

Bill Tracking Report

102 Congress

102 Bill H.R. 5944

**Title:**

Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act of 1992

**Legislative Chamber:**

U.S. House of Representatives

**Sponsor:**

Peter Kostmayer (D-PA)

**Bill Cite:**

1992 Bill Tracking H.R. 5944; 102 Bill Tracking H.R. 5944

**Congress:**

102

**Date:**

October 30, 1992

**Bill:**

H.R. 5944

**Summary**

To designate certain public lands in the States of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming as wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, national park and preserve study areas, wild land recovery areas, and biological connecting corridors, and for other purposes.

**Actions**

- Referred to the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands.  
10/30/1992 Type of Action: Committee Consideration  
Action By: House Natural Resources  
Referred to the Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment.  
10/01/1992 Type of Action: Committee Consideration  
Action By: House Merchant Marine and Fisheries  
Referred to the Subcommittee on Forests, Family Farms, and Energy.  
09/24/1992 Type of Action: Committee Consideration  
Action By: House Agriculture  
Referred to the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.  
09/15/1992 Type of Action: Introduction and Referral  
Action By: House of Representatives  
Referred to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.  
09/15/1992 Type of Action: Introduction and Referral  
Action By: House of Representatives  
Referred to the House Committee on Agriculture.  
09/15/1992 Type of Action: Introduction and Referral  
Action By: House of Representatives  
Introduced in House  
09/15/1992 Type of Action: Introduction and Referral  
Action By: House of Representatives

**CRS Bill Digest**

Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act of 1992 - Designates the following lands in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming as wilderness and components of the National Wilderness Preservation System (System): (1) Greater Glacier/Continental Divide Ecosystem; (2) Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem; (3) Greater Salmon Ecosystem; (4) Greater Cabinet/Yaak/Selkirk Ecosystem;

(5) Sky Island Wilderness; (6) Rattlesnake Wilderness; and (7) Rattlesnake Wilderness Area. Adds specified lands to the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area.

Designates: (1) specified wild land areas as Biological Connecting Corridors (Corridors) to protect the life flow of the Northern Rockies Bioregion; and (2) the inventoried roadless areas identified as part of the Corridors as components of the System. Sets forth provisions for the management of those portions of the Corridor which are not designated as components of the System. Exempts specified roads and highways from the provisions of this Act.

Requires that roadless lands (including uninventoried roadless lands and areas less than 5,000 acres in size) within the national forests in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming which have been studied for potential inclusion in the System, but have not been designated as such, shall be analyzed on an individual, case-by-case basis with full public involvement. Requires the results of each case-by-case analysis and associated environmental analysis to be submitted to specified congressional committees so that the Congress may decide whether these areas should become components of the System to be managed for other, nonwilderness, multiple uses.

Directs the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary), acting through the Director of the National Park Service, to study the feasibility of: (1) creating a Hells Canyon/Chief Joseph National Park and Preserve; (2) creating a Flathead National Park and Preserve; and (3) designating such areas as units of the National Park System (NPS), including national park and national preserve designations to be administered by the National Park Service.

Requires the national park and preserve study areas to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture, until the Congress determines otherwise, to maintain their presently existing natural character and potential for inclusion in the NPS. Provides that, until the Congress determines otherwise, no new road construction or reconstruction, timber harvest (except firewood gathering), oil and gas leasing, mining, or other development which impairs the natural and roadless qualities of the study areas shall be allowed. Requires that special consideration be given to preserving scenery, water quality and fisheries habitat, biological diversity, and wildlife habitat for threatened and endangered species.

Amends the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate: (1) segments of specified rivers and creeks in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS); and (2) segments of specified rivers and creeks in Montana and Wyoming for study as potential addition to the NWSRS. Requires that: (1) such designated wild and scenic river areas be administered by the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to maintain their presently existing wild and scenic character and potential for inclusion in the NWSRS at their highest level of eligibility; and (2) the streambed and the lands one half mile wide along either side of the streambed of any river or stream included in the study be managed to protect their presently existing suitability for inclusion into the NWSRS as wild rivers. Prohibits new road construction or reconstruction, bridges, dams, timber harvesting, mining, oil and gas leasing, or other developments from being allowed within the one half mile corridor along either side of rivers and streams under study.

Establishes the National Wildland Restoration and Recovery System (Recovery System) to: (1) restore National Forest System lands and surrounding areas to their native vegetative cover and species diversity; (2) stabilize slopes and soils to prevent or reduce further erosion; (3) recontour slopes to their original contours; (4) remove barriers to natural fish spawning runs; and (5) generally restore, as much as possible, such lands to their natural condition as existed prior to their entry and development. Authorizes appropriations to establish the National Wildland Recovery Corps (a special unit of the U.S. Forest Service) which shall hire necessary personnel and purchase necessary equipment to carry out its land recovery responsibilities.

Designates certain lands within the Lewis and Clark National Forest known as Badger-Two Medicine Area as the Blackfeet Wilderness Area.

Declares that the Congress recognizes that the Blackfeet Nation retains treaty rights in this area provided for in the 1896 treaty with the Federal Government. Directs the Secretary of Agriculture to review the wilderness area and report to the Congress. Requires that special consideration shall be given to the religious, wilderness, and wildlife uses of the area, taking into account any Federal treaties entered into with the Blackfeet Nation.

Withdraws the Badger-Two Medicine Wilderness Area from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the mining laws and disposition under the geothermal and mineral leasing laws.

Authorizes appropriations to purchase certain privately owned lands located within the Gallatin Range inventoried roadless area to become part of the Gallatin National Forest. Requires that, upon purchase, the former owners shall relinquish all title, rights, and interests in such lands, including all mineral leases, Federal oil and gas leases, and water rights.

Authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into negotiations with private landowners within the greater boundaries of the Crazy Mountains Wilderness to determine a fair purchase price for the sections of private land located within the established Wilderness boundary.

Requires the Secretaries to assure nonexclusive access by native people to Wilderness areas, National Park and Preserve Study areas, Wildland Recovery areas, and Biological Corridors designated by this Act by Native Americans for transitional cultural and religious purposes.

Requires the Forest Service to enter into cooperative management agreements with the appropriate Indian tribes to assure protection of religious, burial, and gathering sites, and to work cooperatively on the management of all uses in the protected areas that affect Indian lands and people.

Requires the Secretaries to give particular emphasis to the preservation and protection of cultural resources located within the areas.

#### **CRS Index Terms**

Biological diversity conservation, Congressional reporting requirements, Conservation of natural resources, Cultural property, Data banks, Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection, Environmental monitoring, Environmental research, Executive reorganization, Federal-Indian relations, Forest roads, Idaho, Indian lands, Land transfers, Mines and mineral resources, Montana, Mountains, National forests, National parks, National recreation areas, Natural areas, Oregon, Public Lands and Natural Resources, Reclamation of land, Research natural areas, Revegetation, Washington State, Wild rivers, Wilderness areas, Wyoming