain Wild  
SAFE Alternatives for our Forest Environment  
Sage Steppe Wild  
San Juan Citizens Alliance  
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council  
Save the Boundary Waters  
Save Our Canyons  
Scenic Utah  
Sheep Mountain Alliance  
Sierra Club  
Silvix Resources  
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council  
Southern Environmental Law Center  
St. George Climbers Coalition  
Standing Trees  
Stewardship Utah  
Surveyor222  
SYRINGA networks  
The Ocean Project  
The Rewilding Institute  
The Wilderness Society  
Third Act Sacramento  
Tuleyome  
Turtle Island Restoration Network  
Washington Wild  
Waterkeeper Alliance  
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
Western Colorado Alliance  
Western Leaders Network  
Western Watersheds Project  
Western Wildlife Conservancy  
Wild Arizona  
Wild Hope  
Wild Montana  
WildEarth Guardians  
Wilderness Watch  
Wilderness Workshop  
Wildlife for All  
Wolf Conservation Center  
Wyoming Outdoor Council  
Wyoming Wilderness Association  
Yellowstone Gateway Business Coalition