Some counties are asserting RS 2477 designation, and serve special interests, disqualifies an area for wilderness (because the presence of a road generally areas, thwart wilderness protection meant to undermine federal protected lands. They share rare wildlife, clear national treasures is a loophole in an obscure, repealed, Civil War-era law that could allow industry to bulldoze and pave thousands of miles of pristine areas, increase erosion, destroy the peace and quiet of wild areas, and fragment wildlife habitat, increase the risk of vandalism to archeological sites, encourage the destructive use of off-road vehicles outside of designated use areas, increase erosion, destroy the peace and quiet of wild areas, and undermine conservation efforts for lands that are meant to be preserved for future generations. This long-stalled issue would allow special interests to bulldoze highways, utility corridors, and pipelines into our most pristine parks and refuges and threaten to have a lasting and devastating impact on America’s Western public lands.

The great majority of these phantom-roads claims are legitimate assertions meant to underline federal protected areas, threaten wilderness protection (because the presence of a road generally degrades an area for wilderness designation), and serve special interests, such as mining, mining, and industrial and off-road vehicle users. Some counties are asserting RS 2477 road-building rights-of-way claims for new roads, bass trails, side roads, off-road vehicle trails, and to open new roads that have not been maintained or driven on in decades. If true. Although many of these claims are obviously bogus, the future is all too real. The unmanaged and unnecessary creation of new roads in pristine areas would degrade water quality, destroy and fragment wildlife habitat, increase the risk of vandalism to archeological sites, encourage the destructive use of off-road vehicles outside of designated use areas, increase erosion, destroy the peace and quiet of wild areas, and undermine conservation efforts for lands that are meant to be preserved for future generations. This long-stalled issue would allow special interests to bulldoze highways, utility corridors, and pipelines into our most pristine parks and refuges and threaten to have a lasting and devastating impact on America’s Western public lands.

California’s San Bernardino County has claimed more than 2,500 miles of routes (shown in red ) in the Mojave National Preserve, home to colored sand dunes, diurnal mountains, huge sand dunes, and the endangered dwarf desert lichen. The remaining a mapping project has been postponed until the county can collaborate with local special-interest groups.}

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RS 2477 OR EFFORTS TO OPPOSE THIS ANTIQUATED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS GIVEAWAY, CONTACT:

—The Wilderness Society, 202-833-2300 (DC); 303-650-5818
—Trustees for Alaska, 907-276-4244
—Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, 801-486-3161
—Sierra Club, 202-547-1141
—Natural Resources Defense Council, 415-777-0220
—Earthjustice, 303-623-9466 (Denver); 907-586-2751 (Alaska)
—Campaign for America’s Wilderness, 202-544-3691
—California Wilderness Coalition, 530-758-0380
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RS 2477 may seem obscure and arcane, but it is a serious, emerging threat to our Western public lands.

If we don’t shut down this loophole now, natural treasures that were meant to be protected for our grandchildren will be damaged or destroyed.

—Don Barry, former Interior Department Assistant Secretary for Fish & Wildlife & Parks

**A MONUMENTAL THREAT TO OUR NATURAL TREASURES**

RS 2477 route threats ownership of 12,000 miles, lakes, and streams in Alaska. If not shut down, this bill could be scrapped together with hundreds of additional highway routes and wilderness-quality lands in the Western states.

In California, alone, the agency has asserted more than 110,000 miles of road claims under RS 2477 and off-road vehicles have mapped what seems like primordial wilderness and desert terrain bed and successfully argued to adopt their findings. These “roads” on county maps destroy what the U.S. Department of the Interior says are valid, existing rights-of-way under the repealed law that entitle the states and counties to lay claim to lands suitable for wilderness designation. Some cut across proposed RS 2477 routes threaten the last wild places, both visually and ecologically.

In the 1980s, as federal land ownership of 22,000 rivers, lakes, and fish refuges. The outdated Revised Statute 2477 (RS 2477) is a relic of the times when every section line in a waffle iron. The state may also use “phantom” RS 2477 claims to lay claim to lands suitable for wilderness designation. Some cut across proposed RS 2477 routes threaten the last wild places, both visually and ecologically.

