



100YEARS

May 11, 2022

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Chairman Lowenthal:

On behalf of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and our nearly 1.6 million members and supporters, thank you for introducing H.R. 7580, the Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act of 2022. This timely legislation protects national parks, public lands, nearby communities and critical water supplies from the increased threat of hardrock mining as the United States continues a clean energy transition. Thank you as well to Chairman Lowenthal and the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources for holding a hearing on the Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act of 2022 on Thursday, May 12, 2022.

Since 1919, NPCA has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting our National Park System. Hardrock mining has long posed threats to national park landscapes across the country. Over the past several decades, NPCA has successfully advocated for protecting parks from various mining proposals that would have irreparably harmed them and nearby communities.

The General Mining Law of 1872, which governs more than 350 million acres of public lands, offers little to no environmental protection to these lands, adjacent national park units, vulnerable water resources and nearby communities. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 40% of the headwaters of all western watersheds are polluted by mining with hardrock mining being the largest toxic polluter. Additionally, current law does not require the hardrock mining industry to pay any royalties, unlike the oil and gas industries. This allows companies to stake claim of public lands and then reap the benefits of public resources for private gain without paying anything to the American taxpayer. There is also no incentive or requirement for these private companies to clean up their mines when they are finished leaving governments and communities to live with the impacts of mining's toxic legacy.

The Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act of 2022 would fix these issues and many more, working to make the industry cleaner and more responsive to environmental protections and requiring a fair royalty for the

Headquarters

777 6th Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001

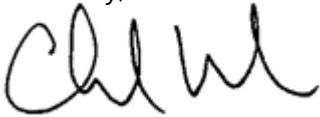
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extraction of resources on public lands. Of particular importance to NPCA is Section 111– Protection of Special Places. This language explicitly protects national parks, monuments and other conservation areas from hardrock mining. The section acknowledges that parks are not islands but are interconnected with the areas around them. It protects the waterways that flow into and through parks, the wildlife that do not know the boundaries created by humans, scenic vistas that have endured for ages and the air that gives life to human, animal and plant alike.

With the protections this legislation will add to our national parks and public lands while helping America achieve our renewable energy goals, NPCA is happy to support this legislation. We look forward to working with Congress to help this legislation become law. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions at clord@npca.org or (202) 257-4365.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad W. Lord', written in a cursive style.

Chad W. Lord
Senior Director, Environment and Climate Policy
National Parks Conservation Association