



Congressional Western Caucus
Year in Review 2017

Chairman Paul A. Gosar

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I. New Chairman



When Congressman Paul Gosar was elected Chairman, he did so under the promises to **1)** grow membership and establish a strong executive leadership team, **2)** continue education and engagement-building trips and meetings, **3)** draft legislation and amendments and provide other legislative support for CWC members, **4)** grow the CWC brand on social media and broaden its influence in Congress, and **5)** pass caucus bylaws governing caucus structure and decision-making.

In the pages to follow, you will see that the Western Caucus accomplished all this and much more during Chairman Gosar's first year.

As a result, the CWC is positioned to be an even bigger player across the Congressional landscape in 2018.

This has only been made possible by the engagement and diligence of our Members and staff. Thank you for helping make this year a major success.

This year, the Western Caucus was on 

TOP 20 2017 Highlights:

- 1) [Recruited 37 new dues-paying members and increased membership to 72 members.](#)
- 2) [Spearheaded introduction of 14 Congressional Review Act bills that rolled back Obama regulations; 3 were signed into law, and 7 were acted on by the Administration.](#)
- 3) [Secured additional \\$576.5 million for wildfires and active forest management language.](#)
- 4) [Led efforts by Congress to scrap the 10-million-acre Sage Grouse mineral withdrawal.](#)
- 5) [Blocked the Obama Administration's power-grabbing BLM Planning 2.0 rule via law.](#)
- 6) [Passed active forest management legislation through the House.](#)
- 7) [Redirected \\$32.5 million from EPA bureaucracy to abandoned mine reclamation efforts.](#)
- 8) [Prevented a new "dirt tax" and new fees for hardrock mining in President's budget.](#)
- 9) [Blocked an Obama rule by law that harmed hunting and wildlife management in Alaska.](#)
- 10) [Passed legislation through the House to prevent a 425,000-acre Obama land grab in MN.](#)
- 11) [Led Congressional efforts to cancel Obama's Clean Power Plan.](#)
- 12) [Prevented funds for the Obama Administration's EPA Methane rule.](#)
- 13) [Passed legislation through the House to block Obama's BLM Venting and Flaring rule.](#)
- 14) [Led efforts on monument review that shrunk footprint in Utah by over 2 million acres.](#)
- 15) [Spearheaded Congressional efforts to repeal Obama's job-killing Fracking rule.](#)
- 16) [Passed provision into law to open up Section 1002 of ANWR for energy production.](#)
- 17) [Prevented the sale off the transmission assets of PMAs within DOE.](#)
- 18) [Led Congressional efforts to scrap Obama's duplicative EPA CERCLA rule.](#)
- 19) [Prevented funds for the Obama Administration's Social Cost of Carbon rule.](#)
- 20) [Led efforts by Congress to end "sue and settle" practices within the EPA.](#)

Other Caucus Milestones in 2017:

- 1) Passed Caucus bylaws at first member meeting – a campaign promise kept.
- 2) Established monthly Member meeting with outside speakers including Secretaries Zinke and Perdue, Administrator Pruitt, Director Mulvaney and Chief Tooke. Catered lunch provided.
- 3) Drafted 26 unique amendments to Interior section of FY'18 approps; 13 were made in order by Rules Committee and 10 were successfully passed and attached to the bill.
- 4) Created weekly newsletter.
- 5) Established weekly Member video address.
- 6) Designed and launched completely redesigned Caucus website
- 7) Issued 74 press releases featuring a total of 505 unique quotes from Caucus members.
- 8) Launched Caucus Instagram page.
- 9) Western Caucus Member Zinke confirmed as Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

II.

Membership

WESTERN CAUCUS LEADERSHIP



REP. PAUL GOSAR
Chairman
(AZ-04)



REP. SCOTT TIPTON
Executive Vice-Chairman
(CO-03)



REP. MARK AMODEI
*Vice-Chairman for Policy
and Appropriations*
(NV-02)



REP. DON YOUNG
*Vice-Chairman for Indian
Affairs and Oceans*
(AK-At Large)



REP. ROB BISHOP
Chairman Emeritus
(UT-01)



REP. STEVE PEARCE
Chairman Emeritus
(NM-02)



REP. DAN NEWHOUSE
Chief Rules Officer
(WA-04)



