



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

June 14, 2002

H.R. 1576

James Peak Wilderness and Protection Area Act

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
on June 5, 2002*

H.R. 1576 would reclassify about 33,195 acres of lands within the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests located in Colorado and administered by the Forest Service. CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1576 would cost about \$600,000 over the next two years. The act could affect direct spending (including offsetting receipts); therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply, but we estimate that any such effects would not exceed \$15,000 per year. H.R. 1576 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

H.R. 1576 would designate as wilderness about 17,195 acres of federal lands within the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests in Colorado. The legislation also would designate 16,000 acres of other lands within those forests as the James Peak Protection Area and would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to acquire nonfederal lands within that area. Subject to valid existing rights, H.R. 1576 would withdraw federal lands within the proposed protection area from programs to develop mineral and geothermal resources and would prohibit timber harvesting within the area except under certain circumstances. Finally, the legislation would direct the Forest Service to establish a new trailhead and related facilities near the Fall River basin in Colorado, study the feasibility of connecting two existing trails, and implement the results of that study.

Based on information from the Forest Service, CBO estimates that designating the wilderness and protection areas would not significantly affect the agency's costs to manage those areas. We estimate that acquiring nonfederal lands within the proposed protection area would cost less than \$200,000 in 2003, assuming the availability of appropriated funds. We also estimate that building the new trailhead and related facilities would cost \$300,000 over the next two years, and that completing the trails feasibility study and implementing its recommendations would cost about \$100,000 in 2003.

Withdrawing lands within the proposed protection area from leasing and development and prohibiting timber harvesting on those lands could reduce offsetting receipts if, under current law, the lands are expected to generate income from those activities. Based on information from the Forest Service, we estimate that any such forgone receipts would not exceed \$15,000 a year.

On November 7, 2001, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 1576 as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on October 3, 2001. The two versions of H.R. 1576 are identical. Differences in the timing of spending reflect a change in our assumption regarding when the legislation will be enacted.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Megan Carroll. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.