

## H.R. 3397, WEST Act of 2023

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on June 21, 2023

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2024	2024-2028	2024-2033
Direct Spending (Outlays)	a	a	a
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	a	a	a
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	0	0
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	a	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes
		<b>Mandate Effects</b>	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	a	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
a. CBO has no basis on which to estimate the direct spending effects of enacting H.R. 3397.			

H.R. 3397 would direct the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to withdraw the proposed rule, “Conservation and Landscape Health,” as published in the *Federal Register* in April 2023.<sup>1</sup> The bill also would prohibit BLM from implementing any substantially similar rule.

Under the proposed regulation, BLM would lease federal land for conservation purposes to private entities or individuals in return for rent and other fees, which would be recorded in the budget as offsetting receipts (or reductions in direct spending). Some of those receipts would be available for spending without further appropriation. The proposed rule does not specify the amount of land that BLM would make available, and it does not define acceptable conservation practices for leased land, terms of leases, or fee structures. Rather, BLM requested public feedback to help inform its decisions about the nature of such leases.

CBO cannot determine the extent that conservation leases implemented under the proposed rule would affect land that under current law will generate receipts from other activities. (Some land under BLM’s jurisdiction generates receipts from the sale of timber or the mining of oil, natural gas, or other subsurface minerals.)

1. “Conservation and Landscape Health,” 88 Fed. Reg. 19583 (April 3, 2023), <https://tinyurl.com/54pv4w6j>.



CBO expects that prohibiting the proposed rule would have direct spending effects. The government would forgo receipts from the conservation leases but could gain receipts from activities that would not occur under those leases. However, CBO has no basis to estimate the magnitude or direction of those effects because they depend on still-undetermined provisions of the proposed conservation leases.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Lilia Ledezma. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phillip L. Swagel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail.

Phillip L. Swagel  
Director, Congressional Budget Office