



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

To: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Members
From: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Staff
Date: Monday, January 19, 2026
Subject: Markup of 8 Bills

The House Committee on Natural Resources will hold a markup on **Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., in room 1324 Longworth House Office Building**. The bills to be considered include: H.R. 2130 (Rep. Johnson of SD); H.R. 3073 (Rep. Maloy); H.R. 3340 (Rep. Fry); H.R. 4255 (Rep. Gosar); H.R. 4294 (Rep. Elfreth); H.R. 5254 (Rep. Bell); H.R. 5729 (Rep. Crane); and H.R. 6365 (Rep. McGuire).

Member offices are requested to notify Madeline Kelley (Madeline.Kelley@mail.house.gov) by 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, to confirm their Member's attendance at the markup.

I. KEY MESSAGES & TOPLINE ACTIONS

- Bills expected to move by regular order: H.R. 4255 (Rep. Gosar), "*Enhancing Safety for Animals Act of 2025*".
- Please note that H.R. 4255 will have an amendment in the nature of a substitute (ANS). Members should ensure that amendments are drafted to the ANS.
- Bills expected to move by unanimous consent: H.R. 2130 (Rep. Johnson of SD), "*Tribal Trust Land Homeownership Act of 2025*"; H.R. 3073 (Rep. Maloy), "*Shivwits Band of Paiutes Jurisdictional Clarity Act*"; H.R. 3340 (Rep. Fry), "*Modernizing Access to Our Public Oceans Act*"; H.R. 4294 (Rep. Elfreth), "*Mitigation Action and Watermen Support Act of 2025*" or "*MAWS Act of 2025*"; H.R. 5254 (Rep. Bell), "*Gateway Partnership Act of 2025*"; H.R. 5729 (Rep. Crane), "*North Rim Restoration Act of 2025*"; and H.R. 6365 (Rep. McGuire), "*Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act*".

II. EXPECTED LEGISLATION

H.R. 4255 (Rep. Gosar), "*Enhancing Safety for Animals Act of 2025*"

The Mexican wolf was listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1976, as the species had become functionally extinct in the southwestern United States (U.S.) and was only rarely

seen in Mexico.¹ From 1977 to 1980, the U.S. and Mexico initiated a captive breeding program within the Mexican wolf's historic range.² In 1998, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) established a nonessential experimental population area in Arizona and New Mexico under Section 10(j) of the ESA and released 11 captive-bred wolves into the wild for the first time.³

In 2015, the Service amended its 10(j) rule to expand the nonessential population area south to the Mexican border and increased the number of areas where wolves could be reintroduced.⁴ The Service also set a cap of 300 to 325 Mexican wolves within the population area. This rule was accompanied by a recovery plan for the species that was finalized in December 2017.⁵ The rule and recovery plan were remanded by the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona, which found they lacked adequate safeguards against the loss of genetically valuable wolves, among other issues.⁶

In 2022, the Service responded to the court's ruling by further revising the 10(j) rule and publishing a recovery plan that (1) increased recovery goals to an eight-year rolling average of at least 320 Mexican wolves in the U.S., (2) set a goal of releasing 22 captive wolves per year into the wild to aid in genetic diversity, and (3) removed the population cap from the 2015 rule.⁷ The recovery plan also called for the population in Mexico to average 200 wolves over an eight-year period, with the last three years exceeding 200 wolves.⁸

Today, the Mexican wolf population in eastern Arizona and western New Mexico has grown to at least 286 wolves in the wild, with the population increasing for 9 consecutive years.⁹ Additionally, 350 Mexican wolves are housed in captive breeding facilities in Mexico and the U.S.¹⁰ On December 20, 2024, the Biden administration revealed that the domestic Mexican wolf population was almost doubling the Service's interim abundance goal of 145 wolves in the U.S., leading the Service to declare that the Mexican wolf population was surpassing its recovery goal in the U.S.¹¹

As Mexican wolf populations increase, so do conflicts with humans and livestock. Due to excessive livestock depredations and disruptions to local economies, local governments in western New Mexico have begun to pass disaster declarations. However, despite requests from

¹ "Conserving the Mexican Wolf," U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, <https://www.fws.gov/program/conserving-mexican-wolf/what-we-do>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ 80 FR 2512.