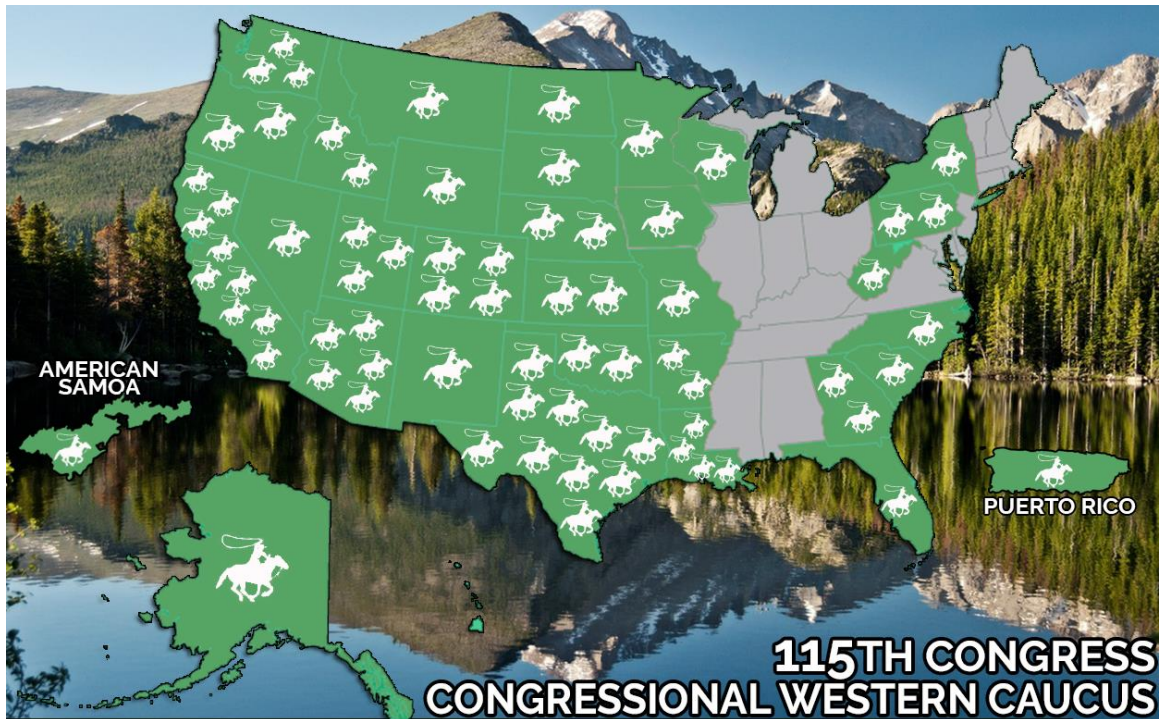
**REP. DAVID
SCHWEIKERT**
Chief Budget Officer
(AZ-08)



REP. CHRIS STEWART
*Chief Defense and
Interior Officer*
(UT-02)



**REP. BRUCE
WESTERMAN**
*Chief Infrastructure and
Forestry Officer*
(AR-04)



Full Membership List (72 total)

Ralph Abraham (LA-05)	Louie Gohmert (TX-01)	Dan Newhouse (WA-04)
Mark Amodei (NV-02)	Jennifer González-Colón (PR-At Large)	Kristi Noem (SD-At Large)
Brian Babin (TX-36)	Paul Gosar (AZ-04)	Steve Pearce (NM-02)
Don Bacon (NE-02)	Garret Graves (LA-06)	Aumua Amata Radewagen (AS-At Large)
Andy Biggs (AZ-05)	Greg Gianforte (MO-At Large)	Tom Reed (NY-23)
Rob Bishop (UT-01)	Jamie Herrera Beutler (WA-03)	Dennis Ross (FL-15)
Jim Bridenstine (OK-01)	Jody Hice (GA-10)	Paul Ryan (WI-01)
Ken Buck (CO-04)	Duncan Hunter (CA-50)	Steve Scalise (LA-01)
Michael Burgess (TX-26)	Lynn Jenkins (KS-02)	Kurt Schrader (OR-05)
Ken Calvert (CA-42)	Mike Johnson (LA-04)	David Schweikert (AZ-06)
Liz Cheney (WY-At Large)	Walter Jones (NC-03)	Pete Sessions (TX-32)
Mike Coffman (CO-06)	Mike Kelly (PA-03)	Mike Simpson (ID-02)
Doug Collins (GA-09)	Steve King (IA-04)	Adrian Smith (NE-03)
Mike Conaway (TX-11)	Raul Labrador (ID-01)	Jason Smith (MO-08)
Paul Cook (CA-08)	Doug LaMalfa (CA-01)	Lamar Smith (TX-21)
Kevin Cramer (ND-At Large)	Doug Lamborn (CO-05)	Chris Stewart (UT-02)
Rick Crawford (AR-01)	Mia Love (UT-04)	Glenn Thompson (PA-05)
John Culberson (TX-07)	Roger Marshall (KS-01)	Scott Tipton (CO-03)
Jeff Denham (CA-10)	Kevin McCarthy (CA-23)	David Valadao (CA-21)
Jeff Duncan (SC-03)	Tom McClintock (CA-04)	Greg Walden (OR-02)
Tom Emmer (MN-06)	Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-05)	Mimi Walters (CA-45)
Blake Farenthold (TX-27)	Martha McSally (AZ-02)	Randy Weber (TX-14)
Bill Flores (TX-17)	Alex Mooney (WV-02)	Bruce Westerman (AR-04)
Trent Franks (AZ-02)	Markwayne Mullin (OK-02)	Don Young (AK-At Large)

III. CRAs & Interior Approps

This year, the Caucus focused its major legislative pushes on a flurry of CRAs earlier in the year, as well as substantial amendment drafting, distribution, support and whipping during consideration of the Interior section of the FY '18 House Appropriations package.

CRAs

ROLLING BACK OBAMA'S REGULATIONS using THE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT			
H.J.RES.36 - BLOCKS BLM VENTING AND FLARING RULE	PASSED HOUSE 2/3/17	H.J.RES.38 - BLOCKS OSM STREAM PROTECTION RULE	SIGNED INTO LAW 2/16/17
H.J.RES.44 - BLOCKS BLM PLANNING 2.0 RULE	SIGNED INTO LAW 3/27/17	H.J.RES.45 - BLOCKS USFWS OIL AND GAS REFUGE RULE	EXEC. ACTION 3/29/17
H.J.RES.46 - BLOCKS NPS OIL AND GAS RULE	EXEC. ACTION 3/29/17	H.J.RES.59 - BLOCKS EPA RMP RULE	EXEC. ACTION 3/13/17
H.J.RES.60 - BLOCKS USFWS COMPENSATORY MITIGATION POLIC	EXEC. ACTION 3/29/17	H.J. RES. 69 - BLOCKS USFWS RULE RESTRICTING STATE HUNTING & WILDLIF	SIGNED INTO LAW 4/3/17
H.J.RES.70 - BLOCKS DOI ARCTIC DRILLING RULE	EXEC. ACTION 4/28/17	H.J.RES.71 - BLOCKS ONRR'S FEDERAL MINERAL PRODUCTION VALUATION RULE	EXEC. ACTION 4/3/17

@WESTERNCAUCUS

The Western Caucus hit the ground running in the new Congress [introducing a package of 14 bills](#) on the first day possible to overturn job-killing rules from the Obama Administration utilizing the Congressional Review Act (CRA). In total,

the House passed 15 CRA bills, four of which were spearheaded by the Western Caucus. Seven other overreaching regulations targeted by the Western Caucus through legislation have subsequently been addressed by executive action.

