

Potential Party Leadership In A The New Congress Poses A Threat Public Lands Conservation

SUMMARY: If Republicans have a majority of seats in the House of Representatives, the potential new leaders within the party could mean bad news for America's public lands. .

Reps. Kevin McCarthy, Steve Scalise, Tom Emmer, and Jim Banks each have a record of being cozy with the oil industry while working to undermine protections for public lands.

Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA):

- Kevin McCarthy's campaign has taken nearly [\\$2.7 million](#) from the oil and gas industry, making him the U.S. House of Representatives' [all time highest recipient](#) of the industry's money.
- After the [American Petroleum Institute](#) sent McCarthy a letter urging him to pass permitting reform, he vowed to make it a [priority in the next congress](#).
- McCarthy supported [a bill](#) which would make it harder to regulate public lands oil leasing.
- McCarthy promised to [curb the power of the Antiquities Act](#), which he said can be misused for "executive overreach."

Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA):

- Steve Scalise's campaign has taken nearly [\\$2 Million](#) from the oil industry.
- Scalise is a constant critic of President Biden's energy and conservation policy, falsely calling it "[his war on American Energy](#)."
- Scalise [opposed](#) permanent reauthorization of the popular Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Rep. Tom Emmer (R-MN):

- Tom Emmer has taken [over \\$196 thousand](#) in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry.
- Emmer attacked the Biden Administration's *America The Beautiful Initiative* as "[federal land grab](#)," and [co-sponsored](#) Lauren Bobebert's 30x30 Termination Act.
- Tom Emmer has worked to reinstate the controversial Twin Metals mine that [threatens](#) the Boundary Waters Wilderness watershed.

- Emmer supported the Trump Administration's plan to [increase offshore oil and gas leasing](#) and co-sponsored a bill to require [congressional approval to prohibit or delay leasing](#) on federal lands.

Rep. Jim Banks (R-IN):

- Banks accepted [\\$103 thousand](#) in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry over the course of his career.
- Banks [signed a letter](#) to President Biden opposing the *America The Beautiful* conservation initiative.
- Banks co-sponsored [a bill](#) with Lauren Boebert to make it harder to regulate public lands oil drilling.

Kevin McCarthy Has Taken \$2.7 Million From The Oil Industry, More Than Any Other Member. At The Same Time, He Has Worked To Make It Harder To Regulate Public Lands Production And Protect Public Lands

Oil & Gas Gave McCarthy Nearly \$2.7 Million Over His Federal Political Career, Making Him The All Time Highest Recipient Of Oil And Gas Money In The House Of Representatives

2005-2022: McCarthy Accepted Nearly \$2.7 Million In Campaign Contributions From The Oil And Gas Industry. According to Open Secrets, McCarthy accepted \$2,680,879 in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry since 2005. [Open Secrets, [10/28/22](#)]

McCarthy Is #1 U.S. House Of Representatives Recipient Of Oil And Gas Industry Contributions Of All Time. According to Open Secrets, McCarthy is the top recipient of oil and gas industry contributions of all time for the U.S. House of Representatives. [Open Secrets, accessed [11/15/22](#)]

McCarthy Is In The Top 6 Congressional Recipients Of Oil And Gas Money Of All Time. According to Open Secrets, McCarthy is the 6th highest congressional recipient of oil and gas money of all time. [Open Secrets, accessed [11/15/22](#)]

McCarthy Vowed To Prioritize Permitting Reform In The Coming Congress, As Requested By The American Petroleum Institute

McCarthy Vowed To “Prioritize Comprehensive Permitting Reform” In 2023. “Underscoring the Republicans' political goals, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) in Sept. 27 remarks at a National Clean Energy Week event vowed that House Republicans "will prioritize comprehensive permitting reform" next year, and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) pressed fellow Republican senators to reject the Manchin plan before the procedural vote on the spending bill.” [Environmental Policy Alert, [10/05/22](#)]

- **API Sent McCarthy A Letter Urging Him To “Pass Permitting Reform Without Delay.”** “Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy: [...] We urge Congress to quickly consider and pass permitting reform without delay.” [API, [08/11/22](#)]

Kevin McCarthy Supported A Bill To Making It More Difficult To Regulate Oil & Gas Leasing On Federal Public Land

