

To Follow Through On Her Commitment To Protecting Arizona's Public Lands, Sen. Sinema Must Vote For Build Back Better And Its \$4.1 Billion Investment In National Parks

SUMMARY: After months of [tense negotiations](#) between the White House and Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), President Biden [released](#) a revised and trimmed version of his Build Back Better Act on October 28, 2021. While much attention [has been given](#) to Build Back Better's essential investments in protecting Arizona from climate change, the bill would also invest significantly in national parks.

Senator Sinema's state of Arizona—which has [seen alarming temperature increases](#) and heat related deaths in recent years—is home to six national parks, including the renowned Grand Canyon National Park. National parks [are warming at double the rate](#) of the national average, with climate change especially threatening the Grand Canyon's water supply, ecosystem, and billions in benefits to local economies.

Senator Sinema has previously [advocated](#) for protecting the Grand Canyon, saying "Arizona's economy depends on protecting the Grand Canyon and ensuring it remains and safe and stunning part of our state." Meanwhile, key national park conservationists like the National Parks Conservation Association [insist](#) that Build Back Better is necessary to preserve and protect our national parks. **To follow through on her commitment to Arizona's public lands, Sen. Sinema must vote for Build Back Better and its \$4.1 billion investment in the country's national parks.**

According to an Accountable.US analysis of [recently released](#) legislative text, Build Back Better provides:

- **\$675 million just to the National Park Service, including:**
 - **\$25 million for historical conservation and preservation of parks**, including Native American lands.
 - **\$50 million for National Heritage Area Partnerships**, which utilize public-private partnerships for conservation, historical preservation, and education programs.
 - **\$500 million for hiring National Parks employees** in the wake of "[systemwide staffing shortages](#)" that put visitors at risk.
- **\$3.5 billion for National Parks and Bureau of Land Management projects, including:**
 - **\$1.25 Billion for conservation, protection, and resilience of lands** administered by the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management.
 - **\$750 million for conservation and ecosystem and habitat restoration** on lands administered by the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management.
 - **\$500 million for wildfire management** following a record-setting fire season in which wildfires burned more Arizona acres than "[the acreage burned in the next four-most burned states combined.](#)"

Climate Change Is Wreaking Havoc On Senator Sinema's State Of Arizona And Its Renowned National Parks, Including The Grand Canyon.

Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Who Opposed President Biden's Original Build Back Better Framework, Has Yet To Publicly Oppose Or Endorse President

Biden's Revised Version Of Build Back Better, Which Was Last Updated On November 3, 2021.

Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) Is A Democratic Senator Representing The State Of Arizona. [Ballotpedia, accessed [10/29/21](#)]

Late August 2021: Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) Firmly Stated Her Opposition To The Cost Of Democrats' Build Back Better Agenda, A Move That Threatened To "Derail" President Biden's Economic Agenda. "Sen. Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona is doubling down in her opposition to the \$3.5 trillion price tag of a party-line spending plan Democrats are assembling to secure much of President Joe Biden's economic agenda. It may compel Democrats to dramatically scale back their ambitions in order to get her support." [Business Insider, [08/23/21](#)]

October 28, 2021: After "Months Of Tense Negotiations," President Biden Released A New Version Of The Build Back Better Framework, Which Featured Cuts To Several Proposals. "President Joe Biden announced Thursday that he had reached a deal with Senate Democratic holdouts on the outlines of a \$1.75 trillion social spending and climate bill. The product of months of tense negotiations between moderate and progressive lawmakers in his party, the new framework contains more details than anything else the White House has released thus far." [CNBC, [10/28/21](#)]

- **The Cost Of The Legislation Had Been Reduced To \$1.75 Trillion From \$3.5 Trillion.** "President Joe Biden announced Thursday that he had reached a deal with Senate Democratic holdouts on the outlines of a \$1.75 trillion social spending and climate bill. [...] The current framework is far smaller than Biden's original \$3.5 trillion proposal. The House Rules Committee released a draft of the reconciliation text Thursday afternoon." [CNBC, [10/28/21](#)]

As Of October 28, 2021, Senator Sinema Had Neither Opposed Nor Publicly Endorsed President Biden's Newly Released And Revised Build Back Better Framework. "This halving of the bill's top-line cost is a concession to the austere tastes of Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema. And the framework's details reflect those senators' various ideological hang-ups. In effect, the Democratic leadership has put together a list of programs and tax hikes that the party's right flank hasn't explicitly ruled out. As of this writing, however, Manchin and Sinema have not publicly endorsed the framework either." [New York Magazine, [10/28/21](#)]