⁵ "Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan, First Revision," U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, December 2017, <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017MexicanWolfRecoveryPlanRevision1Final.pdf>.

⁶ See *Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. Jewell*, 4:15-cv-00019-JGZ (D. Ariz. March 31, 2018), <https://earthjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/18-04-0220cbd20v.20jewell20order.pdf>.

⁷ 87 FR 39348.

⁸ "Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan, Second Revision," U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, September 2022, https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Final-Mexican-Wolf-Recovery-Plan-Second-Revision-2022-signed_508-compliant.pdfvision.

⁹ "Mexican Wolf Number up for 9th Straight Year," Arizona Game & Fish Department, March 3, 2025, <https://www.azgfd.com/2025/03/03/mexican-wolf-numbers-up-for-9th-straight-year/>.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Aislinn Maestas, "5-year Evaluation Reveals Mexican Wolf Population Surpassing Recovery Goals in the United States," U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, December 20, 2024, [Mexican Wolf Population Surpassing Recovery Goals in the United States | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#).

Members of Congress and local community residents and being empowered by its own 10(j) rule, the Service refused to lethally remove the problematic wolves.¹²

In response, Rep. Paul Gosar (R-AZ-09) introduced H.R. 4255. The bill would delist the Mexican wolf from the ESA and nullify the Service's 2015 and 2022 rules. Further, the legislation would prevent the Service from considering the status of the Mexican wolf in Mexico when changing the listing status or formulating a recovery plan, should the species be listed again under the ESA.

During Committee markup, an ANS will be offered that makes technical changes to the introduced bill.

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#), and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#).

Staff contact: Doug Levine (Doug.Levine@mail.house.gov).

H.R. 2130 (Rep. Johnson of SD), “Tribal Trust Land Homeownership Act of 2025”

H.R. 2130 would require the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to process and complete residential and business mortgage packages on Indian land within 20 or 30 days, depending on application type, more closely aligning BIA timelines with industry practices. This bill would also require annual reporting to Congress on mortgages reviewed by the BIA, direct the Government Accountability Office to assess the need to digitize mortgage records, establish a Realty Ombudsman position, and provide relevant agencies and tribes with read-only access to the BIA's Trust Asset and Accounting Management System.

Indian lands primarily fall into one of three categories: trust, fee, and restricted fee. H.R. 2130 applies only to trust land, which is owned by the federal government and managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the benefit of an Indian tribe or individual Indians. Trust land is inalienable and preempts state tax and regulatory authority.

Mortgages on trust land require BIA approval because the federal government holds title to the land. Applications are submitted through regional BIA offices and generally fall into two categories: leasehold mortgages, involving trust land owned by another tribal landowner, or trust land mortgages, involving land owned by the borrower.¹³ While current law establishes review timelines for leasehold and rights-of-way mortgages, no such timeline exists for trust land mortgages.¹⁴

The BIA's *Mortgage Handbook* outlines review procedures for leasehold mortgages, including a 10-day preliminary review and a 20- or 30-day period for approval or denial, depending on the

¹² See, e.g., letter from Member of Congress to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (May 3, 2022), on file with the Committee.

¹³ “Mortgages in Indian Country,” U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, <https://www.bia.gov/service/mortgages>.

¹⁴ 25 CFR 162; 25 CFR 169; *Indian Affairs Mortgage Handbook*, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, July 15, 2019, https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/public/raca/handbook/pdf/52%20IAM%204-H%20Indian%20Affairs%20Mortgage%20Handbook_FINAL_SIGNED_cleanedup%20w%20footer_508.pdf.

application.¹⁵ Despite these guidelines, proponents of H.R. 2130 cite persistent delays. A Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis report, for example, highlighted testimony indicating that borrowers from the Fort Belknap Tribe had waited for more than a year for certified Title Status Reports, which have been repeatedly identified as a barrier to trust land development.¹⁶

Hearing information on H.R. 2130, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#), and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#).

Staff contact: Hannah Hulehan (Hannah.Hulehan@mail.house.gov).

