



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

December 6, 2018

S. 32

California Desert Protection and Recreation Act of 2018

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
on October 2, 2018*

SUMMARY

S. 32 would allow the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to spend past and future proceeds from the sale of certain lands in California to acquire lands owned by the state. The bill also would require BLM to establish a desert tortoise conservation center. In addition, the bill would direct BLM to develop plans to identify and conserve cultural resources of certain Indian tribes. Finally, the bill would designate some federal lands for conservation and recreation.

Using information from BLM and the General Services Administration (GSA), CBO estimates that enacting the legislation would increase direct spending by \$8 million over the 2019-2028 period; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. The bill would not affect revenues.

CBO also estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$15 million over the 2019-2023 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Those amounts would be used primarily to pay federal employees to carry out various provisions of the bill.

CBO estimates that enacting S. 32 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2029.

S. 32 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA).

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary effect of S. 32 is shown in the following table. The costs of the legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars											2019- 2023	2019- 2028
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
INCREASES IN DIRECT SPENDING													
Estimated Budget Authority	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
Estimated Outlays	1	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION													
Estimated Authorization Level	5	4	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	15
Estimated Outlays	5	4	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	15

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted near the start of 2019 and that the necessary amounts will be appropriated in each year.

Direct Spending

CBO estimates that enacting S. 32 would increase direct spending by \$8 million over the 2019-2028 period. The bill would authorize BLM to sell federal land to the state of California and deposit the proceeds into a special account that would be used to purchase other lands owned by the state. In addition, the bill would allow proceeds from certain sales that occurred in the past, which cannot be spent under current law, to be used to acquire other state lands. Using information provided by GSA, CBO estimates that the proceeds from past sales that could be spent under the bill would total \$8 million. Collections from future land sales and spending of those proceeds to acquire additional state lands would have no significant net effect on the budget.

Spending Subject to Appropriation

CBO estimates that implementing four provisions of S. 32 that authorize new activities would cost \$15 million over the 2019-2023 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Desert Tortoise Conservation Center. S. 32 would require the Department of the Interior (DOI) to establish, operate, and maintain a desert tortoise conservation center along the border of California and Nevada. The center would support research, monitoring, and rehabilitation of desert tortoises. Using information provided by DOI, CBO estimates that the cost of operating the facility and supporting research would total \$2 million a year.

Vinagre Wash Special Management Area. The bill would designate roughly 82,000 acres as the Vinagre Wash Special Management Area, and would direct BLM to complete a tribal cultural resources survey for the area. Based on the costs of similar activities, CBO estimates that conducting the fieldwork necessary to complete the survey and a management plan for the area would cost \$2 million over the 2019-2020 period.

Xam Kwatchan Trail Network Plan. S. 32 would direct BLM to develop and implement a plan to identify and conserve the cultural resources of Indian tribes associated with the Xam Kwatchan Trail network in California and Nevada. Using information from BLM, CBO estimates that conducting the fieldwork necessary to complete the plan would cost \$1 million over the 2019-2020 period.

Conservation Designations. The bill would make several designations under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Using information provided by DOI, CBO estimates that completing a comprehensive river management plan for each newly designated river would have a total cost of \$1 million.

Other Provisions. S. 32 also would designate roughly 330,000 acres of federal lands as wilderness, 154,000 acres as off-highway vehicle recreation areas, and 19,000 acres as the Alabama Hills National Conservation Area. Because those designations would not significantly affect the federal management of those lands, CBO estimates that implementing those provisions would have no significant effect on the federal budget.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. The net changes in outlays that are subject to those pay-as-you-go procedures are shown in the following table.

CBO Estimate of Pay-As-You-Go Effects for S. 32, the California Desert Protection and Recreation Act of 2018, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on October 2, 2018

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars											
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2019-2023	2019-2028
NET INCREASE IN THE DEFICIT												
Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Effect	1	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	8

INCREASE IN LONG-TERM DIRECT SPENDING AND DEFICITS

CBO estimates that enacting S. 32 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2029.

MANDATES

S. 32 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On November 19, 2018, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 857, the California Desert Protection and Recreation Act of 2018, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on October 2, 2018. S. 32 is similar to H.R. 857 and CBO's estimates of their budgetary effects are the same.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY

Federal Costs: Jacob Fabian

Mandates: Zachary Byrum

ESTIMATE REVIEWED BY

Kim P. Cawley

Chief, Natural and Physical Resources Cost Estimates Unit

H. Samuel Papenfuss

Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis