



May 11, 2022

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

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal
Subcommittee Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Pete Stauber
Subcommittee Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Westerman, Subcommittee Chairman Lowenthal, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Stauber and all Members of the House Committee on Natural Resources:

On behalf of our more than one million members and supporters, The Wilderness Society (TWS) writes to express support for H.R. 7580, the Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act being heard before the House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources on May 12, 2022.

H.R. 7580, the Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act of 2022

TWS supports H.R. 7580, the Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act, legislation introduced by Chairman Raul Grijalva to update American mining law. The 150-year-old law that governs American mining is severely outdated, offering no protections for communities or public lands that are facing the threat of industrial mining. Signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant in 1872, the law is a true relic, governing deposits like gold, silver, copper, platinum, zinc, and uranium as if our society were still mining these minerals with pickaxes and mules. Hardrock mining causes irreparable damage to sacred and valuable resources and disproportionately harms Indigenous people and the water upon which they rely. EPA has found mining to be the most toxic industry in America. Under current law, mining companies never pay a royalty to extract minerals from public lands and face zero consequences for polluting communities that live near the mines. Even after mining operations cease, the destruction they leave behind impacts communities for generations: hundreds of thousands of abandoned mines litter the nation, and when communities want to clean them up, the mining industry leaves U.S. taxpayers to foot the bill. As our country navigates towards a clean energy future, updating our mining laws is a necessary first step to protect people, wildlife and our shared lands and waters against toxic mining pollution. The Wilderness Society is proud to stand behind efforts to update this antiquated law. We urge the committee to support Chair Grijalva's Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Dan Hartinger

Government Relations Director
The Wilderness Society