Congressional Budget Office
Cost Estimate

February 3, 2020

H.R. 2642, Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on December 5, 2019

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2020	2020-2025	2020-2030
Direct Spending (Outlays)	*	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	*	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	14	not estimated

Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes	**Mandate Effects**	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2031?	< $5 billion	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

* = between zero and $500,000.

H.R. 2642 would designate roughly 130,000 acres of federal land in the Olympic National Forest in Washington as wilderness and would add 470 miles of river segments to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The bill would generally withdraw those areas from availability for commercial timber production.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted in fiscal year 2020. Under that assumption, the affected agencies could incur some costs in 2020, but CBO expects that most of the costs would be incurred in 2021 and later.

Using information from the Forest Service, CBO estimates that the agency would incur upfront costs averaging $400,000 for each of the 15 proposed wilderness designations. That amount includes costs to assess the areas for wilderness characteristics, develop and update management plans, and conduct boundary surveys. In addition, using information from the Forest Service and the National Park Service (NPS), CBO estimates that the agencies would incur upfront costs of $7 million to implement the wild and scenic river designations; most of that amount would be for boundary surveys. Finally, we estimate that the Forest Service and the NPS would spend $300,000 annually after 2021 for additional staff and rangers under the bill. In total, implementing H.R. 2642 would cost $14 million over the 2020-2025 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Income from timber production, the sale of forest products, and special use permits is classified in the budget as offsetting receipts, or reductions in direct spending. Under H.R. 2642, the federal government would forgo receipts because land would be unavailable for those purposes. However, CBO estimates that any increases in direct spending would be insignificant over the 2020-2030 period.

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