Raúl R. Labrador @Raul_Labrador · Feb 7
Another blow to Obama midnight rules. House votes to repeal BLM rules minimizing input from those closest to the ground.

ROLLING BACK OBAMA'S REGULATIONS:
H.J.RES.44: ENDS BLM'S PLANNING 2.0 RULE

- ✗ Limits local and state input into land management decisions
- ✗ Kills jobs and creates unnecessary permitting delays
- ✗ Centralizes power to bureaucrats in Washington, D.C.

@WESTERNCAUCUS

H.J. Res. 44, a Congressional Review Act bill by **Rep. Liz Cheney (WY-At Large)**, blocked BLM's Planning 2.0 Rule and was signed into public law on 3/27/17.

Planning 2.0 changed the BLM's resource management planning process and introduced significant uncertainty

by creating ambiguous standards and expanding agency discretion. Planning 2.0 took planning decisions away from local communities and centralized those decisions with bureaucrats in Washington D.C., allowing radical special interests the same influence as county and local officials in developing Resource Management Plans. Killing this overreaching rule was a huge win for the Western Caucus and **Rep. Cheney**.



H.J. Res. 69, a Congressional Review Act bill by **Rep. Don Young (AK-At Large)**, overturned a final rule issued by Fish and Wildlife Service that restricted hunting and wildlife management in Alaska and was signed into law on 4/3/17.

On August 5, 2016, the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released a final rule that fundamentally undermined Alaska's authority – outlined in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and the Alaska Constitution – to manage fish and wildlife on state, private and federal lands. The rule applied broadly to 16 federal wildlife refuges in Alaska, amounting to 76.8 million acres or 20 percent of the state, and seized management authority away from the State of Alaska for both non-subsistence and subsistence uses. Congress rejected this fundamentally flawed regulation in another decisive win for the Caucus and **Rep. Young**.

In total, President Trump has signed 14 CRA bills into public law. The [American Action Forum](#) estimates that these bills will "save \$1.1 billion annually and eliminate 4.2 million hours of paperwork." The White House estimated that 11 of the CRA bills signed into law will save our economy more than \$10 billion over a 20-year period. These CRAs coupled with other Administration-wide deregulatory efforts contributed to an overall cutting of the number of pages in the Federal Register [by 32 percent by the 10th month](#) of Trump's Presidency.

Interior Approps

Programmatic & language request letters

The Western Caucus attacked every aspect of the appropriations process this year. This includes authoring dozens of programmatic and member language letters in early March to get our members' priorities into base appropriations bill texts. Caucus-drafted requests were offered on a first-come, first-serve basis, with Chairman Gosar submitting priorities

other members didn't select. The 27 requests submitted by our members for the Fiscal Year 2018 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill are below. Click on the hyperlink to view the signed request:

- [Western Caucus Member Marshall and Chairman Gosar lead effort to prevent funds for the Obama Administration's Waters of the United States \(WOTUS\) rule.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Flores and Reps. Olson and Latta lead language request to harmonize EPA's 2008 and 2015 ozone standards.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Cramer leads language request to prevent funds for carrying out the Obama Administration's Clean Power Plan.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Bruce Westerman leads language request to include healthy forest management provisions in FY18 bill.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member McSally leads programmatic request to ensure the Secure Rural Schools program is fully-funded in FY18.](#)
- [Western Caucus Members Cramer and Pearce lead language request to prevent funds for carrying out the Obama Administration's EPA and BLM's methane rules.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Biggs leads programmatic request that reduces EPA's enforcement budget by 20%.](#)
- [Chairman Emeritus Pearce, Vice-Chairman Tipton and Western Caucus Member Lamborn seek to prevent funds for Obama's ONRR Valuation Rule that siphon royalties from oil, gas, and coal producers.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Jason Smith leads language request to prevent funds for carrying out CEQ's NEPA Guidance.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Emmer leads effort to prevent funds for carrying out the Obama Administration's 240,000 acre land grab in MN.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar seeks to prevent funds to list the Sage Grouse as an Endangered Species and to prevent massive 10 million acre mineral withdrawal.](#)
- [Western Caucus Vice-Chairman Tipton seeks to prohibit government agencies from circumventing state law and encroaching on private water rights.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Emeritus Pearce seeks to prevent funds for carrying out the Obama Administration's Onshore Orders 3, 4, and 5.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Mullin leads language request to prevent funds for the Obama Administration's EPA RMP rule.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Biggs leads language request to ensure hunting, fishing and sporting access on federal lands.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar and Rep. Polis lead bipartisan programmatic request to ensure the Payments in Lieu of Taxes \(PILT\) program is fully-funded.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Biggs leads language request to prevent funds for implementing the Obama Administration's EPA CERCLA rule.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Emeritus Pearce leads language request to prevent funds for carrying out the Obama Administration's hydraulic fracturing rule.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar leads effort to prevent funds to list the Gray Wolf in any of the 48 contiguous states.](#)
- [Western Caucus Member Jason Chaffetz leads language request to prevent funds for carrying out the Obama Administration's federal coal lease moratorium.](#)

- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar and Chairman Emeritus Pearce seek to allow for a viable state-based approach for Mexican wolf recovery efforts.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar seeks to prevent funds for carrying out EPA'S Protecting Aquatic Life from Effects of Hydrologic Alteration Guidance.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar seeks to prevent funds for carrying out massive, unilateral national monument designations under the Antiquities Act.](#)
- [Western Chairman Emeritus Pearce leads language request to prevent funds for carrying out a listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar leads language request to prohibit funds for the Social Cost of Carbon in any rulemaking or guidance document.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar leads programmatic request to require coordination and provide resources for tamarisk removal.](#)
- [Western Caucus Chairman Gosar leads language request to require updated inventory of lands identified for disposal.](#)

Caucus amendments – introduction & passage

In August, the Caucus produced 26 amendment drafts containing both summaries and draft language, and identified 7 other amendment ideas based on previously passed legislation which could also be suitable for introduction. The Caucus notified Member offices of the opportunity to select & introduce the amendments noted above on a first-come, first-serve basis. Member engagement was substantial.

Overall, 13 of the 47 Republican amendments made in order by Rules Committee for the Interior section of the 8-bill Appropriations package were Western Caucus-drafted language. Of these, 10 passed the House. including: **Mullin [369](#); Mullin [368](#); Pearce [360](#); Pearce [63](#); Westerman [353](#); Thompson [338](#); McSally [336](#); McSally [1](#); McSally [28](#); Emmer [70](#)**; We were happy to assist our members in scoring key legislative wins.

The above, in addition to the Caucus' substantial role interfacing with Members, Committees and Leadership to message and whip on votes easily represents the largest legislative role played by the CWC during an appropriations package in recent memory.



IV. Other Legislative Victories

H.R. 2936 - Resilient Federal Forests Act **Rep. Bruce Westerman (AR-04)**



- On 11/1/17, the House passed **Rep. Westerman's** Resilient Federal Forests Act.

- H.R. 2936 is bipartisan, comprehensive legislation that simplifies the cumbersome planning process

and reduces the cost of implementing proactive forest management strategies in order to improve forest health throughout the country.

- It empowers local stakeholders and decision-making while advancing a forward-thinking active management strategy to combat wildfires before they get started.
- The Caucus organized a special order, participated in a press conference, recruited speakers for debate, provided a substantive legislative analysis, produced multiple graphics, put out multiple press releases and recruited more than 20 endorsements to assist with passage of this important bill.

H.R. 3905 - the MINER Act **Rep. Tom Emmer (MN-06)**

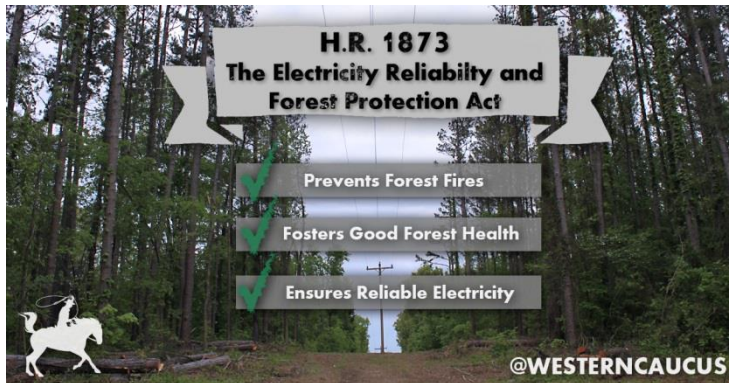


- On 11/30/17, the House passed **Rep. Emmer's** MINER Act.
- H.R. 3905 rejected a last minute land grab by the Obama Administration that would harm mineral production, kill jobs and decimate education revenues.
- The bill protects 17,000 jobs, \$3 billion for education, \$1.5 billion in annual wages and \$2.5 billion annually.
- The Caucus and Chairman organized a

trip to Minnesota to see these issues firsthand, participated in a press conference, held a legislative hearing, recruited speakers for debate, authored floor speeches,

- provided a substantive legislative analysis, produced multiple graphics, helped author a substantive myth vs. fact page, put out multiple press releases, authored multiple dear colleagues, encouraged leadership to put this bill on the floor and helped recruit more than 60 endorsements to assist with passage of H.R. 3905.
- The bill passed by 12 votes and Western Caucus played a key role in this victory.

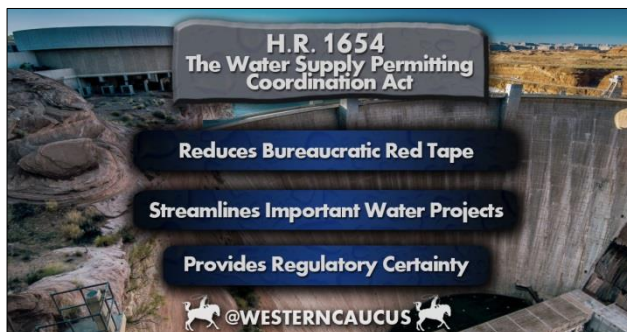
H.R. 1873 - The Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act of 2017
Rep. Doug LaMalfa (CA-01)



- On 6/21/17, the House passed **Rep. LaMalfa's H.R. 1873.**
- H.R. 1873 reduces fire risks and hazards as well as ensures reliable electricity service by allowing management of high-risk vegetation in close proximity to power

- lines to occur in and near certain federal rights-of-way (ROW).
- The bill promotes federal land management agency consistency, accountability, and timely decision-making as it relates to protecting electricity transmission and distribution lines and habitat on federal lands.
- The Caucus recruited speakers for debate, authored floor speeches, provided a substantive legislative analysis, produced graphics, put out a press release and secured 19 of the 29 endorsements to assist with passage of this important bill.
- The bill passed with 300 votes.

