

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6216

To amend the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area Act to adjust the boundary of the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, to amend the Apex Project, Nevada Land Transfer and Authorization Act of 1989 to include the city of North Las Vegas, Nevada, and the Apex Industrial Park Owners Association, to clarify the authority of the Department of Defense to conduct certain military activities at the Nevada Test and Training Range, to designate the Southern Paiute Wilderness in the State of Nevada, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 3, 2023

Mr. HORSFORD (for himself and Ms. LEE of Nevada) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area Act to adjust the boundary of the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, to amend the Apex Project, Nevada Land Transfer and Authorization Act of 1989 to include the city of North Las Vegas, Nevada, and the Apex Industrial Park Owners Association, to clarify the authority of the Department of Defense to conduct certain military activities at the Nevada Test and Training Range, to designate the Southern Paiute Wilderness in the State of Nevada, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Promoting National
5 Security and Preserving Access to Public Land in South-
6 ern Nevada Act of 2023”.

7 **SEC. 2. SLOAN CANYON NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA**

8 **BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.**

9 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 (1) CONSERVATION AREA.—The term “Con-
11 servation Area” means the Sloan Canyon National
12 Conservation Area.

13 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
14 the Secretary of the Interior (acting through the Di-
15 rector of the Bureau of Land Management).

16 (b) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—

17 (1) MAP.—Section 603(4) of the Sloan Canyon
18 National Conservation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460qqq–
19 1(4)) is amended by striking “map entitled ‘South-
20 ern Nevada Public Land Management Act’ and
21 dated October 1, 2002” and inserting “map entitled
22 ‘Proposed Sloan Canyon Expansion’ and dated June
23 7, 2023”.

24 (2) ACREAGE.—Section 604(b) of the Sloan
25 Canyon National Conservation Area Act (16 U.S.C.

1 460qqq–2(b)) is amended by striking “48,438” and
2 inserting “57,728”.

3 (c) RIGHT-OF-WAY.—Section 605 of the Sloan Can-
4 yon National Conservation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460qqq–
5 3) is amended by adding at the end the following:

6 “(h) HORIZON LATERAL PIPELINE RIGHT-OF-
7 WAY.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding sections
9 202 and 503 of the Federal Land Policy Manage-
10 ment Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712, 1763) and sub-
11 ject to valid existing rights and paragraph (3), the
12 Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Direc-
13 tor of the Bureau of Land Management (referred to
14 in this subsection as the ‘Secretary’), shall, not later
15 than 1 year after the date of enactment of this sub-
16 section, grant to the Southern Nevada Water Au-
17 thority (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Author-
18 ity’), not subject to the payment of rents or other
19 charges, the temporary and permanent water pipe-
20 line infrastructure, and outside the boundaries of the
21 Conservation Area, powerline, facility, and access
22 road rights-of-way depicted on the map for the pur-
23 poses of—

24 “(A) performing geotechnical investigations
25 within the rights-of-way; and

1 “(B) constructing and operating water
2 transmission and related facilities.

3 “(2) EXCAVATION AND DISPOSAL.—

4 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Authority may,
5 without consideration, excavate and use or dis-
6 pose of sand, gravel, minerals, or other mate-
7 rials from the tunneling of the water pipeline
8 necessary to fulfill the purpose of the rights-of-
9 way granted under paragraph (1).

10 “(B) MEMORANDUM OF UNDER-
11 STANDING.—Not later than 30 days after the
12 date on which the rights-of-way are granted
13 under paragraph (1), the Secretary and the Au-
14 thority shall enter into a memorandum of un-
15 derstanding identifying Federal land on which
16 the Authority may dispose of materials under
17 subparagraph (A) to further the interests of the
18 Bureau of Land Management.

19 “(3) REQUIREMENTS.—A right-of-way issued
20 under this subsection shall be subject to the fol-
21 lowing requirements:

22 “(A) The Secretary may include reasonable
23 terms and conditions, consistent with section
24 505 of the Federal Land Policy and Manage-

1 ment Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1765), as are nec-
2 essary to protect Conservation Area resources.

3 “(B) Construction of the water pipeline
4 shall not permanently adversely affect conserva-
5 tion area surface resources.

6 “(C) The right-of-way shall not be located
7 through or under any area designated as wilder-
8 ness.”.

