To withdraw certain Federal land in the Pecos Watershed area of the State of New Mexico from mineral entry, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. HEINRICH introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To withdraw certain Federal land in the Pecos Watershed area of the State of New Mexico from mineral entry, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Pecos Watershed Pro-
tection Act”.

SEC. 2. WITHDRAWAL OF FEDERAL LAND IN PECOS WATER-
SHED AREA, NEW MEXICO.

(a) DEFINITION OF FEDERAL LAND.—In this sec-
tion, the term “Federal land” means the Federal land de-
picted as “Pecos Withdrawal” on the map entitled “Pro-
posed Mineral Withdrawal Legislative Map” and dated September 11, 2023.

(b) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid rights in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal land is withdrawn from all forms of—

(1) entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral and geothermal leasing or mineral materials.

SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF THOMPSON PEAK WILDERNESS AREA, NEW MEXICO.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(2) STATE.—The term “State” means the State of New Mexico.

(3) WILDERNESS AREA.—The term “wilderness area” means the Thompson Peak Wilderness Area designated by subsection (b).

(b) DESIGNATION.—In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the approximately 11,599 acres of land managed by the Forest Service in the State, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Pro-
posed Mineral Withdrawal Legislative Map” and dated
September 11, 2023, is designated as a wilderness area
and as a component of the National Wilderness Preserv-
ation System, to be known as the “Thompson Peak Wilder-
ness Area”.

(e) Map and Legal Description.—

(1) In General.—As soon as practicable after
the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
shall file a map and legal description of the wilder-
ness area with—

(A) the Committee on Energy and Natural

Resources of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Natural Resources

of the House of Representatives.

(2) Effect.—The map and legal description
filed under paragraph (1) shall have the same force
and effect as if included in this Act, except that the
Secretary may correct clerical and typographical er-
rors in the map and legal description.

(3) Availability.—The map and legal descrip-
tion filed under paragraph (1) shall be on file and
available for public inspection in the Office of the
Chief of the Forest Service.

(d) Administration.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, the wilderness area shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), except that any reference in that Act to the effective date of that Act shall be considered to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) ADJACENT MANAGEMENT.—

(A) NO PROTECTIVE PERIMETERS OR BUFFER ZONES.—Congress does not intend for the designation of the wilderness area to create a protective perimeter or buffer zone around the wilderness area.

(B) NONWILDERNESS ACTIVITIES.—The fact that nonwilderness activities or uses outside of the wilderness area can be seen or heard from an area within the wilderness area shall not preclude the conduct of the nonwilderness activities or uses outside the boundaries of the wilderness area.

(3) FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT.—In accordance with section 4(d)(7) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(7)), nothing in this section affects the jurisdiction or responsibilities of the State with respect to fish and wildlife management in the
wilderness area (including the regulation of hunting, fishing, and trapping).

(4) GRAZING.—The Secretary shall allow the continuation of the grazing of livestock in the wilderness area, if established before the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with—

(A) section 4(d)(4) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(4)); and

(B) the guidelines set forth in Appendix A of the report of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives accompanying H.R. 2570 of the 101st Congress (H. Rept. 101–405).

(5) WILDFIRE, INSECT, AND DISEASE CONTROL.—The Secretary may carry out measures in the wilderness area that the Secretary determines to be necessary to control fire, insects, or diseases, in accordance with section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(1)).

(e) INCORPORATION OF ACQUIRED LAND AND INTERESTS IN LAND.—Any land or interest in land within the boundaries of the wilderness area that is acquired by the United States after the date of enactment of this Act shall be added to and administered as part of the wilderness area.
(f) **Withdrawal.**—Subject to valid existing rights, the wilderness area is withdrawn from—

(1) entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) disposition under all laws relating to mineral and geothermal leasing or mineral materials.