H.R. 1654 - the "Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act"
Rep. Tom McClintock (CA-04)



- On 6/22/17, the House passed **Rep. McClintock's H.R. 1654.**
- The bill creates a "one-stop" permitting process for new water storage projects in 17 Western states and tasks the Bureau of Reclamation as being the lead agency.
- The regulatory process of constructing new surface water storage -- whether federally or non-federally owned -- often involves a host of federal, state, and local permits and approvals from various agencies.

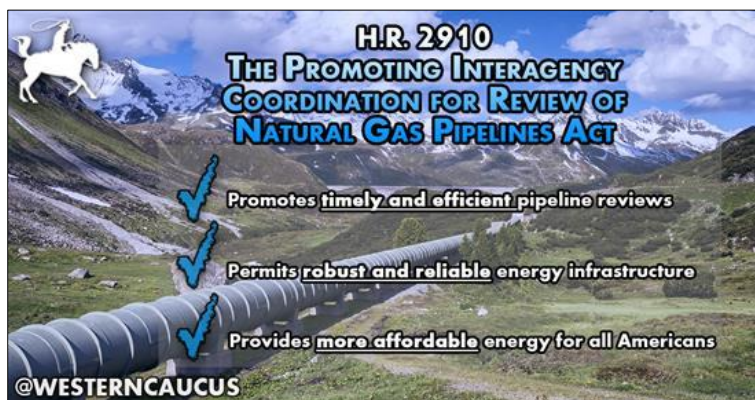
- The Caucus recruited speakers for debate, provided a substantive legislative analysis, produced graphics, put out a press release and secured 14 of the 20 endorsements to assist with passage of H.R. 1654.

H.R. 23 - the “Gaining Responsibility on Water (GROW) Act”
Rep. David Valadao (CA-21)



- On 7/12/17, the House passed **Rep. Valadao’s** H.R. 23.
- The GROW Act amends the Central Valley Project Improvement Act and the San Joaquin River Restoration Act, codifies the Bay-Delta Accord, allows for increased water storage, creates a one-stop permitting process, and prevents federal thieveries of private water rights.
- Further, H.R. 23 streamlines regulations and improves policy governing the movement, use, allocation and storage of water in the Western United States.
- The Caucus recruited speakers for debate, provided a substantive legislative analysis, generated graphics and put out a press release to assist with passage of the bill.

H.R. 2910 - the “Promoting Interagency Coordination for Review of Natural Gas Pipelines Act”
Rep. Bill Flores (TX-17)

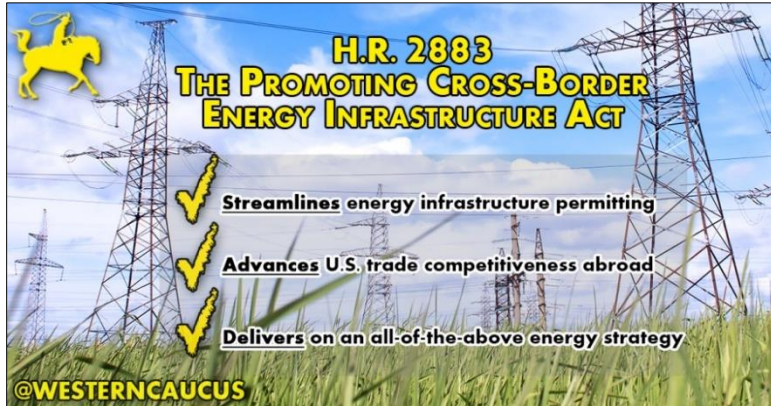


- On 7/19/17, the House passed **Rep. Flores’s** H.R. 2910.
- H.R. 2910 streamlines the permitting process for natural gas pipelines and tasks the Federal

- Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) as being the lead agency.
- The Caucus recruited speakers for debate, provided a substantive legislative analysis, produced graphics, put out a press release and secured endorsements to assist with passage of this bill.

H.R. 2883 – “Promoting Cross-Border Energy Infrastructure Act”

Rep. Markwayne Mullin (OK-02)



- On 7/19/17, the House passed **Rep. Mullin’s H.R. 2883.**

- H.R. 2883 modernizes and streamlines the process by which permits are issued for the construction, connection,

- operation, and maintenance of international border-crossing facilities pertaining to oil and natural gas transport as well as energy transmission.
- The bill also ensures that permitting decisions follow a standardized review process instead of a subjective, one-page document. The Keystone XL pipeline is an example of a project which, because it was subjectively deemed by the Obama Administration not to “serve the national interest,” was denied without explanation.
- The Caucus recruited speakers for debate, provided a substantive legislative analysis, produced graphics and put out a press release to assist with passage of H.R. 2883.

H.R. 3043 - the “Hydropower Policy Modernization Act of 2017”

Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-05)



- On 11/8/17, the House passed **Rep. McMorris Rodgers’ H.R. 3043.**

- This legislation streamlines the licensing process and encourages the expansion of hydropower generation by establishing a single lead coordinating

agency, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, in order to facilitate in a timelier manner hydropower authorizations, approvals, and requirements mandated by federal law.

- This bill will also drastically decrease costs to relicense non-federal dams, a huge win for the West.
- The Caucus recruited speakers for debate, authored floor speeches, provided a substantive legislative analysis, produced graphics and put out a press release to assist with passage of H.R. 3043.

