

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5891

To adjust the boundary of Big Thicket National Preserve in Texas and provide for three ecotourism projects within the preserve, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 24, 2008

Mr. BRADY of Texas introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To adjust the boundary of Big Thicket National Preserve in Texas and provide for three ecotourism projects within the preserve, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds as follows:

5 (1) The Big Thicket National Preserve, located
6 in East Texas, was established by Congress in 1974
7 as the nation's first Preserve.

8 (2) The Big Thicket, known as the "biological
9 crossroads of North America," is home to species

1 native of the Gulf Coastal Plains, Eastern Forests,
2 and the Central Plains, including the bald eagle, the
3 peregrine falcon, and whooping crane, which make
4 their home among rivers, baldcypress swamps, pine
5 savannahs, sandhills, and tall forests.

6 (3) In 1993, Congress approved an expansion
7 of the authorized boundary of the Big Thicket to in-
8 corporate more biological diversity.

9 (4) In 2007, major owners of timberland in the
10 region began divesting property, some of which was
11 ultimately purchased by the National Park Service
12 for Big Thicket.

13 (5) Because of these new additions, the Big
14 Thicket has reached its Congressionally authorized
15 boundary of 97,000 acres.

16 **SEC. 2. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.**

17 The first section of the Act titled “An Act to author-
18 ize the establishment of the Big Thicket National Preserve
19 in the State of Texas, and for other purposes” (16 U.S.C.
20 698), is amended—

21 (1) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), and
22 (e) as subsections (d), (e), and (f), respectively;

23 (2) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
24 lowing:

1 “(c) ADDITIONAL LANDS.—The boundary of the pre-
2 serve may also include any lands acquired from willing
3 sellers totaling not more than 100,000 acres of land near
4 the Preserve as generally depicted on the map titled ‘Big
5 Thicket National Preserve Proposed Boundary Expans-
6 sion’, numbered 175/80, 017A, and dated April 2008. The
7 map shall be on file and available for inspection in the
8 appropriate offices of the National Park Service.”;

9 (3) in subsection (d) (as redesignated by para-
10 graph (1) above)—

11 (A) by striking “owner: Provided further”
12 and all that follows through “exchange:” and
13 inserting a colon; and

14 (B) by striking “After notifying” through
15 the end of that sentence and inserting “The
16 Secretary may, if the Secretary considers such
17 that lands would make a significant contribu-
18 tion to the purposes for which the preserve was
19 created, accept title to any lands, or interests in
20 lands, located outside of the boundaries of the
21 preserve, as established by subsections (b) and
22 (c), which the State of Texas or its political
23 subdivisions may acquire and offer to donate to
24 the United States or which any private person,
25 organization, or public or private corporation

1 (1) easily accessible to a heavily traveled area
2 (such as Beaumont, Texas, near Interstate 10); and

3 (2) serves as an educational opportunity for
4 children and young adults to learn more about Big
5 Thicket National Preserve, wildlife, and the environ-
6 ment, and the importance of protecting these re-
7 sources.

8 **SEC. 5. CANOE AND KAYAKING TRAILS.**

9 The Secretary of the Interior shall construct, operate,
10 and maintain canoe and kayaking trails in Big Thicket
11 National Preserve that—

12 (1) are guided by Global Positioning System
13 waypoints; and

14 (2) include platforms off the water for kayaks
15 and canoes to be docked safely.

16 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

17 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
18 retary of the Interior such sums as are necessary to carry
19 out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

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