



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

February 10, 2014

H.R. 2259 **North Fork Watershed Protection Act of 2014**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources
on January 28, 2014*

H.R. 2259 would withdraw 430,000 acres of federal lands in Montana from programs to develop geothermal and mineral resources. The affected lands, which lie adjacent to Glacier National Park, are already protected for wilderness values, and the proposed designation would not significantly affect the way they are managed. Based on information provided by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would have no significant impact on the federal budget. Enacting H.R. 2259 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

The bill would not affect valid, existing rights on the affected lands, including the rights of private entities to 39 oil and gas leases that have been suspended since 1985 because of litigation. BLM has not offered any new oil and gas leases on the affected lands since that litigation, and CBO does not expect any such leases to be offered in the next 10 years. In addition, based on information provided by BLM, CBO expects that no income would be derived from other activities on the affected lands over that period; therefore, we estimate that enacting H.R. 2259 would not affect direct spending.

H.R. 2259 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

On June 26, 2013, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 255, the North Fork Watershed Protection Act of 2013, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on June 18, 2013. The two bills are similar, and the CBO cost estimates are the same.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jeff LaFave. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.