V. Our Work With the Admin

Sage Grouse - ↓



Since egregious and potentially unlawful actions were taken by the previous Administration, the top issue for members of the Western Caucus has been overturning President Obama's de facto Sage Grouse listing and associated mineral withdrawal. On June 8, 2017, Secretary Zinke announced the beginning of a 60-day review of Greater Sage Grouse Policies,

examining the federal government's mandates in relation to Sage Grouse plans in 11 Western States. The Caucus made clear to the Administration its priorities for this review, including the hopeful rescission of a 10-million acre mineral withdrawal affecting six of those Western states | [Press Release](#)



On October 5th, the Bureau of Land Management announced it would be cancelling the proposed 10-million-acre mineral withdrawal and that the agencies were initiating action to overturn restrictive Sage Grouse regulations implemented by the Obama Administration. The Caucus has been pushing for such changes for years and issued a press release in which 10 members thanked the Administration for these actions | [Press Release](#)



Sue & Settle Clean Power Plan



2017 saw other big victories in coordination with the Administration that the Caucus was proud to play a role in, including the cessation of the practice of ‘sue and settle’ at EPA as well as the cancellation of the Clean Power Plan. Both of these Obama-era federal power grabs were major drags on our economy. The Caucus was a constant legislative opponent of each of these practices and was pleased the Administration responded to us | [S&S Press Release](#) | [CPP Press Release](#)

WOTUS withdrawal

The Obama Administration’s WOTUS Rule would have caused significant harm to rural America, including farmers, ranchers, small businesses, water users and other property owners. This flawed mandate directly contradicts prior U.S. Supreme Court decisions, which imposed limits on the extent of federal Clean Water Act.

For years, Members of the Western Caucus introduced legislation, inserted funding riders into appropriations bills and passed at least five different measures through the House to block WOTUS.

WOTUS was already stayed by the courts for its impressive unconstitutionality, but the Western Caucus nonetheless applauded the Administration’s move to listen to our members and issue a notice of proposed rulemaking to roll-back this hare-brained scheme | [Press Release](#)



VI. Caucus-led Letters

Western Caucus letter securing an additional \$576.5 million for wildfires

- On 10/4/17, 32 Members sent OMB Director Mulvaney a letter asking that the Administration send Congress a proposal that includes comprehensive forest management and wildland fire budgeting reforms as part of disaster relief.
- This effort was successful and resulted in \$576.5 million for wildfires and strong active forest management language.
- This Caucus initiative also prevented the Forest Service from having to raid their active management accounts in order to fund suppression costs.
- [Press Release](#) | [Letter](#)

Western Caucus letter to EPA Admin. Pruitt requesting CERCLA rule rollback

- On 7/31/17, 42 Members sent a letter to EPA Administrator Pruitt expressing concerns about Obama-proposed financial responsibility requirements for hardrock mining companies.
- These regulations were duplicative with existing state and federal requirements.
- Subsequently, the EPA [announced on 12/01/17](#) that it would be issuing no final financial requirement regulations, listing equivalent reasons as contained in our original letter as justification.
- [Press Release](#) | [Letter](#)

Western Caucus letter requesting President Trump reduce political monuments

- After DOI Secretary Zinke submitted his monument recommendations to President Trump, the Caucus circulated a letter to the President making recommendations for each of the 27 monuments under review.
- The Caucus recommended that the President shrink or rescind a majority of the 27 marine and land monuments.
- 24 Members signed onto the letter, and in his Utah announcement on December 6, 2017, President Trump acted on some of our recommendations as pertains to the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante Monuments, shrinking over 2,000,000 acres and devolving land from 'monument' to assorted federal statuses.
- [Press Release](#) | [Letter](#)

Western Caucus letter to Budget Committee preserving PMA assets

- 52 Members signed onto a letter led by **Reps. Gosar, Schrader, Newhouse and Tipton** requesting that the Budget Committee not include provisions in the FY'18 budget which aim at selling off the transmission assets of DOE's Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs).
- Such provisions were included in the President's FY'18 budget request. However, substantial stakeholder input and third party research determined that privatization would hinder the interests of rural America within the jurisdictions in question while providing only one-time paltry boosts to the Treasury.
- The Budget Committee eventually heeded our advice and did not include the provisions in question in the House's FY'18 budget.
- [Press Release](#) | [Letter](#)

Western Caucus letter requesting the President implement coordination

- 22 Members signed onto a letter led by Reps. **Buck, LaMalfa, Gosar and Thompson** requesting that the President implement requirements entailing that federal agencies coordinate on land use planning and other regulatory actions with state and local governments.
- Included along with the letter was a draft Executive Order which would effectively implement coordination.
- [Press Release](#) | [Letter](#)

Western Caucus letter on Dirt Tax and other new fees for hardrock mining

- The Caucus caught wind that career employees were pushing for a new "dirt tax" and new fees for the hardrock mining industry in President Trump's budget.
- Hardrock mining alone generates more than 1.2 million jobs and provides approximately \$3 trillion in added value to America's GDP – roughly 15 percent.
- Inclusion of these provisions would have stifled investment and resulted in other significant ramifications for industry.
- On May 3, 2017, 45 members of Congress [wrote](#) President Trump, Director Mulvaney and Secretary Zinke opposing including these four misguided proposals in the president's FY 2018 budget request.
- A few days later they received confirmation that this Western Caucus effort was successful.
- [Letter](#)