McCarthy Called For Increasing Domestic Oil Production And More Drilling. “Rep. Kevin McCarthy led a chorus of local Republican lawmakers and oil producers Monday in denouncing Democratic oil and gas policies at the federal and state levels, saying the United States would be stronger and the world safer if domestic producers were allowed to drill for more petroleum. [...] McCarthy asserted local gasoline prices would fall if Democratic leaders eased up on permitting.” [The Bakersfield Californian, [03/21/22](#)]

McCarthy Co-Sponsored A Bill That Would Require Congressional Approval To Prohibit Or Delay Mineral, Oil, And Gas Leases On Federal Lands. “This bill requires the President and federal agencies to obtain the approval of Congress before prohibiting or substantially delaying certain new energy or mineral leases or permits on federal lands, including oil and gas leases, coal leases, hard rock leases, or critical minerals leases. In addition, the President and agencies must obtain the approval of Congress before withdrawing certain federal lands from mineral and geothermal leasing activities.” [Congress.gov, [01/28/21](#)]

McCarthy Expressed His Intention To Curb The Antiquities Act And Limit Executive Authority To Designate National Monuments

McCarthy Said That Obama Abused The Antiquities Act And That He Would Work Toward A “Defense Against Future Executive Overreach.” “Government must still retain the authority to preserve our nation's most treasured sites, but that authority was clearly abused by the Obama Administration when it restricted over 550 million acres in 34 national monuments under the Antiquities Act. [...] President Trump and House Republicans will work together to offer a defense against future executive overreach and bring a necessary dose of commonsense to public land policy.” [The Daily Independent, [04/27/17](#)]

Representative Steve Scalise Propped Up The Oil & Gas Companies That Provide Millions To His Reelection Efforts At The Expense Of Public Lands Conservation

Representative Steve Scalise Raised Nearly \$2 Million In Campaign Contributions From Oil & Gas Companies

Oil & Gas Companies Contributed Nearly \$2,000,000 To Representative Steve Scalise's Campaigns Over His Political Career. According to OpenSecrets, the Oil & Gas Industry were among the top 5 contributors to Representative Scalise's campaigns over his 23-year career in Congress with contributions totalling \$1,995,177. [OpenSecrets, accessed [11/15/2022](#)]

Representative Steve Scalise Is A Critic Of President Biden's Energy Policy And Regularly Calls On The President To "End His War On American Energy" And "Unleash" Oil & Gas Production

Representative Scalise Said President Biden's Federal Lands Leasing Policy Was "An Assault On American Energy" And Responsible For Weakening National Security. "Biden banned new oil/gas leases on federal land & water. He's waging an assault on American energy. The outcome: USA Jobs/Production shipped to China, the Middle East & Russia, Weaker national security, Higher household energy costs. This will crush workers & families." [Twitter, [@SteveScalise](#), posted [1/27/2021](#)]

Representative Scalise Claimed President Biden Refused To "End His War On American Energy" And To Ignore White House Attempts To "Spin" The Energy Crisis Differently. "Let's be clear: Gas prices don't have to be this high. But Joe Biden refuses to end his war on American energy production so we can fully utilize our own resources. Don't let the White House spin it differently." [Twitter, [@SteveScalise](#), posted [3/16/2022](#)]

- **Representative Scalise Called On President Biden To Open The Strategic Petroleum Reserve And Areas "Closed By President Biden To Leasing" To Replace Russian Imports.** "There is no reason that Putin should be pocketing hundreds-of-millions of dollars per day by selling oil to America in the United States when we can cut that off right now by opening up our reserves, opening up areas that have been closed by President Biden to leasing so that Putin does not have that leverage over America or Europe to finance this brutal invasion." [Twitter, [@SteveScalise](#), posted [3/16/2022](#)]

Representative Scalise Blamed The Federal Permitting Process For "Sky High" Gas And Home Heating Prices And Claimed It Was The Result Of A Biden Admin That "Doesn't Actually Care About Your Suffering." "Biden is currently sitting on more than 4,400 pending applications for permits to drill while your gas prices and home heating costs are sky high. Let that sink in. This administration doesn't actually care about your suffering." [Twitter, [@SteveScalise](#), posted [10/19/2022](#)]

Representative Steve Scalise Opposed Permanently Funding The Land And Water Conservation Fund And Wants To Make It Harder To Protect Endangered Landscapes With The Antiquities Act

Scalise Opposed Permanent Reauthorization And Funding For The Land And Water Conservation Fund