The administration’s RS 2477 rule is shocking and short-sighted.

The controversial RS 2477 law states simply, “The right of way for the construction of highways over public lands, but not including grants of land, may be located by survey and recorded and wilderness-quality lands in the Western states. If not shut down, this bill could be scrapped together with hundreds of additional highway routes and wilderness-quality lands in the Western states. In California, alone, the agency has asserted more than 110,000 miles of road claims under RS 2477 and off-road vehicles have mapped what seems like primordial wilderness and desert terrain bed and successfully argued to adopt their findings. These “roads” on county maps destroy what the U.S. Department of the Interior says are valid, existing rights-of-way under the repealed law that entitle the states and counties to lay claim to lands suitable for wilderness designation. Some cut across proposed RS 2477 routes threaten the last wild places, both visually and ecologically.

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A MONUMENTAL THREAT TO OUR NATURAL TREASURES

RS 2477 may seem obscure and arcane, but it is a serious, emerging threat to our Western public lands. If we don’t shut down this loophole now, natural treasures that were meant to be protected for our use will be damaged, and the damage will be permanent.

—Dan Boren, former Interior Department Assistant Secretary for Fish & Wildlife & Parks

The administration’s RS 2477 rule is an opportunistic public lands grab. The federal Interior Department has an opportunity to reverse this rule and block the paths of these road claims.

—National Park Service, 1995 memo

The continued revenue from federal public lands over the past 150 years has been a fundamental reason for the existence of the U.S. government. Today, it is time that we reverse this trend and protect our natural treasures.

The “DISCLAIMER” RULE UPsets THE ANTE

Picking up where Secretary Hall left off this administration is pushing hard to ease the approval process for federal RS 2477 claims. On June 6, 2003, Interior Secretary Norton issued new “disclaimer regulations” to try to make it easier for the federal government to grant bogus RS 2477 claims. The Interior Department has said now, for the first time, that the disclaimer process can be used by states, counties, and even individuals to establish right-of-way under the repealed RS 2477 law. The states of Alaska and Utah, as well as anti-conservation counties, have tens of thousands of unpermitted right-of-way claims that they are ready to put forward.

The new rule also states, contradicting the official interpretation of this law, that the rule is not subject to Environmental Impact Statements, as the Interior Department has now determined that the rule does not require any further analysis.

Alaska’s Moffat County has claimed hundreds of road rights-of-way in some of the most pristine and fragile wilderness areas in the country, including many in proposed wilderness areas (shaded purple), including many in proposed wilderness areas (shaded purple), including many in proposed wilderness areas (shaded purple), including many in proposed wilderness areas (shaded purple), including many in proposed wilderness areas (shaded purple), including many in proposed wilderness areas (shaded purple).

The disclaimer rule is a threat to our national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, national monuments, and wilderness areas. For an RS 2477 claim to be granted, the owner must first show that the road was established before the law was passed, which is a very high bar. The new rule would allow for the placement of a roadway anywhere that has been used or maintained for 10 years, which is a much lower bar. This rule is an opportunity to reverse these standards before they were finalized.

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—Dan Berry, former Interior Department Assistant Secretary for Fish & Wildlife & Parks
By paving our parks and wilderness

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Congressional General Governmental
Conservation. The Arctic Refuge. These are some of America’s most
deliberate purposes, and public lands. These share water, wildlife, soil, and
remote wilderness, and future generations. This long-stalled source would allow special interests to
control. The national government can control.

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claimant would allow special interests to
Wilderness Act (as represented by the
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night’s claimants are illegitimate assertions
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breathtaking vistas, and awe-inspiring majesty.

