



Rescission of Conservation Land Use Rule

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Action: On September 10, the Administration [proposed rescinding](#) the [2024 Public Lands Conservation Rule](#), which currently gives conservation equal standing with energy, grazing, timber, and mining as defined “uses” of Federal lands. The Department of the Interior [argues](#) the rule restricts development and adds compliance burdens. The proposed rescission restores a “balanced multiple use” framework, designed to open Federal lands to greater commercial activity and provide more predictable permitting for industries such as energy, agriculture, and timber wishing to use Federal lands. The Department is [accepting](#) public comments until November 10.

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- The proposal seeks to eliminate conservation as a standalone “use” under the [Federal Land Policy and Management Act](#), reversing the 2024 [rule](#) that elevated leases of Federal lands for conservation to equal footing with energy, grazing, timber, and mining. Interior officials have criticized the rule as amounting to a “backdoor land grab” by allowing conservation to displace development. In practice, the rescission would restrict the ability of conservation groups to bid on leases or secure protections independent of commercial activities, effectively shifting Federal land management toward other uses, including recreational and economic uses.
- This proposal follows similar actions the Department has taken on conservation policy. Earlier in the month, Secretary Doug Burgum issued [Secretarial Order 3442](#), limiting how [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#) (LWCF) dollars may be spent. The order prioritizes acquisitions for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park

Service, while reducing acquisitions by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Order also requires approval from state governors and local leaders for any LWCF purchases, restricts nonprofit participation, and permits the sale of some Federal lands to states.

- The proposed rescission also fits into a wider set of directives reshaping Federal land policy. On their first day in office, the Administration’s Executive Order on [Unleashing American Energy](#) directed Interior and Agriculture to open federal lands and the Outer Continental Shelf to expanded energy and mineral exploration and to reassess prior land withdrawals, along with a similar [Order](#) targeting Alaska.
- In February, Interior began a [review](#) of national monument boundaries, raising the prospect of shrinking designations for these Federally-protected lands. In March, the President issued an Executive Order for the [Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production](#), declaring a forest “emergency” to increase timber harvests by 25 percent while expediting environmental reviews. Most recently, the President established the [Make America Beautiful Again Commission](#) was to coordinate conservation, recreation, and economic growth strategies, with a strong emphasis on deregulation and private-sector involvement.
- Conservation groups have [criticized](#) the proposed land use rule, arguing that it would place almost 245 million acres of land managed by the BLM ineligible for conservation efforts in favor of extractive industries and [undermine](#) efforts to address climate change.

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