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Rep. Tipton Unveils Western Colorado Public Lands Proposal

WASHINGTON D.C. – Today, Representative Scott Tipton (CO-03) released draft text for a public lands package aimed to improve the management of large swaths of public lands across Colorado’s Third Congressional District. Tipton’s draft legislation, the *Colorado Recreation Enhancement and Conservation Act* (Colorado REC Act), would designate over 70,000 acres of new wilderness, release approximately 39,000 acres from Wilderness Study Areas, enhance recreation opportunities and further protect archaeological sites of the Ancestral Pueblo.

The discussion draft contains five measures that would add land to the National Wilderness Preservation System in the San Juan and Rio Grande National Forests, formally establish a boundary for the Curecanti National Recreation Area, expand the Yucca House National Monument nearly six times over, and release Wilderness Study Areas that have been found unsuitable for wilderness designations by the Bureau of Land Management.

“Colorado’s Third Congressional District is home to some of the most cherished public lands in the country, and we must ensure responsible management and protection of them. The Colorado REC Act is intended to balance the unique needs and desires of various stakeholders that I have met with in recent years, and I hope to be able to build broad consensus around this bill as it moves through the legislative process,” **said Tipton**. “Today’s announcement is meant to continue conversations on the best ways to manage and preserve some of the Third District’s most treasured places. I look forward to receiving feedback on the components of this measure and incorporating them into a final bill that works for all outdoor enthusiasts.”

Colorado REC Act Summary:

- Expands the Sangre De Cristo Wilderness Area to provide permanent protections for 40,038 acres of land located within the Rio Grande National Forest.
- Provides permanent protections for approximately 60,000 acres of land located within the San Juan Mountains.
- Formally establishes the boundary for the Curecanti National Recreation Area (NRA).
- Releases over 39,000 acres of Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) and an Instant Study Area (ISA) in Southwest and Northern Colorado that have been determined to be unsuitable for wilderness designations.
- Revises the boundary of the Yucca House National Monument to allow for the voluntary donation of 160 acres of property adjacent to the monument.

A full overview of the REC Act can be found [here](#).

Background:

The introduction of this discussion draft aligns with Tipton's record of supporting and protecting public lands and recreation sites during his time in Congress. In 2014, Tipton's *Hermosa Creek and Watershed Protection Act* passed the House with bipartisan support and was signed into law. Earlier this year, Tipton voted in support of S. 47, the *Natural Resources Management Act of 2019*, which permanently reauthorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund. S. 47 also included language from two of Tipton's bills that renamed peaks in the San Juan Mountains after two fallen Colorado climbers, Christine Boskoff and Charlie Fowler, and the *Every Kid Outdoors Act*, which provides free admission to national parks for fourth-grade students.

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Congressman Scott R. Tipton represents Colorado's Third District. He serves on the [House Committee on Financial Services](#). Tipton is the Executive Vice Chairman of the [Congressional Western Caucus](#) and Co-chairman of the Congressional Small Business Caucus.