9 (d) PRESERVATION OF TRANSMISSION AND UTILITY
10 CORRIDORS AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY.—The expansion of the
11 Conservation Area boundary under the amendment made
12 by subsection (b)—

13 (1) shall be subject to valid existing rights, in-
14 cluding land within a designated utility transmission
15 corridor or a transmission line right-of-way grant
16 approved by the Secretary in a record of decision
17 issued before the date of enactment of this Act;

18 (2) shall not preclude—

19 (A) any activity authorized in accordance
20 with a designated corridor or right-of-way re-
21 ferred to in paragraph (1), including the oper-
22 ation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of
23 any authorized utility facility within the cor-
24 ridor or right-of-way; or

(i) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and other applicable laws; and

17 SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE APEX PROJECT, NEVADA
18 LAND TRANSFER AND AUTHORIZATION ACT
19 OF 1989.

20 (a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2(b) of the Apex Project,
21 Nevada Land Transfer and Authorization Act of 1989
22 (Public Law 101–67; 103 Stat. 169) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “As used in this Act, the following terms

1 shall have the following meanings—” and inserting
2 “In this Act:”;

3 (2) in each of paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5),
4 by inserting a paragraph heading, the text of which
5 comprises the term defined in that paragraph;

6 (3) in paragraph (3), by inserting “COUNTY;
7 CLARK COUNTY.—” before “The term”;

8 (4) in paragraph (6)—

9 (A) by inserting “FLPMA TERMS.—” be-
10 fore “All”; and

11 (B) by inserting “(43 U.S.C. 1701 et
12 seq.)” before the period at the end;

13 (5) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), (3),
14 (4), (5), and (6) as paragraphs (7), (6), (4), (5),
15 (2), and (8), respectively;

16 (6) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so re-
17 designated) the following:

18 “(1) APEX INDUSTRIAL PARK OWNERS ASSOCIA-
19 TION.—The term ‘Apex Industrial Park Owners As-
20 sociation’ means the Apex Industrial Park Owners
21 Association formed on April 9, 2001, and chartered
22 in the State of Nevada (including any successor in
23 interest).”; and

24 (7) by inserting after paragraph (2) (as so re-
25 designated) the following:

1 “(3) CITY.—The term ‘City’ means the city of
2 North Las Vegas, Nevada.”.

3 (b) KERR-MCGEE SITE TRANSFER.—Section 3(b) of
4 the Apex Project, Nevada Land Transfer and Authoriza-
5 tion Act of 1989 (Public Law 101–67; 103 Stat. 170) is
6 amended—

7 (1) in the first sentence—

8 (A) by striking “Clark County” and insert-
9 ing “Clark County, the City, or the Apex Indus-
10 trial Park Owners Association, individually or
11 jointly, as appropriate,”; and

12 (B) by striking “Site” and inserting “Site
13 and other land conveyed in accordance with this
14 Act”; and

15 (2) in the third sentence, by striking “Clark
16 County” and inserting “Clark County, the City, or
17 the Apex Industrial Park Owners Association, indi-
18 vidually or jointly, as appropriate.”.

19 (c) AUTHORIZATION FOR ADDITIONAL TRANS-
20 FERS.—Section 4 of the Apex Project, Nevada Land
21 Transfer and Authorization Act of 1989 (Public Law 101–
22 67; 103 Stat. 171) is amended—

23 (1) in subsection (c), by striking “Clark Coun-
24 ty” and inserting “Clark County, the City, or the

1 Apex Industrial Park Owners Association, individ-
2 ually or jointly, as appropriate,”; and

3 (2) in subsection (e), by adding at the end the
4 following:

5 “(3) MINERAL MATERIALS SALE.—Notwithstanding
6 the requirements of part 3600 of title 43, Code of Federal
7 Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this
8 paragraph), the Secretary may sell, at not less than fair
9 market value, without advertising or calling for bids and
10 without regard to volume or time limitations, mineral ma-
11 terials resulting from grading, land balancing, or other ac-
12 tivities on the surface of a parcel of land within the Apex
13 Site for which the United States retains an interest in the
14 minerals.”.