November 1, 2021: Democrats Were "Closing In On A Compromise" To Get Senator Sinema's Support For Build Back Better. "Congressional Democrats say they are closing in on a compromise to change some drug pricing practices, with negotiators working through the weekend and Monday to convince key holdouts like Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) to support the last-minute deal." [Washington Post, [11/01/21](#)]

November 3, 2021: Democrats Updated The Language Of The Build Back Better Act, Retaining Funding For National Parks And Public Lands. [H.R. 5376, The Build Back Better Act, Pg. 109, [11/03/21](#)]

Arizona Is The Fourth Fastest Warming State And Has Experienced Heat Related Deaths In Recent Years Due To Record Setting Temperatures—In June 2021, "Nearly Every Square Inch" Of The State Of Arizona Set Record High Temperatures.

Arizona Is The Fourth Fastest Warming State In The United States. [States at Risk, accessed [11/04/21](#)]

2021 HEADLINE: "Heat Killed A Record Number Of People In Arizona Last Year, 'A Staggering Increase'"[Arizona Republic, [01/31/21](#)]

In 2020, The Number Of Heat Related Deaths In Arizona "Soared To A New High" Of 494 Deaths. "The number of heat-related deaths in Arizona soared to a new high last year as people endured the hottest summer on record and the complications of the pandemic. The deaths of at least 494 people were linked to heat during 2020, state health officials said this week, a preliminary number that may continue to grow as more deaths under investigation are resolved." [Arizona Republic, [01/31/21](#)]

June 2021: "Nearly Every Square Inch" Of The State Of Arizona Set A Record High. "The National Weather Service in Flagstaff noted it was likely that nearly every square inch of Arizona set a record high Wednesday." [NBC, [06/17/21](#)]

Arizona's Heat Wave Days Are Projected To Triple By 2050. [States at Risk, States Report Card, [2015](#)]

National Parks, Like Those In Arizona, Are Warming Twice The Rate Of The National Average.

Arizona Has Three National Parks, Including The Grand Canyon National Park, As Well As " Four National Monuments Administered By The Bureau Of Land Management." "There are 24 National Park Service (NPS) units in Arizona including three national parks (Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, Saguaro), plus another four national monuments administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)." [The American Southwest, accessed [11/04/21](#)]

A 2018 Study Conducted By UC Berkeley And The University Of Wisconsin-Madison Found That Temperatures In National Parks Are Increasing At Double The National Rate. "A hotter, drier future awaits U.S. national parks, monuments, historic sites and memorials compared to the nation as a whole, based on the first analysis of climate change impacts across all 417 parks done by UC Berkeley and University of Wisconsin-Madison. [...] The findings showed that temperatures in national parks increased at double the national rate, while rainfall decreased across more of the park sites over the past century." [Inde Arizona, [12/05/18](#)]

Grand Canyon National Park—One Of The Most Visited National Parks—Is Expected To Suffer Water Shortages And Ecosystem Collapse Due To Climate Change.

Grand Canyon National Park Was The 6th Most Visited National Park In 2020, With 2.9 Million Recreational Visitors. [National Park Service, accessed [11/04/21](#)]

In 2019, Grand Canyon National Park Was The 2nd Most Visited National Park, With 6 Million Visitors. [USA Today, [02/07/21](#)]

2019 HEADLINE: "Climate Change Expected To Take A Toll On The Grand Canyon." [Arizona Daily Star, [02/21/19](#)]

Climate Change Will Make Weather In Grand Canyon National Park Less Predictable. "'It's fair to say that the predictability of weather seems to be less so (with climate change),' Gootee said. 'People often reference storms being more intense or frequent, or less frequent but way more intense. In the Grand Canyon, when it comes to climate change, there are definitely some things that are going to be impacted.'" [Arizona Daily Star, [02/21/19](#)]

