

REVOKING AN IMPORTANT LAND-USE PLANNING RULE

Passed: 51-48

SUMMARY:

The Senate passed a resolution to permanently revoke the land-use planning rule for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM, which guides the use and conservation of millions of acres of federal public lands and the wildlife that depend on them. (*March 7, 2017, Roll Call No. 82*)

BACKGROUND:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) made long overdue changes to its public land planning process to increase public engagement, efficiency, and responsiveness to the pressing challenges land managers face today in managing 247 million acres of public land and the 3,000 species of wildlife that call those lands home. These challenges include wildfires, invasive species and increased demand for domestic energy. The updates to the planning process are commonly known as “Planning 2.0.”

Planning 2.0 improved the process for updating Resource Management Plans, which are essentially blueprints for managing areas of public land over 15 to 20 years. For example, these plans identify the places BLM has decided can be developed and those that should be conserved for wildlife habitat, cultural resource protection or recreation.

In February, Congress triggered the rarely used but devastatingly powerful Congressional Review Act (CRA) to pass joint resolutions that have the effect of law and not only revoke a federal rule but also prohibit issuance of any substantially similar rule in the future. Senator Liz Cheney (R-Wyo.) introduced H.J. Res. 44, the CRA resolution that ultimately revoked the BLM Planning 2.0 rule. With passage of the resolution, the public lost opportunities to have a say in the management of these important public lands should be managed, and public land management will continue to be more contentious, inefficient and costly.

OUTCOME:

On March 7, 2017, the Senate passed the H.J. Res 44 to revoke the BLM planning 2.0, 54-45. “No” was the pro-conservation vote. President Donald Trump signed the resolution into law on March 27, 2017.