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On November 13, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a markup of 16 bills pertaining to energy, parks, and public lands. Of the 16 bills, 12 were passed out of committee by a voice vote, addressing wilderness designations, grazing management issues, and historic site protections. Four bills underwent further discussion before passing, three by roll call vote and one by voice vote.

The National Park Access Act (S. 2104) would authorize the National Park Service (NPS) to reimburse states for money spent keeping parks and forests open during the 2013 government shutdown, and it was passed by a voice vote. A related bill, the Public Access to Public Land Guarantee Act (S. 1750), would institute a standing agreement for continued operation of parks and forests in the case of future shutdowns. Despite reservations expressed by several Democrats, the bill narrowly passed by a roll call vote of 12-10.

These bills have been recognized as examples of effective bipartisan compromise, balancing the interests of conservationists with those of ranchers, loggers, and other public lands stakeholders.

Sources: Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee website