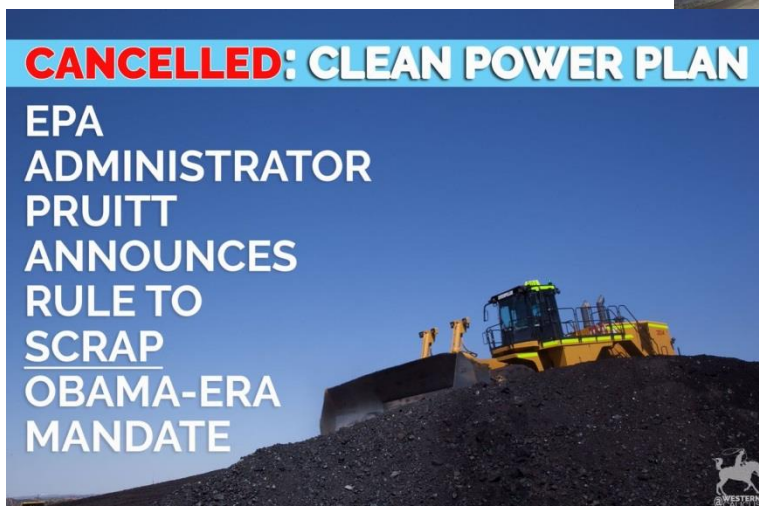
VII. Graphics & Design

The Caucus took a new approach to design under Chairman Gosar, providing members with visually appealing content on the issues of the day for use in social media and other communications. Contact Tanner.Hanson@mail.house.gov if you have a graphic idea and want the Caucus to get involved.

Some examples:



A small showing of the Caucus' design portfolio. Check out our instagram for more



VIII. Social Media

The Caucus grew in social media reach substantially this year by releasing graphics, press releases and reposting our members' content. Our members also took advantage of our content by sharing it around.

Social Media Quick Hits:

- Boosted [twitter](#) followers from **1046** --> **2654** (1608 gain)
- Boosted [Facebook](#) likes from **1410** --> **2260** (850 gain)
- Launched Caucus [Instagram](#) page on September 22, 2017 garnering nearly **300** followers since launching.

Most-engaged Caucus tweet -->



Most engagement for Caucus-provided tweet -->



<-- The Caucus spends a lot of its social media capital boosting the efforts of its other members on the floor, in committee, and in the media.

IX. Western Caucus in the Field

Chairman Gosar believes that a great way for members and staff from all over the United States to learn about important policy issues is to see, feel and experience them firsthand. Accordingly, educational trips in partnership with the Western Caucus Foundation are another critical service provided by the Caucus. In 2017, members and staff participated in several such events.



Alaska

For the first time in more than a decade, the Western Caucus helped organize a trip for members and staff to Alaska. Highlights of this informative journey included a review of North Slope Oil and Gas production facilities, an air tour over ANWR, a review of the Trans Alaska Oil Pipeline in Fairbanks, a roundtable with multiple industry panels in Anchorage, a visit to the largest gold mine in Alaska (producing 401,000 troy ounces in 2015), as well as a fisheries and tourism briefing in Seward.

Denver, CO

This year members and staff of the Western Caucus also participated in a lively roundtable discussion in Denver with key energy producers including members of the Western Energy Alliance.



Las Vegas, NV

The final trip of the year was to Las Vegas for our Winter Policy Roundtable and Public Lands Forum. More than 100 stakeholders, eight members, two dozen Congressional staffers as well as agency officials from the EPA, Department of Interior and the Forest Service participated in this event. In addition to three robust policy roundtables, attendees joined in an autonomous vehicle and technology demonstration as well as a behind the scenes tour of the National Rodeo and the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument.



Minnesota

This year, a crisis in Minnesota's mining scene caused by Obama's political land grab prompted an impromptu trip organized by Chairman Gosar and Congressmen Tom Emmer and Bruce Westerman. The Members visited potential mining sites and participate in labor & industry press conferences discussing the need to bring mining back to Northern Minnesota.



X. Monthly Member Meeting

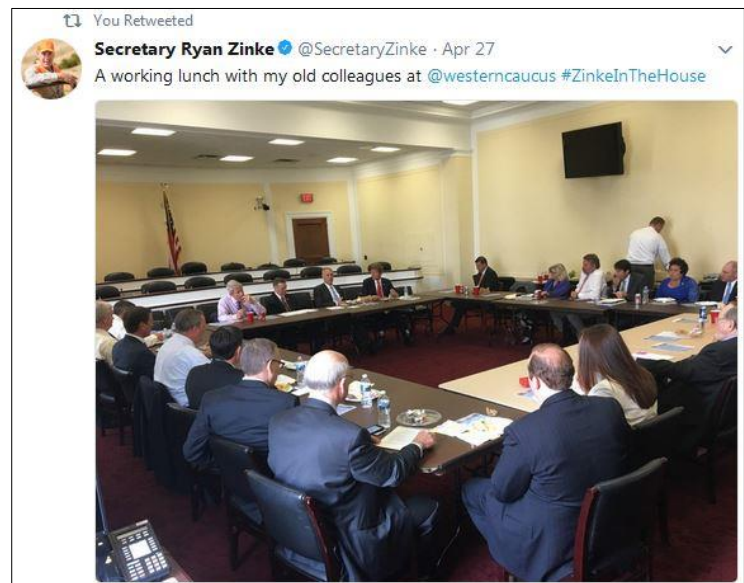
The Monthly Member Meeting is a new Caucus opportunity introduced by Chairman Gosar that connects Members with Administration and other officials over a catered lunch. Our members this year had the opportunity to hear from: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, OMB Director Mick Mulvaney, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, Interior Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt, US Forest Service Chief Tony Tooke, as well as one meeting which hosted 9 Canadian Premiers.



Pictured: Members of the Caucus with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt at a WC Member's Meeting.