Climate Change Will Affect Groundwater, Leading To Declining Spring Levels And Threatening Ecosystems In Grand Canyon National Park. "Gootee cited groundwater withdrawal as one of the most significant potential impacts of climate change in the Canyon. Increase in groundwater use or pumping can cause declining groundwater tables, which is the level below the surface of the ground where water can be found. This could then result in declining spring levels throughout the canyon.' The majority of ecosystems and wildlife rely on these springs, which are the minority of the Grand Canyon real estate. There aren't that many of them," he said. 'So, the impact on the springs will have a huge impact on the ecosystems on all levels.'" [Arizona Daily Star, [02/21/19](#)]

As Recently As This Year, Senator Sinema Has Stressed The Importance Of Grand Canyon National Park To Arizona And Its Economy—Meanwhile, National Parks Conservation Experts Are Calling On The Passage Of Build Back Better To Protect National Parks And Their Communities.

Senator Sinema Has Frequently Stressed The Importance Of National Parks To Arizona, Once Stating, "Arizona's Economy Depends On Protecting The Grand Canyon."

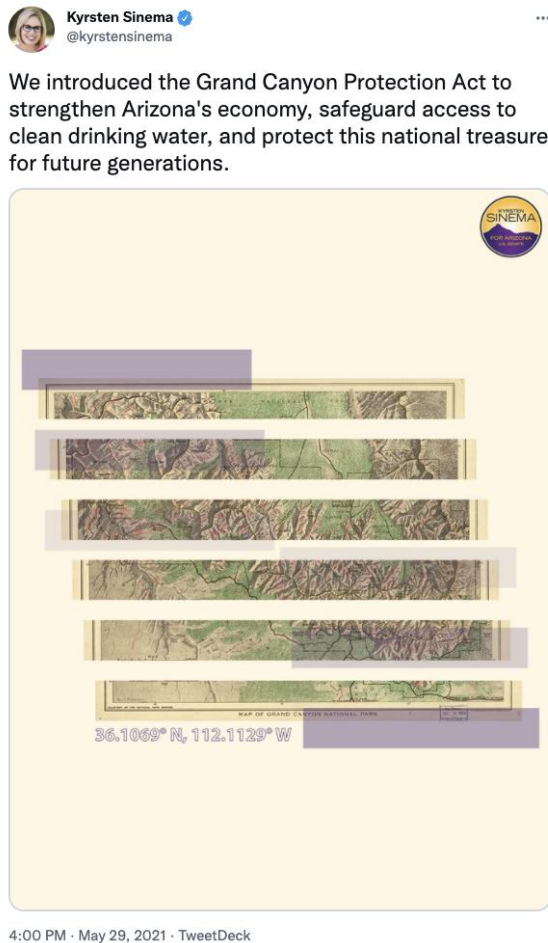
Senator Sinema In February 2021: "Arizona's Economy Depends On Protecting The Grand Canyon And Ensuring It Remains And Safe And Stunning Part Of Our State." "Arizona's economy depends on protecting the Grand Canyon and ensuring it remains a safe and stunning part of our state for generations to come," said Sinema. [Senator Sinema, [02/23/21](#)]

- **In 2018, Grand Canyon Visitation Generated \$1.2 Billion In Local Economic Benefits.** "A new National Park Service (NPS) report shows that the 6.3 million visitors to Grand Canyon National Park in 2018 spent \$947 million in communities near the park. That spending supported 12,558 jobs in the local area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$1.2 billion." [National Parks Service, [05/28/19](#)]

Senator Sinema In June 2020: "Protecting Arizona's Public Lands Strengthens Our Outdoor Recreation Industry, Boosting Opportunities For Arizona Businesses And Creating Good-Paying Jobs." "The Sinema-backed Great American Outdoors Act addresses over \$507 million in deferred maintenance needs in Arizona and provides full, permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Arizona has received \$250 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to protect lands like the Grand Canyon and Saguaro National Park and ensure recreation access for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. 'Protecting Arizona's public lands strengthens our outdoor recreation industry, boosting opportunities for Arizona businesses and creating good-paying jobs,' said Sinema." [Senator Sinema, [06/17/20](#)]

February 2021: Senator Sinema Introduced The Grand Canyon Protection Act To Ban Uranium Mining Around Grand Canyon National Park. "Sinema and Kelly's Grand Canyon Protection Act prohibits new uranium mining around Grand Canyon National Park, protecting Arizona's water supply, outdoor recreation and tourism industries, and tribal communities. Currently, the Grand Canyon welcomes over 6 million visitors a year, contributes \$1.2 billion to local economies, and supports over 12,500 jobs in the region." [Senator Sinema, [02/23/21](#)]

May 2021: Senator Sinema Tweeted "We Introduced The Grand Canyon Protection Act To Strengthen Arizona's Economy [...] And Protect This National Treasure."