15 (d) ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS.—Section 6
16 of the Apex Project, Nevada Land Transfer and Author-
17 ization Act of 1989 (Public Law 101–67; 103 Stat. 173)
18 is amended by adding at the end the following:

19 “(d) COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESS-
20 MENTS.—Each transfer by the United States of land or
21 interest in lands within the Apex Site or rights-of-way
22 issued pursuant to this Act shall be conditioned on the
23 compliance with applicable Federal land laws, including
24 the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.

1 4321 et seq.) and the Federal Land Policy and Manage-
2 ment Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).”.

3 **SEC. 4. CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITY OF DEPARTMENT**
4 **OF DEFENSE TO CONDUCT CERTAIN MILI-**
5 **TARY ACTIVITIES AT NEVADA TEST AND**
6 **TRAINING RANGE.**

7 (a) SPECIFICATION OF AUTHORIZED MILITARY AC-
8 TIVITIES.—Paragraph (1) of section 3011(b) of the Mili-
9 tary Lands Withdrawal Act of 1999 (title XXX of the Na-
10 tional Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000;
11 Public Law 106–65; 113 Stat. 886) is amended—

12 (1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
13 by inserting “, subject to the conditions set forth in
14 subsection (a) of section 3014” after “Secretary of
15 the Air Force”;

16 (2) by striking “and” at the end of subpara-
17 graph (C);

18 (3) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as sub-
19 paragraph (G); and

20 (4) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the fol-
21 lowing new subparagraphs:

22 “(D) for emergency response;

23 “(E) for the establishment and use of ex-
24 isting or new electronic tracking and commu-
25 nications sites, including the construction of up

1 to 15 equipment pads, no larger than 150-by-
2 150 feet in size, along existing roads to allow
3 placement and operation of threat emitters;

4 “(F) for the use and maintenance of roads
5 in existence as of January 1, 2024, to allow ac-
6 cess to threat emitters and repeaters for instal-
7 lation, maintenance, and periodic relocation;
8 and”.

9 (b) INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE.—Section
10 3011(b)(5)(G), as added by paragraph (1) of section
11 2844(b) of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National De-
12 fense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law
13 116–283; 134 Stat. 4351), is further amended—

14 (1) by amending clause (i) to read as follows:

15 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of
16 the Interior and the Secretary of the Air
17 Force shall jointly establish an interagency
18 committee (referred to in this subpara-
19 graph as the ‘interagency committee’) to—

20 “(I) facilitate coordination, man-
21 age public access needs and require-
22 ments, and minimize potential conflict
23 between the Department of the Inter-
24 ior and the Department of the Air
25 Force with respect to joint operating

1 areas within the Desert National
2 Wildlife Refuge; and

3 “(II) discuss the activities au-
4 thorized in paragraph (1) and provide
5 input to the United States Fish and
6 Wildlife Service and the Department
7 of the Air Force when assessing
8 whether these activities may be con-
9 ducted on the joint operating areas
10 within the Desert National Wildlife
11 Refuge that are under the primary ju-
12 risdiction of the Secretary of the Inter-
13 rior in a manner that is consistent
14 with the National Wildlife Refuge
15 System Administration Act (16
16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.) and other appli-
17 cable law.”; and

18 (2) in clause (ii)—

19 (A) by inserting “, including a designee of
20 the Director of the United States Fish and
21 Wildlife Service” before the period at the end of
22 subclause (I); and

23 (B) by inserting “, including a designee of
24 the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for

1 Energy, Installations, and Environment” before
2 the period at the end of subclause (II).

(c) ADDITIONAL PURPOSE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—Section 3011(b)(H)(5)(ii), as
added by paragraph (2) of such section 2844(b), is amend-
ed in clause (ii)—

7 (1) by striking “and” at the end of subclause
8 (I);

13 “(III) discussing and making rec-
14 ommendations to the interagency com-
15 mittee established under subpara-
16 graph (G) with respect to any pro-
17 posal by the Secretary of the Air
18 Force to undertake any of the activi-
19 ties authorized in paragraph (1) on
20 the joint operating areas within the
21 Desert National Wildlife Refuge.”.

22 SEC. 5. DESIGNATION OF SOUTHERN PAIUTE WILDERNESS,

NEVADA.

24 (a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

1 (1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of the Interior.

3 (2) STATE.—The term “State” means the State
4 of Nevada.