Representative Scalise Opposed The Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) On The Grounds It Capped The Funding States Received From Local Oil & Gas Revenues For Conservation. “The No. 2 House Republican will oppose a conservation bill on the floor next week that other leaders in his party — including the president — are touting as an important GOP legislative achievement in an election year. House Minority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.) will vote “no” on the “Great American Outdoors Act,” which would fully and permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund with \$900 million annually, plus address some of a \$20 billion backlog of deferred maintenance projects at national parks and on public lands around the country...The LWCF is funded by revenue collected from offshore oil and gas leases, and lawmakers from Gulf states like Louisiana resent that there is a cap imposed on how much money their states can receive from the drilling they host.” [E&E, published [7/16/2020](#)]

- **The GAOA, Passed With Large Bipartisan Support, Permanently Reauthorized And Funded The Land And Water Conservation Fund.** “The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was established by Congress in 1964 to fulfill a bipartisan commitment to safeguard natural areas, water resources and cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans. The fund invests earnings from offshore oil and gas leasing to help strengthen communities, preserve history and protect the national endowment of lands and waters. On August 4, 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) was signed into law, authorizing \$900 million annually in permanent funding for LWCF. Prior to the passage of GAOA, funding for LWCF relied on annual Congressional appropriations.” [Department of the Interior, accessed [11/15/22](#)]

Scalise Introduced A Bill To Restrict How The Antiquities Act Can Be Used To Protect Ocean Ecosystems And Resources

Representative Scalise Introduced Legislation To Limit The Authority Of The President To Declare National Monuments And Override Local Regulations On Oil & Gas Exploitation. In 2021, Rep. Scalise introduced HR 4334 to limit the president’s authority to withdraw areas of the Outer Continental Shelf from oil & gas leasing and declare new marine national monuments. Additionally, the bill would have required the DOI to obtain congressional approval before declaring a moratorium on issuing leases on federal lands or waters for oil, gas, or coal and defer to state regulations, guidance, and permit requirements for all activities regarding fracking on federal land. It would also have permitted DOI to delegate decisions about issuing oil and gas drill permits on federal land to states. [Congress.gov, accessed [11/15/2022](#)]

Tom Emmer Sides With Extremists To Stoke Fear About The America The Beautiful Initiative While Working To Undermine Public Lands Protections

The Oil And Gas Industry Has Given Tom Emmer \$194K Over His Federal Political Career

2015-Present: Congressman Tom Emmer Represents Minnesota's 6th District. "Congressman Tom Emmer was sworn in for his first term in the U.S. House of Representatives on January 6, 2015. He is currently serving his fourth term." [Congressman Tom Emmer, accessed [11/15/22](#)]

2013-2022: The Oil And Gas Industry Contributed \$194,304 To Emmer's Political Career. According to Open Secrets, the Oil & Gas industry contributed \$194,304 to Congressman Tom Emmer's campaigns since 2013. [Open Secrets, [10/28/22](#)]

Tom Emmer Worked To Terminate The Biden Administration's 30x30 Initiative, Calling It A "Land Grab" And "Threat To Minnesota's Way Of Life"

Emmer Co-Sponsored Rep. Lauren Boebert's 30x30 Termination Act. "This bill prohibits federal acquisition of land or declaration of a national monument in certain areas and nullifies a provision of an executive order related to conservation. In a state or county where 15% or more of the land is managed by a federal agency (1) federal funds may not be used to acquire nonfederal land unless the agency proposing the acquisition disposes of an equal amount of federal land within the state or county, and (2) a declaration of a national monument shall not apply." [Congress.gov, [05/07/21](#)]

September 2022: Emmer Called 30x30 A "Federal Land Grab" That Would "Jeopardize [Americans'] Way Of Life." ""After over a year since the introduction of this federal land grab, it is unacceptable that the Biden Administration refuses to answer our concerns about the 30 x 30 initiative and provide clarity to the responsible stewards of our land – the thousands of Minnesotans who work in farming, agriculture, ranching, mining, and recreation," said Congressman Emmer. "We must allow Americans to care for their own lands, not jeopardize their way of life."" [Congressman Tom Emmer, [09/16/22](#)]

June 2021: Emmer Sent Biden A Letter Of Concern About 30x30 Initiative, Calling It A "Threat To Minnesota's Way Of Life." "Today, Congressman Pete Stauber (MN-08) along with Congressman Tom Emmer (MN-06) [...] sent a letter to President Biden to express their serious concerns over his proposed "Conserving 30 Percent of America's Land and Waters by 2030" initiative [...] The text of the letter is as follows: Dear President Biden, We write to express our grave concerns about the "Conserving 30% of America's Land and Waters by 2030" initiative – better known by the tagline "30x30" – which is a threat to Minnesota's way of life." [Congressman Pete Stauber, [06/15/21](#)]

