

A scenic landscape of mountains and a forested valley under a clear blue sky. The foreground shows a rocky, grassy slope. The middle ground is a dense forest of evergreen trees. The background features a range of rugged mountains with some snow patches on the peaks.

# Public Lands Workforce Stability Act

REPRESENTATIVES **JOE NEGUSE**  
AND **JARED HUFFMAN**

## Background

Over the past 15 months, the national public land agency personnel that work tirelessly to ensure the safety, accessibility, and management of our lands have been under attack. According to the Office of Personnel Management's 2025 data, public land agencies lost [17% of the federal workforce](#) across the country resulting in dire consequences for many of our country's natural treasures.

Currently, multiple "critical to life and property" functions and locations are left with little to no staffing, there have been [decreases in up to 24%](#) in some places of experts that work to ensure safety on public lands.

The data shows that workforce reductions have hit all federal land management agencies, resulting in the loss of specialists and experienced leaders, leaving them with insufficient resources.

## Legislation

This Public Lands Workforce Stability Act would prohibit Reductions in Force (RIFs) at the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service.

The bill would ensure a moratorium on RIFs until 2030 without the prior notification and approval of the chairs and ranking members of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

## Endorsements

The bill is endorsed by the *Conservation Lands Foundation, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, National Parks Conservation Association, Sierra Club, Grassroots Wildland Firefighters, Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, Trust for Public Land, and the Association of National Park Rangers.*

## Quotes

"Grassroots Wildland Firefighters support our nation's land management agencies and their critical mission. Our forests, parks and wildlands are at risk without a strong workforce. Thanks to Representative Neguse and congressional leaders for taking this step to ensure our land management agencies have the stable, experienced workforce they need to manage lands, respond to wildfires, and support communities," said **Bobbie Scopa, Executive Board Vice President, Grassroots Wildland Firefighters.**

“National Parks Conservation Association commends Representative Neguse for prioritizing National Park Service workforce at a moment when the agency is stretched to the brink. Devastating staffing cuts have left the Park Service unable to fully protect and preserve our national parks. And millions of visitors are already paying the price, enduring longer lines, fewer ranger programs and shuttered facilities,” said **John Garder, Senior Director of Budget and Appropriations for NPCA**. “Park staff are the heartbeat of our national parks. Without essential staff in our parks and the support offices that keep them up and running, trails crumble, stories go untold, priceless resources are put at risk, and visitor experience and safety suffer. Supporting Park Service staff isn’t optional, it’s essential. We applaud Rep. Neguse for recognizing that and for standing up for our parks by championing this bill.”

“America’s parks and public lands depend on the dedicated public servants who keep them safe, accessible, and well-managed. Unfortunately, years of deep reductions in staffing have left critical positions vacant and strained the ability of agencies to serve the American public. We applaud Congressman Neguse for his leadership to reinstate a moratorium on Reductions in Force that will help protect the workforce that stewards our nation’s lands and supports local economies for the benefit of current and future generations,” said **Myke Bybee, Senior Director of Government Relations for Trust for Public Land**.

“Our parks are in crisis. They are understaffed and under-resourced. Since the start of the Trump Administration, the NPS has lost nearly 25% of its staff. Those who remain are being asked to do more with less. It is a dangerous and unsustainable situation. This legislation will help stop the bleeding and provide much-needed relief to NPS staff,” said **Emily Thompson, Executive Director, Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks**.

“With the 'fork in the road' offers, arbitrary mass firings of probationary employees, and a hiring pause, the National Park Service has been stretched to a breaking point. Now, with his announcement of another deferred resignation offer, Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum has made it clear that he wants to cripple an already struggling National Park Service,” said **Bill Wade, the Executive Director of the Association of National Park Rangers**. “If Congress values our national parks and the people who protect them, then it will reinstate the moratorium on reductions in workforce.”

“For far too long, Congress has not provided our land management agencies, especially the Bureau of Land Management, with the funding necessary to maintain the staffing needed to perform their essential work managing our public lands. The last thing this, or any administration, should be doing is reducing the number of people who work for the BLM and other land management agencies. Conservation Lands Foundation supports this critical legislation to prohibit reductions in force and involuntary separations for these agencies,

and applauds Rep. Neguse for leading this important effort," said **David Feinman, Vice President of Government Affairs, Conservation Lands Foundation.**

"Our public lands are part of what makes this country great. Chaotically firing the workers responsible for protecting these treasured forests, mountains, landscapes, and waters is dangerous and irresponsible. We've seen the damage caused by Elon Musk and DOGE, and additional cuts would further jeopardize public safety, threaten our ecosystems, and put the future of our shared outdoor spaces and communities at risk. Rep. Neguse's bill would protect these workers and the critical work they perform to protect our public lands and waters for the next generation. Sierra Club urges Congress to act now to protect our public lands and the communities that depend on them by supporting this critical legislation," said **Athan Manuel, Director, Lands Protection Program for the Sierra Club.**

"If we want our public lands and waters to stay accessible, productive, and resilient, we need a strong workforce on the ground to manage them. We've already seen the impact of staffing losses across the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service—less capacity for habitat work, wildfire preparedness, and responsible use of these landscapes. That's not a path forward. The people managing our public lands are essential to keeping them healthy and open—for hunters, anglers, ranchers, grazers, and rural communities. Investing in that workforce is one of the most practical, effective ways to ensure these places endure. We appreciate members of Congress working to prevent further reductions in force and support fully staffed land management agencies. That's how we sustain our public lands, waters, and wildlife for the long haul," said **Ryan "Cal" Callaghan, President and CEO, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers.**