H.R. 3073 (Rep. Maloy), “Shivwits Band of Paiutes Jurisdictional Clarity Act”

The Shivwits Band of Paiutes (Shivwits Band) is a federally recognized tribe residing on a 28,000-acre ancestral reservation just outside of St. George, Utah.¹⁷

A 2022 federal appellate case has stunted economic development for the Shivwits Band by shrouding on-reservation commercial activity in legal uncertainty.¹⁸ In *Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation v. Lawrence* (*Lawrence*), the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Utah state courts lack the jurisdiction to hear cases involving on-reservation conduct.¹⁹ Additionally, the Tenth Circuit found that even in instances where a tribe has provided a clear and valid waiver of its sovereign immunity, Utah state courts still lack jurisdiction unless the requirements of 25 U.S.C § 1322²⁰ and 25 U.S.C § 1326²¹ are met.²²

The *Lawrence* ruling has created unnecessary uncertainty for the Shivwits Band and potential investors. Under *Lawrence*, the Shivwits Band can no longer consent to state court jurisdiction on a case-by-case basis, meaning that if an issue arises between the Shivwits Band and an outside investor, there is no guarantee that the state court will intervene. This lack of clarity made outside groups hesitant to partner with the Shivwits Band.²³

H.R. 3703 addresses these concerns by clarifying that Utah state courts hold jurisdiction over civil cases involving the Shivwits Band that occur on their tribal lands. Appropriately, the bill also ensures that the tribe’s sovereign immunity remains intact unless the tribe waives it.

¹⁵ *Indian Affairs Mortgage Handbook*, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, July 15, 2019, https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/public/raca/handbook/pdf/52%20IAM%204-H%20Indian%20Affairs%20Mortgage%20Handbook_FINAL_SIGNED_cleanedup%20w%20footer_508.pdf.

¹⁶ James Robert Colombe, “Shortening TSR timeline; A proposal to end delays that hinder Native homeownership,” Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, September 9, 2020, https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2020/shortening-the-tsrl-timeline-a-proposal-to-end-delays-that-hinder-native-homeownership#_ftnref9.

¹⁷ Briefing Paper on H.R. 3703, provided to Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs Staff in May 2025. On file.

¹⁸ Letter of Support for H.R. 3073, Washington County, Utah, Shivwits Band of Paiute Indians, March 18, 2025, https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/shivwits_band_of_paiutes_letter_of_support.pdf.

¹⁹ *Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah & Ouray Reservation v. Lawrence*, No. 18-4013, 2022 WL 54822 (10th Cir. Jan. 6, 2022).

²⁰ Section 1322 provides that state courts can assume jurisdiction over civil cases between Indians or where Indians are parties with the consent of the tribe, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/25/1322>.

²¹ Section 1326 provides that state courts can assume jurisdiction when “a majority vote of the adult Indians voting at a special election held for that purpose” voted in favor, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/25/1326>.

²² *Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah & Ouray Reservation v. Lawrence*, No. 18-4013, 2022 WL 54822 (10th Cir. Jan. 6, 2022).

²³ *Id.*

Additionally, H.R. 3703 amends the Long-Term Leasing Act (LTLA)²⁴ to authorize the Shivwits Band to lease land held in trust for their benefit for up to 99 years. In 1955, Congress passed the LTLA, which generally authorizes, subject to the Secretary of the Interior’s approval, any Indian lands held in trust or land subject to a restriction against alienation to be leased by the Indian owner, for 25 years, except for grazing purposes.²⁵ A lease authority of up to 99 years is often needed for long-term commercial leases and some financing contracts. Since its enactment, Congress has amended the LTLA many times, including granting some tribes 99-year lease authority.²⁶

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#), and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#).

Staff contact: Kirstin Liddell (Kirstin.Liddell@mail.house.gov).

H.R. 3340 (Rep. Fry), “*Modernizing Access to Our Public Oceans Act*”

U.S. waterways serve the commercial and recreational industries that are critical to the domestic and global economy. Operating on the water safely and effectively requires access to a wide range of data, including the types of vessels permitted to operate and any other restrictions in place. The restrictions and data can vary from region to region, often causing confusion.

H.R. 3340 seeks to make this information readily accessible by directing the Secretary of Commerce to develop standards for collecting and disseminating digitized geospatial data necessary for boaters and anglers. This data would include when federal waterways are open, no-wake zones or speed restrictions, the types of vessels allowed, and the boundaries of fishing restrictions. The bill also requires robust public consultation to ensure that the disseminated data meets statutory requirements, serves the public, and is accessible and iterative. The Secretary of Commerce would be required to make this data available on a public website within four years of this legislation’s enactment.