[Twitter, [05/29/21](#)]

The National Parks Conservation Association Has Publicly Called For The Passage Of Build Back Better, Saying Congress "Must" Pass Build Back Better's "Historic Investments In Our Clean Energy Future And Climate Resilience Measures For Parks Ravaged By Flood, Fire And Drought."

The National Parks Conservation Association Is An Organization With A Mission To "Protect And Enhance America's National Park System For Present And Future Generations." [National Parks Conservation Association, accessed [11/09/21](#)]

The National Parks Conservation Association Brings Policy Experts, Volunteers, Lobbyists, And Community Organizers Together To Educate The Public And Influence Conservation Policy Decisions. "From our national headquarters in Washington, D.C., and 27 locations nationwide, we call on our program and policy experts, committed volunteers, staff lobbyists, community organizers and communications specialists to inform and inspire the public and to influence decision makers to ensure that our national parks are well protected." [National Parks Conservation Association, accessed [11/09/21](#)]

The Senior Director Of Environmental Policy And Climate Change For The National Parks Conservation Association Said Build Back Better "Includes Historic Investments In Our Clean Energy Future And Climate Resilience Measures For Parks Ravaged By Flood, Fire And Drought." "The Statement of Chad Lord, Senior Director of Environmental Policy and Climate Change for The National Parks Conservation Association: 'National parks and communities are on fire, under water, and inundated by storms. We need climate action now. This framework includes historic investments in our clean energy future and climate resilience measures for parks ravaged by flood, fire and drought. It would create jobs and drive investment in communities hit hardest by pollution. Congress must come together to make this framework a reality, helping protect America's most beloved public lands from irrevocable damage.'" [National Parks Conservation Association, [10/28/21](#)]

The National Parks Conservation Association Said Congress "Must" Pass Build Back Better To "Protect America's Most Beloved Public Lands From Irrevocable Damage Due To Climate Change.

"Congress must come together to make this framework a reality, helping protect America's most beloved public lands from irrevocable damage due to climate change." [National Parks Conservation Association, [10/28/21](#)]

The Latest Version Of Build Back Better Would Provide The National Park Service With Up To \$4.1 Billion In Funding For Conservation, Historic Preservation, Employee Hiring, And Other Climate Priorities.

Build Back Better, As Released On November 3, 2021, Provides \$675 Million To Just To The National Park Service For Increasing Park Access, Preserving Heritage Sites, And Hiring Parks Service Employees.

Build Back Better Includes \$100 Million For National Park Service Development Of Urban Access To Parks. "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Director of the National Park Service for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$100,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2026, to carry out direct, competitive grants to localities for acquisition of land or interests in land, or for development of recreation facilities to create or significantly enhance access to parks or outdoor recreation in urban areas" [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 910, [11/03/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$25 Million To The National Parks Service For Historic Preservation, Including On Native American Lands. "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Director of the National Park Service for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$25,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2026, to provide funding through direct expenditure, contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, or technical assistance to States, Indian Tribes, the District of Columbia, and Territories to carry out preservation or historic preservation as defined by section 300315 of title 54, United States Code." [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 911, [11/03/21](#)]

- **The 2019 American Community Survey Found That Arizona Had The Highest Number Of Native Americans Of Any State.** [Stacker, [01/06/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$50 Million To The National Parks Service For National Heritage Area Partnerships. "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Director of the National Park Service for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$50,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2026, to carry out funding for National Heritage Area Partnerships" [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 911, [11/03/21](#)]

- **National Heritage Areas Are "Grassroots" Public-Private Partnerships Between The National Parks Service And Local Communities That Support Historic Preservation, Conservation, Tourism, And Education Programs.** "National Heritage Areas are a grassroots, community-driven approach to heritage conservation and economic development. Through public-private partnerships, NHA entities support historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, and educational projects." [National Parks Service, accessed [11/09/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$500 Million For Hiring National Parks Service Employees. "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$500,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2030, to hire employees in units of the National Park System." [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 912, [11/03/21](#)]