Pictured: Reps. Marshall and Pearce with Secretary Perdue and his guest.



XI. Monthly Staff Policy Breakfast



This year, the Western Caucus Foundation hosted bicameral monthly staff policy briefings in the Capitol Building, where WC member staff, stakeholders, Administration and other officials came to discuss the issues of the day and strategize.

These meetings draw a big, standing-room-only crowd because they keep member offices up-to-date on land, water and energy issues at the Congressional level while also giving a voice to important issues from outside the beltway.



XII. Western Caucus Weekly Address

In an effort to increase member visibility and provide an additional platform, the Western Caucus started a weekly video address. WC staff add graphics, music and do a significant amount of editing before blasting out on social media and in our new weekly newsletter.



XIII. Native American Policy Symposium



On July 19th, the Western Caucus Foundation hosted a Native American Symposium with tribal nations from around the country. New Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke was the featured speaker and several members of the Caucus discussed tribal priorities in front of a jam-packed crowd. Tribal members also addressed the massive audience on important issues for Indian Country including tribal empowerment and natural resources.

XIV. Trump Admin Nominations

A huge priority of the Western Caucus early on this year was supporting our nominees, pushing back against false attacks and getting our folks confirmed. The Caucus produced graphics, sent out press releases, live tweeted during hearings, drafted a letter and took part in other advocacy efforts to combat false narratives from the opposition.

The image is a collage of social media posts from various representatives, each featuring a graphic that supports a specific nomination. The graphics are designed to look like campaign posters or signs, with a portrait of the nominee on the left and supporting text on the right. The text is in white and blue on a dark background. The posts are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some overlapping. The representatives mentioned are Rep. Bill Flores, Rep. Jeff Duncan, Rep. Mia Love, Rep. Doug Collins, Rep. Alex Mooney, Rep. Randy Weber, Rep. Rick Crawford, and Rep. Adrian Smith. The graphics support the following nominees: Scott Pruitt (EPA Administrator), Ryan Zinke (Secretary of the Interior), Sonny Perdue (Secretary of Agriculture), and Neil Gorsuch (Supreme Court Justice). The posts include dates and some text from the original tweets.

Rep. Bill Flores @RepBillFlores · Feb 17
Scott Pruitt will bring a much-needed change in leadership and attitude to the EPA.

Rep. Jeff Duncan @RepJeffDuncan · Jan 31
Ryan will be a fantastic Secretary of the Interior. Look forward to working with him on common sense federal land use! @westerncaucus

Rep. Mia Love @RepMiaLove · Jan 17
Congressman Zinke will be a great advocate on public lands issues. I am looking forward to his confirmation. #utpol

Rep. Doug Collins @RepDougCollins · Mar 23
Sonny Perdue represents a commonsense approach to working w #farmers as they contribute to our growing economy. @westerncaucus

Rep. Alex Mooney @RepAlexMooney · Jan 18
I support @AGScottPruitt to be our next EPA Administrator! #EPA

Rep. Randy Weber @TXRandy14 · Feb 17
Today, is a huge day for the EPA. Godspeed @ScottPruitt.

Rep. Rick Crawford @RepRickCrawford · Apr 7
Congratulations to Judge Neil Gorsuch on his confirmation to ser Supreme Court by a bipartisan vote of 54-45!

Rep. Adrian Smith @RepAdrianSmith · Apr 24
Confirmation of #AgSec Sonny Perdue is great news for #NebraskaAg. Now we can hit the ground running on ag policy. bit.ly/2ptMCta

XV. Briefings

One of the Caucus's main objectives is keeping Members and staff updated on important issues. This year the Caucus held staff briefings with outside groups and officials from the Administration including:

- Briefing on ANWR and Section 1002
- Briefing on Tax Reform
- Briefing on National Monuments and Trump Review
- Briefing on Coordination and Local Control



IX. 2018

The Congressional Western Caucus was founded during the 103rd Congress in 1993. In 2018, we will celebrate our 25th Anniversary.

Initially, the Caucus was born in the West, out of concerns of undue federal interference with rural, agricultural, timber, water, mining and hunting values that had been a part of American society for centuries. The Caucus was founded to fight this federal overreach, promote rural values and preserve our uniquely American way of life.

Over time, the Caucus has grown beyond the geographic West, allying with Members of Congress from all across the country who share our values and our vision of a stronger America. The Western Caucus has never been stronger and is a dominant force on Capitol Hill currently comprised of members from 33 different states and territories.

Much of the Caucus's efforts in 2017 were focused on rolling back job-killing regulations from the previous Administration as a result of eight years of overreach and a failure to follow the Rule of Law.

The Caucus has an aggressive legislative agenda for 2018 and our Members will be putting forth proactive solutions.

We are coordinating closely with the Committees of jurisdiction and the Administration on a new infrastructure package that will create high quality jobs and strengthen local communities.

A mining package and sportsmen's package are additional pieces of legislation that our Members want to see passed into law this Congress.

Ensuring affordable and safe domestic food production for American families and increasing forest health are also important to the Western Caucus as part of the Farm Bill. Hearings have already taken place in the House and Western Caucus Member Mike Conaway has made reauthorization a priority recently [launching a landing page](#) to share worthwhile information.

Western Caucus will also be putting forth aggressive legislative packages to modernize the Endangered Species Act, codify important executive actions by the Administration, restore local control as well as reduce energy burdens and other job-killing regulations.

Western Caucus Foundation-Coordinated Trips for 2018 include trips to Montana, Colorado, Arizona and Las Vegas – details forthcoming.

We are filled with optimism and are excited to work with our members, staff, committees and the administration to make 2018 the best year yet.