5 (3) WILDERNESS AREA.—The term “wilderness
6 area” means the wilderness area designated by sub-
7 section (b)(1).

8 (b) ADDITION TO THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS
9 PRESERVATION SYSTEM.—

10 (1) DESIGNATION.—In accordance with the
11 Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), there is
12 designated as wilderness and as a component of the
13 National Wilderness Preservation System the ap-
14 proximately 736,188 acres of Federal land managed
15 by the Director of the United States Fish and Wild-
16 life Service in Clark and Lincoln Counties, Nevada,
17 to be known as the “Southern Paiute Wilderness”.

18 (2) BOUNDARY.—The boundary of any portion
19 of the wilderness area that is bordered by a road
20 shall be not less than 50 feet from the centerline of
21 the road.

22 (3) MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable
24 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-

1 retary shall prepare a map and legal description
2 of the wilderness area.

3 (B) EFFECT.—The map and legal descrip-
4 tion prepared under subparagraph (A) shall
5 have the same force and effect as if included in
6 this section, except that the Secretary may cor-
7 rect clerical and typographical errors in the
8 map or legal description.

9 (C) AVAILABILITY.—The map and legal
10 description prepared under subparagraph (A)
11 shall be on file and available for public inspec-
12 tion in the appropriate offices of the United
13 States Fish and Wildlife Service.

14 (4) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing
15 rights, the wilderness area is withdrawn from—

16 (A) all forms of entry, appropriation, and
17 disposal under the public land laws;

18 (B) location, entry, and patent under the
19 mining laws; and

20 (C) operation of the mineral leasing and
21 geothermal leasing laws.

22 (c) MANAGEMENT.—Subject to valid existing rights,
23 the wilderness area shall be administered by the Secretary
24 in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131
25 et seq.), except that—

1 (1) any reference in that Act to the effective
2 date of that Act shall be considered to be a reference
3 to the date of enactment of this Act; and

4 (2) any reference in that Act to the Secretary
5 of Agriculture shall be considered to be a reference
6 to the Secretary.

7 (d) INCORPORATION OF ACQUIRED LAND AND IN-
8 TERESTS IN LAND.—Any land or interest in land within
9 the boundary of the wilderness area that is acquired by
10 the United States after the date of enactment of this Act
11 shall be added to, and administered as part of, the wilder-
12 ness area.

13 (e) WATER RIGHTS.—

14 (1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

15 (A) the land designated as the wilderness
16 area—

17 (i) is within the Mojave Desert;
18 (ii) is arid in nature; and
19 (iii) includes ephemeral streams;

20 (B) the hydrology of the land designated
21 as the wilderness area is predominantly charac-
22 terized by complex flow patterns and alluvial
23 fans with impermanent channels;

(C) the subsurface hydrogeology of the region in which the land designated as the wilderness area is located is characterized by—

(i) groundwater subject to local and regional flow gradients; and

(ii) unconfined and artesian conditions;

(D) the land designated as the wilderness area is generally not suitable for use or develop-

(E) because of the unique nature and hydrology of the desert land in the wilderness area, it is possible to provide for proper management and protection of the wilderness area and other values of land in ways different from ways used in other laws.

17 (2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section—

(A) constitutes an express or implied reservation by the United States of any water or water rights with respect to the wilderness area;

(B) affects any water rights in the State
(including any water rights held by the United
States) in existence on the date of enactment of
this Act;

(C) establishes a precedent with regard to
any future wilderness designations;

(D) affects the interpretation of, or any designation made under, any other Act; or

14 (4) NEW PROJECTS.—

(ii) EXCLUSION.—In this paragraph,
the term “water resource facility” does not
include a wildlife guzzler.

4 (B) RESTRICTION ON NEW WATER RE-
5 SOURCE FACILITIES.—Except as otherwise pro-
6 vided in this section, on and after the date of
7 enactment of this Act, neither the President nor
8 any other officer, employee, or agent of the
9 United States shall fund, assist, authorize, or
10 issue a license or permit for the development of
11 any new water resource facility within the wil-
12 derness area.

13 (f) WILDFIRE, INSECTS, AND DISEASE.—In accord-
14 ance with section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C.
15 1133(d)(1)), the Secretary may take such measures in the
16 wilderness area as are necessary for the control of fire,
17 insects, and diseases (including, as the Secretary deter-
18 mines to be appropriate, the coordination of the activities
19 with a State or local agency).

