
Reporting Requirements

When land is acquired by the federal government, it is no longer a part of the taxable land portfolio of a state or local government. This means local governments experience diminished tax revenues, while they still are required to provide many of the same critical services (maintaining roads along them, performing search and rescue activities, etc.). Often, the federal government's purchase of land requires local governments to do more with less.

The Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) would provide mandatory funding to the Land and Water Conservative Fund (LWCF) which has historically been used as the federal government's main source of funds for the acquisition of new federal land. By making this funding mandatory and no longer subject to the annual appropriations process, Congress loses a great deal of oversight and control of the program. The very least Congress can do is ensure there is transparency on the costs of federal land acquisition and that the American people are aware of how this will impact their communities.

Additionally, the GAOA would divert billions of dollars from the Treasury to a National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (Restoration Fund) to address the maintenance backlog on our federal lands. While the purpose of caring for land already owned by the federal government is absolutely crucial, it should be paid-for with savings found in other programs rather than adding to the nation's deficit. However, again, the very least Congress can do is to keep a watchful eye on the Restoration Fund to monitor its progress and ensure its efficiently serving its purpose.

Therefore, this amendment would require stronger reporting requirements on the programs within the GAOA.

Amendment Specifics

- Requires reports to Congress on costs of acquisition, maintenance, and administration of lands obtained under the LWCF.
- Requires reports to states and local units of government regarding lost property taxes due to LWCF land acquisitions.
- Requires reports to Congress on Restoration Fund projects to be funded, currently being funded, the amount of money expended for that project, and an estimate of expenditures needed to complete the project.