- **2020 Sierra Club Press Release Headline: "Staff Shortages Put National Parks Visitors At Risk."** [Sierra Club, [08/26/20](#)]
- **Summer 2021: The National Parks System Faced "Systemwide Staffing Shortages," After National Parks Lost 16% Of Its Staff Between 2011 And 2019.** "Most of the severe congestion

occurs at just a handful of the best-known parks, Montana's Republican Senator Steve Daines observed. Encouraging visits to some of the other 423 sites overseen by the National Park Service could ease crowding at marquee destinations, he said. Systemwide staffing shortages, however, leave the small parks ill-equipped to pick up that excess demand, said NPCA's Brengel. During the high-growth years of 2011 to 2019, the NPS lost 16% of its staff capacity, she said." [Bloomberg, [07/29/21](#)]

Build Back Better Also Includes \$3.5 Billion For National Parks And Bureau Of Land Management Projects, Including Conservation, Habitat Restoration, Wildfire Management, And Maintenance Projects.

Build Back Better Provides \$100,000,000 To The National Parks Service, Bureau Of Land Management, And Other Agencies For "More Efficient, Accurate, And Timely Reviews For Planning, Permitting, And Approval Processes." "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Department of the Interior for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$100,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2026, to provide for the development of more efficient, accurate, and timely reviews for planning, permitting, and approval processes for the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation" [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 905, [11/03/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$1.25 Billion To The Secretary Of The Interior For Projects Related To The "Conservation, Protection, And Resiliency Of Lands And Resources Administered By The National Park Service And Bureau Of Land Management." "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$1,250,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2031, to carry out projects for the conservation, protection, and resiliency of lands and resources administered by the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management" [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 906, [11/03/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$750,000,000 For Conservation, As Well As Ecosystem And Habitat Restoration, On Lands Administered By The National Parks Service And Bureau Of Land Management. "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$750,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2031, to carry out conservation, ecosystem and habitat restoration projects on lands administered by the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management. [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 907, [11/03/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$500,000,000 For Conservation, Resiliency, And Restoration On Lands Administered By The National Parks Service And Bureau Of Land Management. "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$500,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2031, to provide funding, including all expenses necessary to provide funding, through direct expenditure, grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, to perform appropriate conservation projects or resiliency or restoration projects, including all expenses necessary to carry out such projects, on public lands administered by the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management" [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 908, [11/03/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$500,000,000 For Wildfire Management Administered By The National Park Service And Bureau Of Land Management. "SEC. 70704. WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT. In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$500,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2031, for wildland fire management by the Bureau of Land Management or National Park Service" [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 908, [11/03/21](#)]

- **March 2021: Arizona Governor Doug Ducey (R-AZ) Warned Of A Severe Wildfire Season Similar To Last Year's, Which Was "One Of Arizona's Worst Wildfire Seasons In A Decade Due To An Ongoing Drought, Lack Of Rain And Vegetation Overgrowth."** "Several fires were ravaging their way across Arizona because of an unusually dry season. Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey and other fire

officials warned in mid-March about the likelihood of severe 2021 wildfires, saying that this season was expected to be similar to last year's — one of Arizona's worst wildfire seasons in a decade due to an ongoing drought, lack of rain and vegetation overgrowth." [Arizona Central, [07/29/21](#)]

- **July 2021: The National Interagency Fire Center Found That Arizona Wildfires Had Burned Nearly 480,000 Acres In 2021—"Higher Than The Acreage Burned In The Next Four Most-Burned States Combined."** "Close to 480,000 acres have burned in Arizona due to wildfires so far this year, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. That number of acres is higher than the acreage burned in the next four most-burned states combined, the Boise-based center reported on July 7." [12News, [07/12/21](#)]

Build Back Better Includes \$400,000,000 For Deferred Maintenance Projects Within The National Park System, Including Housing For National Park Service Employees. "In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior for fiscal year 2022, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$400,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2026, for carrying out priority deferred maintenance projects, which may include resolving directly-related infrastructure deficiencies, including through direct expenditures or transfer authority, within the boundaries of the National Park System and to provide housing, including expenses necessary to provide housing, for—(1) field employees of the National Park Service pursuant to subchapter III of chapter 1013 of title 25 54, United States Code;" [House Rules Committee, H.R. 5376, pg. 909, [11/03/21](#)]