

TESTIMONY OF HANS COLE
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS & ADVOCACY
PATAGONIA, INC
HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS,
AND PUBLIC LANDS
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Chairman Haaland, Ranking Member Young. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Hans Cole, and I am director of Campaigns and Advocacy for Patagonia. At Patagonia, we are in business to save our home planet. On behalf of our 3,000 employees, and their families and communities across America and around the world, I commend the Committee for tackling this issue, and I strongly urge you to take bold action to address our planet's climate crisis head-on before it is too late.

The science reflects what we see with our own eyes, and the voices of the American people and responsible businesses on the topic are clear. If we fail to change course, global temperatures will continue to rise and environmental emergencies – massive wildfires, deadly heat waves, disastrous hurricanes, major flooding, growing food shortages – will grow worse.

The U.S. Government's 2018 National Climate Assessment noted that ecological catastrophe will lead to an economic catastrophe, wiping out up to 10 percent of the American economy by 2100. That is not good for business, but it's even worse for our employees, our customers and your constituents who could see wages drop and unemployment rise.

We believe that clean renewable energy, regenerative organic farming, and purposeful public lands protection should play critical roles in addressing the climate crisis. Consistent with this Committee's interest in public lands, my testimony today will focus on purposeful protection of these important places and the need to transition to a more sustainable future.

America's public lands are one of our greatest collective assets but they are also the source of substantial greenhouse gas emissions. According to the [U.S. Geological Survey](#), almost a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions in the United States come from fossil fuels extracted from public lands or offshore waters. Oil, gas, and mining corporations are damaging our public lands and waters and worsening the climate crisis. This will get much worse as the Trump Administration continues an assault on land and water protections, despite outcries from outdoor enthusiasts and companies of all political stripes who together represent a nearly \$900 billion industry. We oppose:

- The Administration's proposed offshore leasing and drilling that would make more than 90% of U.S. waters available to oil and gas companies, including the entire Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the entire Gulf of Mexico, and most of Alaska's available coastal waters.
- An attack on Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that would open one of our planet's last truly wild places to drilling and accelerate the destruction of the Western Arctic.

- Slashing the size of Utah's Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments, in violation of the Antiquities Act.

The Administration's actions not only rob Native people and all Americans of their natural and cultural heritage, threaten communities that depend on the outdoor industry for economic survival, poison our water and air, and wreak untold damage on vulnerable species -- they also exacerbate the climate crisis. Opening up public lands to more extraction will increase emissions and destroy ecosystems that help mitigate climate change by storing carbon.

Instead, Congress should impose a moratorium on oil and gas drilling in federal waters and bar drilling in Alaska's remaining wild places. We urge you to restore Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments, and support measures like Senator Udall and Representative Haaland's bill to make it clear that the President has no authority to undermine the protection of America's National Monuments.

Congress should also permanently reauthorize and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which has used a small percentage of revenues from existing offshore drilling leases to protect five million acres of public parks, wildlife habitats, and recreation areas across the country. Instead of further slicing up our important landscapes and waterways, we should build wildlife overpasses and underpasses, invest in communities eager to remove unsafe and damaging dams and diversions, and strengthen large-scale wildlife corridors for migratory species. These are all bipartisan solutions that address climate issues and appeal to the outdoor

enthusiasts in every single state, as well as the small and big businesses that rely on tourism and protected natural resources for their livelihood.

Along with protecting our public lands as one of our greatest resources to combat climate change, we must also transition our economy to rely on clean, renewable energy. Congress should stop spending taxpayer dollars subsidizing large oil and gas companies and approving destructive projects like the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, and reverse the drive to loosen restrictions on coal-fired power plants, inefficient cars and trucks, and polluters of all kinds.

Patagonia supports proposals to transition to 100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2050. We need to invest in transformative research and green infrastructure like a smart electric grid. Congress should provide incentives to encourage American consumers and businesses to install solar panels, build wind turbines, buy electric vehicles, and retrofit buildings to make them more energy efficient.

The traditional “all-of-the-above” approach has unfortunately relied on the false promise of outdated technologies like nuclear plants and hydroelectric dams that have catastrophic consequences for our environment by producing toxic waste and driving species to extinction. The only viable path for the planet’s survival is to embrace wind, solar, geothermal, and other truly clean and renewable sources of energy.

This transition toward a less-polluting economy must account for how American's food is grown and distributed. Agriculture is a significant part of the American economy, contributing billions to GDP, and is also a source of substantial greenhouse gas emissions, emitting about 650 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually. But how we grow our food also holds great promise in combatting climate change. At Patagonia we have helped develop a new standard – the Regenerative Organic Certification – that builds on current organic practices to improve soil health. Regenerative organic farming has the potential to remove carbon from the atmosphere, storing it in the soil. Studies indicate that if we moved from current industrial farming to regenerative organic practices we could sequester enough carbon to slow, if not completely halt, the growing amount of CO₂ in our atmosphere. And experts agree we could feed our growing population using regenerative organic farming.

If Congress takes bold action in all these areas –protecting public lands and waters and promoting a change to clean, renewable energy along with encouraging regenerative organic agriculture – it will challenge the private sector to step up as well. Patagonia will continue to do our part.

We are re-investing \$10 million we received from the 2017 irresponsible corporate tax cuts by donating to groups that are fighting to protect our air, land, and water to save our planet.

Patagonia is committed to becoming carbon neutral across our entire business—including across our supply chain—by 2025. That means we will reduce, capture or otherwise mitigate all of the carbon emissions we create, including the emissions from the factories that make our textiles and finished clothing. We will use only renewable or recycled materials in our products, and by 2020

we will use only renewable electricity in our stores and offices. We are similarly piloting products made and built compliant with the new Regenerative Organic Certification to show the world that products can be built using these practices.

Patagonia will continue to encourage our community and customers to participate in the democratic process. As long as polluters wield power, Patagonia will speak out and fight back. We will proudly and transparently support candidates and causes we believe in.

Please make 2019 the year that the United States finally takes decisive action to fight the climate crisis. Please reclaim our public lands and water from the polluters and give them back to the people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today. I look forward to any questions you may have for me.