

119<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> 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.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2026

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

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## 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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