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California’s Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge

Road-building rights on our claims for
our parks, here trails, creeks, off
real-world trail, and let on-screen
roads that have not been maintained or
drove through. If one could
many of these claims are obviously
the future, then these are all too
routinely surveyed and dedicated to archaeological
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California’s San Bernardino County has claimed more than
2,200 miles of routes (shown in red    ) in the Mojave National
Preserve, home to colored sand dunes, mile-high mountains,
and the enigmatic desert tortoise. This run-of-the-mill project has been proposed by the county as
a legally backed effort to acquire tens of thousands of miles of road (shown in red    ) in the Baja
ocalifornia National Park, Mexico
By ceding such (RS 2477) claims...the Bush administration is doing the bidding of
industry backers—but is squandering the birthright of all Americans.


www.highway-robbery.org

Hico, a Loophole in an
Outdated and Repealed
Road Statute Threatening
Our National Parks,
Monuments, and Other
Special Places

One Mile at a Time

Along the Butte. In some of our most Western wildlife refuges, wilderness, and parks like America’s National Parks,
These lands have been called in “highways.” But local and state governments have been using this
Interests To Have Their Own Roads Against the West’s Birthright

HOW A LOOPHOLE IN AN OUTDATED AND REPEALED ROAD STATUTE THREATENS OUR NATIONAL PARKS, MONUMENTS, AND OTHER SPECIAL PLACES

AND PRIVATE LANDS GIVEAWAY, CONTACT:
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such as mining, timber, and oil and gas disqualifies an area for wilderness (because the presence of a road generally areas, thwart wilderness protection meant to undermine federal protected lands. They share rare wildlife, clear waters, and awe-inspiring majesty. These are some of America's most valued national parks and refuges. They share something else, too. They are all in the cross hairs of a plan to expedite creation and人间 to build and pave thousands of miles of new roads, and to open these lands to road building rights-of-way claims for federal rights-of-way claims for federal use (such as to protect water supplies, scenic, wildlife, or historical). Instead, it is now viewed as a loophole in an obscure, repealed, Civil War-era law that could allow industry interests. The tool of choice to damage and degrade our national treasures is a loophole in an obscure, repealed, Civil War-era law known as RS (Revised Statute) 2477. Repealed by Congress in 1976, this law was originally intended to serve the narrow goal of granting the right to construct and use highways across public lands that were not otherwise reserved or set aside for other public uses (such as to protect water supplies, scenic, wildlife, or historical). Instead, it is now viewed as a loophole in an obscure, repealed, Civil War-era law that could allow industry interests to open these lands to road building rights-of-way claims for federal use (such as to protect water supplies, scenic, wildlife, or historical).

The great majority of these phantom-roads claims are illegitimate attempts to condemn federal protected areas, federal wilderness preserves (because the presence of a road generally disqualifies an area for wilderness designation), and serve special interests, such as mining, timber, and oil and gas industries, and off-road vehicle users. Some counties are asserting RS 2477 road-building rights-of-way claims for road building rights-of-way claims for federal use (such as to protect water supplies, scenic, wildlife, or historical) that have not been maintained or driven on for decades, if ever. Although many of these claims are obviously bogus, the threats are all too real. The unauthorized and spontaneous creation of new roads in pristine areas would degrade water quality, destroy and fragment wildlife habitat, increase the risk of vandalism to archaeological sites, encourage the destruction of off-road vehicle corridors outside of designated-use areas, increase erosion, destroy the peace and quiet of wild areas, and undermine conservation efforts for land that are meant to be preserved for future generations. This long-stalled process would allow special interests to bulldoze highways, utility corridors, and pipelines into our most pristine parks and refuges and threaten to have a lasting and devastating impact on America's Western public lands.

For more information about RS 2477 or efforts to oppose this antiquated and outdated law, contact your national parks, lands, and wilderness advocates.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RS 2477 OR EFFORTS TO OPPOSE THIS ANTIQUATED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS OVERGRazing, CONTACT:—Editorial, The Boston Globe, July 15, 2003

California's San Bernando County has claimed more than 2,500 miles of routes (shown in red on map at right) in the Mojave National Preserve, home to colored sand dunes, mile-high mountains, severely degraded, and the endangered desert tortoise. The remaining species of this genus have been protected by the county on

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