Hearing information, including testimony, from the 118th Congress can be found [here](#), and the hearing memo can be found [here](#).

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H.R. 5729 (Rep. Crane), “*North Rim Restoration Act of 2025*”

The Dragon Bravo Fire was the largest wildfire in the continental U.S. in 2025, scorching more than 145,000 acres across northern Arizona in and around Grand Canyon National Park.²⁷ The blaze devastated forests, decimated wildlife habitat, and destroyed more than 100 structures.²⁸

²⁴ 25 U.S.C. § 415.

²⁵ P.L. 255, Ch. 615, Sec. 1, 69 Stat. 539.

²⁶ See, e.g., P.L. 117-346.

²⁷ “Dragon Bravo Fire – Incident Information,” InciWeb, July 28, 2025 (daily update), <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/azgcp-dragon-bravo-fire>.

²⁸ Peter Valencia, “106 buildings destroyed, hazmat sites found in Dragon Bravo Fire aftermath,” Arizona’s Family, September 2, 2025, <https://www.azfamily.com/2025/09/02/report-106-buildings-destroyed-hazmat-sites-found-dragon-bravo-fire-aftermath/>.

This included notable visitor facilities, such as the historic Grand Canyon Lodge, an iconic landmark.²⁹ The fire also caused a sharp decline in tourism across the region, resulting in significant revenue losses for gateway communities and park operations.³⁰ Although fully contained by late September 2025, the North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains partially closed to visitors and faces an uncertain path to full recovery.³¹ The loss of the Grand Canyon Lodge and much of the surrounding infrastructure has created lasting uncertainties for small businesses in the area that rely on the outdoor recreation and tourism economy.³²

H.R. 5729 would expedite rebuilding and forest-recovery efforts within fire-affected areas of Grand Canyon National Park by authorizing the National Park Service (NPS) to use existing direct emergency acquisition authorities to swiftly hire qualified contractors and begin restoration work.³³ This includes forest management or restoration activities, rebuilding and improving structures, and other recovery efforts necessary to remediate fire damage. An ANS is expected at markup addressing technical assistance from NPS.

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#), and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#).

Staff contacts: Aniela Butler (Aniela@mail.house.gov) and Brandon Miller (Brandon.Miller@mail.house.gov).

H.R. 6365 (Rep. McGuire), “*Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act*”

Wintergreen is a resort and residential community located off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Nelson County, Virginia. The community has only one road in and out, a longstanding safety concern for residents and first responders.³⁴ Local officials warn that this single chokepoint slows emergency response and would severely impede evacuation during a wildfire, winter storm, or medical emergency.³⁵ To address this vulnerability, Wintergreen proposed a secondary, emergency-only egress route connecting to the Blue Ridge Parkway. The route follows an existing dirt path on NPS land and requires approximately 30 feet of gravel to make it passable for emergency vehicles.³⁶ However, despite strong community support, the project stalled for decades due to an NPS legal interpretation barring new road connections.³⁷ H.R. 6365 directs the

²⁹ “Grand Canyon Lodge,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, last updated November 14, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/places/000/grand-canyon-lodge.htm>.

³⁰ “Northern Arizona wildfires hurt tourism economy of Grand Canyon area,” KNAU (Arizona News), July 18, 2025, <https://www.knau.org/knau-and-arizona-news/2025-07-18/northern-arizona-wildfires-hurt-tourism-economy-of-grand-canyon-area>.

³¹ “Status of the North Rim – Grand Canyon National Park,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, accessed October 7, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/grca/northrimstatus.htm>. Scott Sistik, “Grand Canyon fire leaves almost half of North Rim structures destroyed or damaged,” New York Post, September 2, 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/09/02/us-news/grand-canyon-fire-leaves-almost-half-of-north-rim-structures-destroyed-or-damaged/>.

³² Kennedy Hayes, “Wildfire shuts down Grand Canyon’s North Rim, strangling tourism in Arizona-Utah towns,” Fox Business, August 14, 2025, <https://www.foxbusiness.com/small-business/wildfire-shuts-down-grand-canyons-north-rim-strangling-tourism-arizona-utah-towns>.

³³ 48 CFR 18, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-48/chapter-1/subchapter-C/part-18>.

