

Alaska Wilderness League * Blancett Ranches * Colorado Environmental Coalition *
Earthjustice * Ecoflight * Environment America * Natural Resources Defense Council *
Sierra Club * Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance * The Wilderness Society *
Western Resource Advocates

Protect Western water and wildlife: Support the Polis Amendment

Dear Representative,

Please vote YES on Representative Jared Polis' amendment #130 to H.R. 3408 to remove harmful and speculative oil shale provisions that endanger Western public lands and water supplies and do **nothing** to fund transportation projects or create jobs.

Oil shale development threatens to impair public land, water, wildlife and air resources in some of the West's iconic places in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. Lands proposed for wilderness protections, critical wildlife habitat and areas popular with hunters and anglers would be subject to risky and speculative development.

Oil from shale rock, not to be confused with shale oil, has yet to be produced in commercial quantities despite 100 years of research and development and decades of taxpayer subsidies. The problem with oil shale is not any particular federal policy but the rock itself. There is no oil in oil shale. Oil shale is a rock made of kerogen, a waxy substance that has to be heated to 700 degrees to produce oil. Cheaper and cleaner alternatives fuel sources exist.

Even with more than 3 million acres of non-federal lands on which to test their technologies and hundreds of millions of dollars invested in research over the last few decades, companies cannot figure out how to develop oil shale profitably. The biggest driver of oil shale historically has been the DoD, which has since recognized that oil shale is not a viable fuel source and has taken strong steps to reduce its reliance on fossil fuel and increase its investment in efficiency and use of renewable energy.

In addition to technological hurdles facing oil shale, scarce water supplies in the West could be an insurmountable obstacle to oil shale. The BLM estimated that industrial scale oil shale development could require as much as 150 percent of the amount of water the Denver Metro Area consumes each year. With our waters such as the Colorado River already overtaxed, there simply is not enough water to facilitate oil shale development.

This oil shale title is but one of many irresponsible and unprecedented provisions in this deeply flawed transportation bill. The bill undercuts funding for transit, biking and walking, and utilizes fiscally untenable and environmentally destructive pay-fors. However, oil shale is too risky of a bet to place on the West's natural resources. **It is an empty promise that creates no energy, no jobs and no revenue. Please support the Polis amendment.**

Sincerely,

Alaska Wilderness League
Blancett Ranches
Californians for Western Wilderness
Colorado Environmental Coalition
Earthjustice
Ecoflight

Environment America
Natural Resources Defense Council
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