

**Josh Wilson**

2691 Dartmoor Road.

Scenic, AZ 86432 #805

josh@byandforthepeople.org

8014145574

**Date:** 9/26/2025

**The Honorable Paul Gosar, Chair**

**The Honorable Maxine Dexter, Ranking Member**

**House Natural Resources Committee**

**Oversight & Investigations Subcommittee**

1324 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

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**Subject: Request for Oversight Into Biotechnology Transparency on Public Lands**

Dear Chair Gosar, Ranking Member Dexter, and Members of the Subcommittee,

Under **House Rule X**, your Subcommittee has primary jurisdiction to **oversee federal agencies, programs, and policies** connected to public lands, natural resources, energy development, and conservation. This authority includes ensuring that these agencies act with **transparency, accountability, and efficient stewardship of taxpayer funds**.

Recent **federal regulatory changes** raise serious concerns that public lands and conservation dollars may now be used to advance biotechnology projects without meaningful public oversight:

- **USDA APHIS (July 2025):** Stopped requiring Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) or Environmental Assessments (EA) for most genetically engineered plants and trees. This allows large-scale biotech introductions to move forward **with no traditional environmental review or public comment**.
- **Endangered Species Act Revisions (2024):** Allow project developers to classify portions of their Habitat Conservation Plans as **Confidential Business Information (CBI)**, hiding key details from public disclosure and exclude accountability if unintended consequences occur.
- **NEPA Phase 2 Rule (2024, partially vacated 2025):** Imposed strict page limits and deadlines that **compress public comment periods**, while expanding **categorical exclusions** that bypass review entirely — including for genetically engineered plants, animal vaccines and genetically engineered insects and animals with no EIS!

These changes together create a situation where **biotechnology projects can be deployed on public lands without local communities even knowing what is being introduced into their environment. but wait there more, the public will be funding it.**

**Local Impact: Mohave County**

Congressman Gosar's **H.R. 1994 – Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act** will direct new federal revenues to counties like Mohave. While this funding is welcomed, **25% of these revenues are earmarked for conservation projects**, which could now include experimental biotech restoration efforts under the weakened review standards described above.

Without clear oversight, taxpayer dollars could quietly fund:

- Genetically engineered trees or vegetation plantings,
- Cloned or lab-created wildlife releases,
- Or other biotechnology-driven interventions,  
**without public disclosure or informed consent.**

As a resident of Mohave County, I believe our local government — and Congress — have a duty to **track, disclose, and debate** these activities before they move forward.

### **My Request**

I respectfully urge this Subcommittee to exercise its authority under House Rule X to:

1. **Investigate** how State, Federal, and Nonprofit organizations are using biotechnology and showcase how these regulatory changes will invite world scientists to experiment with science freely, with their names hidden, and without consequences.
2. **Clarify reporting requirements** for counties receiving federal conservation dollars under H.R. 1994 so that funds are spent transparently and have accountability.
3. **Consider legislation or rule guidance** to restore environmental review and public comment opportunities for projects involving genetic engineering or biotechnology in the communities that they are released in.
4. **Hold public hearings** to ensure affected communities can voice concerns about biotechnology use on public lands.

### **Closing**

Transparency is the foundation of public trust. Communities like mine deserve to know how federal dollars are spent and what technologies are being introduced into our lands and ecosystems. By using its oversight powers, this Subcommittee can help ensure that decisions affecting our environment and our way of life are made **in the open, not behind closed doors**. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. supporting documentation can be found on our website and i would be happy to participate in hearings to help shed light on these issues.

Respectfully,

**Josh Wilson**

[josh@byandforthepeople.org](mailto:josh@byandforthepeople.org)

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