Tom Emmer Pushed To Reinstate Twin Metals' Mineral Leases In Minnesota, Canceled By The Obama And Biden Administrations For The Threat It Posed To Boundary Waters Wilderness Area's Watershed

Emmer Expressed Disappointment At The Initial Cancellation Of Twin Metals' Mining Lease In 2016. "Congressman Tom Emmer (MN-06) released the following statement in regards to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service's refusal to renew Twin Metals' federal mineral leases for the proposed copper-nickel mine near Ely, MN. "I am incredibly disappointed that the outgoing Administration has once again acted in poor-faith during their last days in power. "" [Congressman Tom Emmer, [12/15/16](#)]

Emmer Called Biden's Cancellation Of Twin Metals' Mineral Lease A "Politically-Driven Crusade." "Emmer said "Today's decision is another disappointing attack from an administration committed to killing American independence on key resources. Mining has been a Minnesota way of life for generations. We must not allow it to become the latest casualty in the Biden Administration's politically-driven crusade."" [Congressman Tom Emmer, [01/26/22](#)]

The Biden Administration Canceled Twin Metals' Mineral Lease, Which Was Temporarily Reinstated By Trump And Initially Canceled Due To The Threat It Posed To The Boundary Waters Wilderness Area Watershed. "U.S. Forest Service issued a decision withholding consent to the renewal of two mineral leases in 2016, citing the risk of environmental contamination of the surrounding watershed as a key concern. Subsequently, the BLM rejected the renewal application submitted by Twin Metals Minnesota. Based on a now-withdrawn legal opinion, the Interior Department improperly renewed the expired leases and granted their renewal in 2019." [U.S. Department Of Interior, [01/26/22](#)]

Tom Emmer Supported A Bill To Make It Harder To Regulate Oil Leasing On Public Lands

Emmer Co-Sponsored A Bill That Would Require Congressional Approval To Prohibit Or Delay Mineral, Oil, And Gas Leases On Federal Lands. "This bill requires the President and federal agencies to obtain the approval of Congress before prohibiting or substantially delaying certain new energy or mineral leases or permits on federal lands, including oil and gas leases, coal leases, hard rock leases, or critical minerals leases. In addition, the President and agencies must obtain the approval of Congress before withdrawing certain federal lands from mineral and geothermal leasing activities." [Congress.gov, [01/28/21](#)]

Jim Banks Has Taken Money From The Oil Industry While Promoting Deregulating Public Lands Oil Drilling And Opposing The America the Beautiful Initiative

The Oil And Gas Industry Has Given Tom Emmer \$194K Over His Federal Political Career

2015-2022: The Oil And Gas Industry Contributed \$103,040 To Banks' Political Career.

According to Open Secrets, the Oil & Gas industry contributed \$103,040 to Congressman Jim Banks' campaigns since 2015. [Open Secrets, [10/28/22](#)]

Jim Banks Called For More Domestic Oil And Gas Drilling Through Deregulation And Increased Permitting

Banks Co-Sponsored Boebert's Bill That Would Require Congressional Approval To Prohibit Or Delay Mineral, Oil, And Gas Leases On Federal Lands. " Sponsor: Rep. Boebert, Lauren [R-CO-3] The bill requires the President and federal agencies to obtain the approval of Congress before prohibiting or substantially delaying certain new energy or mineral leases or permits on federal lands, including oil and gas leases, coal leases, hard rock leases, or critical minerals leases. In addition, the President and agencies must obtain the approval of Congress before withdrawing certain federal lands from mineral and geothermal leasing activities. Further, the bill repeals the President's authority to withdraw unleased lands on the outer Continental Shelf from oil and gas leasing." [Congress.gov, [02/05/21](#)]

Jim Banks Opposes The America The Beautiful Initiative

Banks Signed A Letter To Biden In Opposition To 30x30, Saying The Initiative Displayed "Dangerous Thoughtlessness." "Therefore, we remain concerned that the 30 by 30 initiative will be used as a method to undermine private property rights, circumvent the multiple-use mandate, and lock up more land. [...] However, the 30 by 30 initiative displays a dangerous thoughtlessness and far too many of our questions have been left unanswered. [...] Jim Banks, Member of Congress" [Senator Romney, [03/15/21](#)]