

# PUBLIC LANDS ENEMY #4



## Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.)

Sponsored Bills: 7; Cosponsored Bills: 25;

Total Possible Bills: 84

U.S. House of Representatives (2011-Present),  
Arizona's 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Member, Committee on Natural Resources  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources  
Member, Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans  
Member, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
Member, Subcommittee on the Interior  
Chairman, U.S. Congressional Western Caucus ([Elected in Nov. 2016](#))

Paul Gosar represents much of western Arizona. Between 2011 and 2016, the congressman introduced or cosponsored 32 of the 84 anti-public lands bills aimed at giving away the federal government's title to or authority over managing America's lands. This earned him the title Public Lands Enemy #4.

Gosar is out of touch with the majority of Arizona voters, over 88 percent of whom agree that public lands are essential to their state's economy.<sup>19</sup> Wildlife viewing is big business in Arizona with wildlife-related recreation contributing \$2.4 billion in annual spending.<sup>20</sup> Despite these facts, Gosar routinely rails against "federal overreach" and is one of the leading voices in Congress to fight federal ownership of and protection for public lands. He champions uranium, mining and livestock industries regardless of the harm his policies would cause to public lands, waters and Arizona's indigenous people.

During his political career, the energy and natural resources sector has contributed the fourth highest — [\\$247,950](#) — to Gosar's election campaigns.

Among Gosar's many anti-public lands bills, [H.R. 1904](#) and [H.R. 687](#) stand out. Both would have traded public lands sacred to western Apache tribes to an international mining behemoth Rio Tinto for its proposed Resolution Copper Mine, despite the fact that the area was withdrawn from mining 60 years ago by executive order of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The material removed from this mine would cover thousands of acres of public land with toxic mine waste, and when the mine is closed it would leave behind a crater up to two miles wide and 1,000 feet deep. After Gosar's bills and others like it failed to pass into law, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) pushed the land swap through by forcing the inclusion of a midnight rider on a must-pass defense funding bill in late December 2014.

Another of Gosar's bills, [H.R. 5836](#), requires the secretaries of interior and agriculture to sell land to the states under the guise of recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, off-roading and shooting, activities that are currently allowed on public lands. Once those lands are state owned, they could be sold to the highest bidder to be drilled, mined, logged, roaded and developed.

The congressman has made his dislike of national monuments clear by introducing [H.R. 2877](#) and [H.R. 1495](#), which would revoke the president's authority to designate national monuments in Arizona. In response to legislation proposing the Greater Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument, Gosar said, "[the] double-

<sup>19</sup> Source: Weigel, L. and Metz, D. Conservation in the West Poll. Sponsored by the Colorado College State of the Rockies Project. 2013.

<sup>20</sup> Source: <http://www.ourpubliclands.org/public-lands-report-az>

dealing bill isn't even worth the paper it was printed on."<sup>21</sup> Gosar also [showed support for the Bundy's](#) during the now infamous Nevada standoff between the militia and the Bureau of Land Management when the agency tried to round up Cliven Bundy's trespassing livestock after 24 years of illegal grazing on public lands in Nevada. Gosar even [traveled to Bunkerville](#) during the conflict.

In these ways Gosar claims, in a recent flyer, to be "Making the West Great Again."<sup>22</sup>

**Anti-Public Lands Bills Sponsored or Cosponsored by Gosar:**

<b>Bill Type</b>	<b>Sponsored</b>	<b>Cosponsored</b>
<b>Land Seizure</b> Public Lands Sale for "Recreation" ( <a href="#">H.R. 5836</a> ) Oak Flat Land Trade ( <a href="#">H.R. 1904</a> ) Oak Flat Land Trade ( <a href="#">H.R. 687</a> ) State Choice of 5 Percent of Public Lands ( <a href="#">H.R. 2852</a> ) No Increase in Public Land ( <a href="#">H.R. 4423</a> )	 X X X   	   X X 
<b>Private/County/State Control of Public Lands</b> BLM Road Authority Seizure ( <a href="#">H.R. 5598</a> ) Weakens RS 2477 Rules ( <a href="#">H.R. 4313</a> ) End BLM/USFS Law Enforcement ( <a href="#">H.R. 4751</a> ) Community Forest Demo Areas ( <a href="#">H.R. 2316</a> ) Local Control of Public Land Access ( <a href="#">H.R. 1555</a> ) Local Control of Public Land Access ( <a href="#">H.R. 4272</a> ) Community Forest Demo Areas ( <a href="#">H.R. 1294</a> ) Community Forest Demo Areas ( <a href="#">H.R. 6009</a> ) State Beetle Kill Logging Projects ( <a href="#">H.R. 695</a> ) State Beetle Kill Timber Projects ( <a href="#">H.R. 818</a> ) State Beetle Kill Timber Projects ( <a href="#">H.R. 6089</a> ) State Control, Fisheries and Hunters ( <a href="#">H.R. 2406</a> ) State Oil and Gas Control ( <a href="#">H.R. 866</a> )	 X               	   X X X X X X X X X X X X X 
<b>Weakening Federal Protections</b> Weakens Grazing Management ( <a href="#">H.R. 4234</a> ) No More Uranium Withdrawal ( <a href="#">H.R. 3155</a> ) Border Patrol Free Reign ( <a href="#">H.R. 2398</a> ) Weakens Grazing Management ( <a href="#">H.R. 657</a> ) Logging Priority on Forests ( <a href="#">H.R. 1526</a> ) Timber Over Forest Conservation ( <a href="#">H.R. 2647</a> ) Sage Grouse is Not Endangered ( <a href="#">H.R. 4739</a> )	       	 X X X X X X X 

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/congressman-paul-gosar-lashes-out-at-grand-canyon-monument-bill-supporters-7798829>

<sup>22</sup> <http://gosar.house.gov/sites/gosar.house.gov/files/Western%20Caucus%20Presentation.pdf>

**Campaign Contributors** ([2016 Election](#), as of December 2016, source: Center for Responsive Politics):

- Oil & Gas Industry:
  - \$5,750
- Energy & Natural Resources Sector:
  - \$86,600
- Major Funders (in Gosar's Top 100 Contributors, 2016 Election):
  - **Coal:** Arch Coal (\$3,000)
  - **Grazing:** Arizona Cattle Feeder's Association (\$1,500)
  - **Mining:** Freeport McMoRan (\$13,500)
  - **Conglomerates:** Koch Industries (\$2,500)

**League of Conservation Voters National Environmental Scorecard:**

[Lifetime](#): 7 percent