

EARTHJUSTICE*ENVIRONMENT AMERICA*CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA'S WILDERNESS*SIERRA CLUB*THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

S. 22, THE OMNIBUS PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT ACT: A COMMON- SENSE, BIPARTISAN PIECE OF AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION

The House will soon take up the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. This legislation is comprised of over 160 bipartisan bills that would preserve key components of America's natural heritage and provide important economic benefits to struggling local economies. The relevant authorizing committees have worked through the issues, precedents and costs on all of the included bills over a period of many months and in some cases several years. Senator Bingaman has packaged these initiatives into S. 22, which passed the Senate on 1/15/09 by a vote of 73-12. This legislation contains no spending, no earmarks (as defined by the Senate), has no PAYGO issues, and deserves to be thoughtfully considered on its merits, particularly the economic benefits its passage would provide during the deepening recession.

BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 is a broadly supported, bipartisan bill that includes measures introduced last Congress by 53 Senators (**27 Democrats, 25 Republican, and one Independent**) and 75 Representatives (**39 Democrats and 36 Republican**). The vast majority of the bills in the package are non-controversial, passed through their respective committees by voice vote, and have little to no opposition on their merits. All of the pro-wilderness measures included have strong local support, and many are the result of years of local collaboration and consensus building.

AUTHORIZING, NOT APPROPRIATING

S. 22 is an authorization bill, not an appropriations measure. No monies are directed to be spent, and any cost associated with the legislation is subject to the appropriations process. For the most part, the package's individual components were considered through regular order in the relevant authorizing committees. The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 **does not** appropriate any money from the federal treasury but, rather, allows worthy programs to be considered for appropriations in the future.

WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION

The wilderness and conservation measures within the omnibus act will have only negligible effects on oil and gas production because the areas identified for protection are not priorities for production. The Wyoming Range Legacy Act, for example, will have no significant effect on oil and gas production, because the federal land management agencies have no plans to issue new oil and gas leases in the next decade.^[1] Meanwhile, the nearby Jonah and Pinedale Anticline oil fields continue to produce significant oil and gas and hold more than 25 times more oil and gas than the Wyoming Range.

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^[1] Congressional Budget Office. 2008. Cost estimate for the Wyoming Range Legacy Act.