

June 10, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-230 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Chairman Manchin, and Ranking Member Barrasso,

The National Wildlife Federation supports the Bureau of Land Management’s proposed revisions to its Fluid Mineral Leases and Leasing Process (the Rule, commonly referred to as the “oil and gas rule”) and urges you and your colleagues to oppose the usage of the Congressional Review Act to prevent the implementation of and overturn the Rule.

The Rule formalizes implementation of provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act—landmark legislation that will help secure a fair return and process for taxpayers for oil and gas development on public lands. The Rule also ensures that companies responsible for development on public lands shoulder the cost of clean ups – not American taxpayers and nearby communities, counties, Tribes, and states. This rule is the culmination of years of review, debate, and dialogue to guarantee that leasing and development occurs in a transparent and fiscally responsible manner that also reduces the burden on the public to clean up the damage caused by abandoned oil and gas wells.

This Rule also reduces conflict between leasing and other uses of public lands essential to supporting resilient communities and healthy wildlife populations, ensuring that American traditions of ranching, hunting, fishing, outdoor recreation, and enjoyment of our nation’s abundant, natural resources can continue for generations to come.

Attached to this letter are our initial comments submitted to the Department of the Interior in support of their rulemaking process, which further outlines the basis for our support for the Rule.

We strongly support the Rule and urge you to not only oppose efforts to prevent its finalization, but to support its implementation. By supporting the BLM’s implementation of the Rule, you will help ensure a fair return for oil and gas produced on public lands, reduce the likelihood that American taxpayers will be responsible for covering the cost of clean-up, and avoid the potential impacts of oil and gas development on wildlife, hunting, fishing, grazing, agriculture, and restoration on public lands consistent with BLM’s multiple-use mandate.

Thank you for your work to balance uses on America's public lands and to fight for the communities that rely upon them.

Sincerely,

Arizona Wildlife Federation

Association of Northwest Steelheaders

Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future

Colorado Wildlife Federation

Conservation Coalition of Oklahoma

Conservation Federation of Missouri

H.E.C.H.O.

Kansas Wildlife Federation

Kentucky Waterways Alliance

Louisiana Wildlife Federation

Montana Wildlife Federation

National Wildlife Federation

Nevada Wildlife Federation

New Jersey Audubon

New Mexico Wildlife Federation

Sociedad Ornitologica Puertorriquena Inc

Texas Conservation Alliance

Utah Wildlife Federation