

# Good Samaritan Remediation of Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act

## *Creating clean water for communities and the environment.*

The *Good Samaritan Remediation of Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act of 2024* (S.2781/H.R.7779) would enable qualified conservation organizations and state agencies to voluntarily tackle cleanups that improve water quality. Abandoned hardrock mines are a huge environmental liability, but nobody is responsible for these messes...unless someone wants to help fix the problem. Then they could be held legally responsible under the Clean Water Act and CERCLA for pollution they didn't create, stopping remediation projects before they start. This bill is a commonsense solution to this problem.



### A NATIONWIDE CRISIS IN OUR OWN BACKYARDS

**100,000** – Miles of streams in the U.S. listed as impaired for acidity and heavy metals, the kind of pollution caused by acid mine drainage.

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**40 percent** – Number of headwater streams in the western U.S. that the EPA estimates are contaminated from historical mining activity.

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**\$2.9 billion** – Federal agency spending over 10 years for cleanups in 46 states, only scratching the surface of a \$50+ billion problem.

#### WHAT WOULD GOOD SAM DO?

- Establish a new EPA pilot program to permit up to 15 low-risk projects.
- Mining is strictly prohibited.
- Provides a “do no harm” conditional liability shield for Good Samaritans.
- Requires public notice, NEPA analysis, comment period, and public hearing.
- Only addresses liability under Clean Water Act and CERCLA.
- Notice and comment for Tribal, local and state governments.
- Projects designed to improve environmental conditions.
- Applicant must have a third-party financial assurance mechanism.
- Anyone who caused or contributed to pollution is not eligible.

#### WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS WOULD QUALIFY?

S.2781/H.R.7779 would enable public and private entities to voluntarily tackle cleanups that otherwise wouldn't happen:

- A conservation organization could partner with the Forest Service to create a wetland that treats acid mine drainage leaking into a stream located on public lands.
- State agencies could employ local contractors to clean up abandoned mine sites that are hazards to communities through the installation of a passive water treatment systems.
- A volunteer, non-liable Good Samaritan mining company could help a local watershed group remove contaminated tailings piles eroding into a stream and restore the streamside riparian area.
- A conservation district could leverage grant funding and apply for an investigative sampling permit to quantify baseline conditions and design a project to treat hazardous mine waste.

A Good Samaritan pilot program would encourage qualified volunteers to conduct low-risk cleanups implemented with EPA oversight. This would improve water quality and the environment, protect community health, and help foster a restoration economy.

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**For more information,** visit: [www.tu.org/goodsam](http://www.tu.org/goodsam)

## BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IN CONGRESS

Led by Reps. **Susie Lee (D-NV)**, **Celeste Maloy (R-UT)** and **Mary Peltola (D-AK)** H.R.7779 has 32 bipartisan cosponsors:

Rep. John Curtis (R-UT)	Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV)	Rep. Russ Fulcher (R-ID)
Rep. Brittany Pettersen (D-CO)	Rep. Blake Moore (R-UT)	Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA)
Rep. Burgess Owens (R-UT)	Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO)	Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT)
Rep. Steven Horsford (D-NV)	Rep. Lauren Boebert (R-CO) Rep.	Rep. Dusty Johnson (R-SD)
Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV)	Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV)	Rep. Kim Schrier (D-WA)
Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO)	Rep. Rick Crawford (R-AR)	Rep. Troy Nehls (R-TX)
Rep. Aaron Bean (R-FL)	Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA)	Rep. Sykes (D-OH)
Rep. Gabe Vasquez (D-NM)	Rep. Garrett Graves (R-LA)	Rep. Vince Fong (R-CA)
Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID)	Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA)	Rep. Pete Stauber (R-MN)
Rep. Yadira Caraveo (D-CO)	Rep. Elijah Crane (R-AZ)	Rep. Reuben Gallego (D-AZ)
Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA)	Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM)	

Led by Senators **Martin Heinrich (D-NM)** and **James Risch (R-ID)** S.2781 has 39 bipartisan cosponsors:

Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID)	Senator John Thune (R-SD)	Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) Senator
Senator John Hickenlooper (D-CO)	Senator Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ)	Jeff Merkley (D-OR)
Senator Steve Daines (R-MT)	Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND)	Senator Mike Braun (R-IN)
Senator Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM)	Senator Tina Smith (D-MN)	Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)
Senator Mark Kelly (D-AZ)	Senator Ted Budd (R-NC)	Senator Mitt Romney (R-UT)
Senator Cynthia Lummis (R-WY)	Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV)	Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA)	Senator John Boozman (R-AR)	Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA)
Senator Mike Lee (R-UT)	Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO) Senator	Senator Jon Tester (D-MT)
Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)	Dan Sullivan (R-AK)	Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD)
Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)	Senator Laphonza Butler (D-CA)	Senator Brain Schatz (D-HI)
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)	Senator John Barrasso (R-WY)	Senator Mullin (R-OK)
Senator John Hoeven (R-ND)	Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV)	Senator Peter Welch (D-VT)
Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)	Senator Thomas Tillis (R-NC)	Senator Cotton (R-AR)

## BROAD STAKEHOLDER ENDORSEMENTS

The *Good Samaritan Remediation of Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act of 2024* is endorsed by the following:

Angler Action Foundation	Great Old Broads for Wilderness	Planning and Conservation League
American Fisheries Society	Houston Safari Club	Pope & Young Club
American Fly Fishing Trade Association	Interstate Mining Compact Commission	Property and Environment
American Exploration and Mining Association	Izaak Walton League of America	Research Center
American Rivers	Mule Deer Foundation	Public Lands Foundation
American Sportfishing Association	National Association of Forest Service Retirees	Quail Forever
Archery Trade Association	National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Arizona Dept. of Environmental Quality	National Congress of American Indians	Regeneration
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies	National Deer Association	Rivian
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	National Mining Association	Securing America's Future Energy
Bass Anglers Sportsman Society	National Shooting Sports Foundation	Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters
Bonefish & Tarpon Trust	National Wildlife Federation	The Nature Conservancy
Boone and Crockett Club	National Wild Turkey Federation	The Wildlife Society
California Outdoor Recreation Partnership	National Parks Conservation Association	Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
California Trout	New York State Conservation Council	Trout Unlimited
Campfire Club of America	North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Coalition	Western Governors Association
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation	Orion: The Hunter's Institute	Western States Water Council
Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports	Outdoor Alliance	Whitetails Unlimited
Delta Waterfowl	Outdoor Recreation Roundtable	Wild Salmon Center
Ducks Unlimited	Pheasants Forever	Wild Sheep Foundation
Ecoflight		Wildlife Forever
Fly Fishers International		Wildlife Mississippi
Granite Outdoor Alliance		Wildlife Management Institute
		North American Grouse Partnership