³⁴ Charlotte Matherly, “At Wintergreen, a gravel road to nowhere prompts a bill in Congress,” Cardinal News, February 5, 2024, <https://cardinalnews.org/2024/02/05/at-wintergreen-a-gravel-road-to-nowhere-prompts-a-bill-in-congress/>.

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *Id.*

Secretary of the Interior to issue a right-of-way to Wintergreen for its emergency route upon the completion of any required environmental reviews.

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#), and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#).

Staff contacts: Aniel Butler (Aniela@mail.house.gov) and Hannah Devereaux (Hannah.Devereaux@mail.house.gov).

H.R. 4294 (Rep. Elfreth), “*Mitigation Action and Watermen Support Act of 2025*” or “*MAWS Act of 2025*”

Blue catfish were first introduced into Virginia’s river systems decades ago with the presumption that they would remain in freshwater ecosystems.³⁸ However, the catfish were able to tolerate higher salinity levels than anticipated and have since spread aggressively throughout the Chesapeake Bay (Bay) watershed.³⁹ There, catfish consume several native species, including blue crabs, American shad, and striped bass.⁴⁰

H.R. 4294 would establish a two-year pilot program within the Department of Commerce to support the commercial removal of invasive blue catfish in the Bay. The goal of this legislation is to direct NOAA, through its existing Chesapeake Bay Office, to coordinate with non-federal partners to accelerate the removal of invasive Blue Catfish from the Bay watershed.

An ANS will be introduced at markup. First, the ANS requires NOAA to enter into a memorandum of understanding with non-federal partners to develop abundance estimates of blue catfish in the Bay prior to initiating the pilot program. The ANS also directs NOAA to enter into cooperative agreements with watermen and seafood processors to ensure accountability and guardrails when providing financial assistance for the removal of catfish. The ANS also requires quarterly congressional briefings on the pilot program and a report to Congress on the pilot program’s effectiveness.

Information on the bill’s legislative hearing can be found [here](#), and the hearing memo can be found [here](#).

Staff contact: Kirby Struhar (Kirby.Struhar@mail.house.gov).

H.R. 5254 (Rep. Bell), “*Gateway Partnership Act of 2025*”

Gateway Arch National Park is Missouri’s most visited landmark, drawing over 2.4 million visitors annually.⁴¹ The Gateway Arch Park Foundation (Foundation) plays a central role in

³⁸ “Blue Catfish: Invasive and Delicious,” NOAA Fisheries, October 20, 2020. <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/bluecatfish-invasive-and-delicious>.

³⁹ *Id.*

⁴⁰ “Blue Catfish,” NOAA Fisheries, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/blue-catfish>.

⁴¹ “Gateway Arch National Park sees 2.4 million visitors in 2023,” National Park Service, February 29, 2024, <https://www.nps.gov/jeff/learn/news/gateway-arch-national-park-sees-2-4-million-visitors-in-2023.htm>.

maintaining and enhancing the park.⁴² Currently, NPS may issue permits for special events at the Arch but lacks clear statutory authority to enter into a formal agreement with the Foundation for recurring private use of park facilities.⁴³ This creates uncertainty around cost recovery and event management.

H.R. 5254 addresses this gap by authorizing NPS to formalize an agreement with the Foundation to host private events in Gateway Arch National Park buildings. Projections show that private events hosted under a formalized partnership could generate up to \$780,000 annually in new revenue for Gateway Arch National Park.⁴⁴ The bill allows NPS to recover all associated costs, protects park resources and public access, and provides liability safeguards for the federal government. An amendment is expected at markup addressing technical assistance from NPS.

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#), and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#).

Staff contacts: Aniela Butler (Aniela@mail.house.gov) and Hannah Devereaux (Hannah.Devereaux@mail.house.gov).

III. CBO SCORES

None available.

IV. EFFECT ON CURRENT LAW (RAMSEYER)

[H.R. 3073](#)

[H.R. 6365](#)

[H.R. 4294](#)

⁴² “Legacy”, Gateway Arch Park Foundation, <https://www.archpark.org/foundation/legacy>. Sarah Fenske, “CityArchRiver project made \$572M economic impact in 2024, report says,” St. Louis Magazine, June 23, 2025, <https://www.stlmag.com/news/cityarchriver-economic-impact/>.

⁴³ 36 CFR 2.50, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/chapter-I/part-2/section-2.50>.

⁴⁴ *Id.*