20 (g) DATA COLLECTION.—Subject to such terms and
21 conditions as the Secretary may prescribe, nothing in this
22 section precludes the installation and maintenance of hy-
23 drologic, meteorological, or climatological collection de-
24 vices in the wilderness area, if the Secretary determines
25 that the devices and access to the devices are essential

1 to flood warning, flood control, or water reservoir oper-
2 ation activities.

3 (h) MILITARY OVERFLIGHTS.—Nothing in this sec-
4 tion restricts or precludes—

5 (1) low-level overflights of military aircraft over
6 the wilderness area, including military overflights
7 that can be seen or heard within the wilderness area;

8 (2) flight testing or evaluation; or

9 (3) the designation or creation of new units of
10 special use airspace or the establishment of military
11 flight training routes, over the wilderness area.

12 (i) WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with section
14 4(d)(7) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C.
15 1133(d)(7)), nothing in this section affects or dimin-
16 ishes the jurisdiction of the State with respect to
17 fish and wildlife management, including the regula-
18 tion of hunting, fishing, and trapping, in the wilder-
19 ness area.

20 (2) MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.—In furtherance
21 of the purposes and principles of the Wilderness Act
22 (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the Secretary may conduct
23 any management activities in the wilderness area
24 that are necessary to maintain or restore fish and

1 wildlife populations and the habitats to support the
2 populations, if the activities are carried out—

3 (A) consistent with relevant wilderness
4 management plans or comprehensive conserva-
5 tion plans; and

6 (B) in accordance with—

7 (i) the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C.
8 1131 et seq.); and

9 (ii) appropriate policies, including
10 policies authorizing the occasional and
11 temporary use of motorized vehicles, if the
12 use, as determined by the Secretary, would
13 promote healthy, viable, and more natu-
14 rally distributed wildlife populations that
15 would enhance wilderness values with the
16 minimal impact necessary to reasonably ac-
17 complish those tasks.

18 (3) EXISTING ACTIVITIES.—In accordance with
19 section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C.
20 1133(d)(1)), the State may continue to use aircraft
21 (including helicopters) to survey, capture, trans-
22 plant, monitor, and provide water for wildlife popu-
23 lations.

24 (4) WILDLIFE WATER DEVELOPMENT
25 PROJECTS.—Subject to subsection (e), the Secretary

1 shall authorize structures and facilities, including ex-
2 isting structures and facilities, for wildlife water de-
3 velopment projects, including guzzlers, in the wilder-
4 ness area if—

5 (A) the structures and facilities would, as
6 determined by the Secretary, enhance wilder-
7 ness values by promoting healthy, viable, and
8 more naturally distributed wildlife populations;
9 and

10 (B) the visual impacts of the structures
11 and facilities on the wilderness area can reason-
12 ably be minimized.

13 (5) HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may des-
15 ignate areas in which, and establish periods
16 during which, for reasons of public safety, ad-
17 ministration, or compliance with applicable
18 laws, no hunting, fishing, or trapping will be
19 permitted in the wilderness area.

20 (B) CONSULTATION.—Except in an emer-
21 gency, the Secretary shall consult with the ap-
22 propriate State agency and notify the public be-
23 fore taking any action under subparagraph (A).

24 (j) PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ACCESS.—The area
25 depicted as “Corn Creek / Alamo Road” on the map enti-

1 tled “Desert National Wildlife Range Proposed Southern
2 Paiute Wilderness Area” and dated September 7, 2023,
3 shall be preserved for public access.

4 (k) EFFECT OF ACT.—Nothing in this Act rescinds
5 or precludes the continued management of any other area
6 of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge as proposed wilder-
7 ness until the date on which the area is designated as a
8 component of the National Wilderness Preservation Sys-
9 tem by a subsequent Act of Congress.

10 **SEC. 6. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND STATE OF NE-**
11 **VADA COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.**

12 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
13 of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to
14 the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the
15 Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the
16 House of Representatives a report that describes the sta-
17 tus of the cooperative agreement authorized under section
18 2905(j)(6) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Au-
19 thorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–
20 263; 136 Stat. 3043).

