



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

December 8, 2014

**S. 776
Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Act**

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
on November 13, 2014*

S. 776 would designate about 32,000 acres of federal land in New Mexico as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The bill also would require the Forest Service to convey, without consideration, four parcels of land totaling 43 acres to two municipalities in New Mexico. Finally, the bill would authorize the agency to sell two parcels of federal land totaling less than half an acre to two private entities.

Based on information regarding the cost of similar activities and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that establishing the new wilderness area and carrying out the land transactions required under the bill would cost less than \$500,000. Because the bill would authorize the Forest Service to retain and spend any proceeds from the sale of the affected lands, we estimate that enacting the bill would increase offsetting receipts and associated direct spending; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. However, we estimate that the total net proceeds from the authorized land sales would be minimal. Enacting S. 776 would not affect revenues.

The bill would authorize the Forest Service to sell 0.2 acres to a church and 0.1 acres to a private landowner in the town of Red River, New Mexico. Based on the value of similar lands in the area, CBO estimates that the proceeds from those sales would total less than \$100,000. Because the agency would be able to retain and spend those amounts under the bill, CBO estimates that enacting those provisions would have no significant net impact on direct spending over the 2015-2024 period. In addition, because none of the lands that would be designated as wilderness or conveyed to the municipalities currently produce any income and are not expected to do so in the future, we estimate that enacting those provisions would not affect direct spending.

S. 776 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would benefit the town of Red River and the village of Taos Ski Valley in New Mexico. Any costs to those entities resulting from the land conveyances would be incurred voluntarily.

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