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SENATE

{ REPORT
{ 106-377

ADDITION OF LAND TO SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

AUGUST 25, 2000.—Ordered to be printed

Filed under authority of the order of the Senate of July 26, 2000

Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2279]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the bill (S. 2279) to authorize the addition of land to Sequoia National Park, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends that the bill, as amended, do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

On page 2, line 5, amend subsection (c) to read as follows:

“(c) ADDITION TO PARK.—Upon acquisition of the land under subsection (a)—

“(1) the Secretary of the Interior shall—

“(A) modify the boundaries of Sequoia National Park to include the land within the park; and

“(B) administer the land as part of Sequoia National Park in accordance with all applicable laws; and

“(2) The Secretary of Agriculture shall modify the boundaries of the Sequoia National Forest to exclude the land from the forest boundaries.”.

PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

The purpose of S. 2279 is to authorize the addition of approximately 1,540 acres of land to Sequoia National Park.

BACKGROUND AND NEED

The 1,540 acre Dillonwood Grove is the largest privately owned stand of giant sequoia trees anywhere in the world, and borders the southern boundary of Sequoia National Park in California.

Dillonwood is the southern extension of the Garfield Grove, which is located within the park. The Garfield/Dillonwood grove ranks among the five groves in the world in total number of mature sequoia trees. Much of the Dillonwood section of the combined grove is a vigorous young forest, a result of natural regeneration after past sequoia logging. The grove also contains a number of surviving monarch specimens.

Dillonwood's locale is primarily on steep terrain ranging in elevation from 5,400 to 8,000 feet. It is accessible in good weather by a dirt road that extends to the park boundary. Aside from its boundary with Sequoia National Park, Dillonwood is entirely surrounded by national forest land.

The owner of the property has decided to sell the land, and has expressed a strong desire to have it added to Sequoia National Park. The Save-the-Redwoods League has negotiated an option to purchase Dillonwood for \$10 million with the intent of subsequently selling the property to the Federal Government. Since Dillonwood is located outside of the boundaries of Sequoia National Park and is considered an inholding within the adjacent national forest, legislation is needed to authorize the addition of the grove to the park.

S. 2279 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the Dillonwood Grove and modify the boundaries of Sequoia National Park so that the land can be administered as part of the park.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

At the business meeting on July 13, 2000, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered S. 2279 favorably reported, as amended.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, in open business session on July 13, 2000, by a majority vote of a quorum present, recommends that the Senate pass S. 2279, if amended as described herein.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

During the consideration of S. 2279, the Committee adopted an amendment to clarify that both the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture are directed to adjust the boundaries of the lands under their respective jurisdictions. The amendment is necessary because the Dillonwood property is located within the boundaries of the Sequoia National Forest, so that both the park and forest boundaries must be adjusted to reflect its inclusion in the park.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 directs the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the land described in the specified map reference. The land is to be added to Sequoia National Park, and the park boundary modified to include the land. The boundaries of the Sequoia National Forest are to be adjusted to exclude the land.

COST AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The following estimate of the cost of this measure has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 19, 2000.

Hon. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 2279, a bill to authorize the addition of land to Sequoia National Park, and for other purposes.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

S.2279—A bill to authorize the addition of land to Sequoia National Park, and for other purposes

S. 2279 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to acquire by donation, purchase, or exchange about 1,540 acres of land in California known as Dillonwood Grove. Once acquired, the acreage would be added to the boundaries of Sequoia National Park and administered as part of the park.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts and based on information provided by the National Park Service, CBO estimates that purchasing Dillonwood Grove would cost the federal government about \$10 million in fiscal year 2001. Managing the additional acreage would not have any significant cost.

S. 2279 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The bill contains no private-sector or intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

REGULATORY IMPACT EVALUATION

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out S. 2279. The bill is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards or significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses.

No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy.

Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from the enactment of S. 2279, as ordered reported.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Legislative reports from the Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget setting forth Executive agency recommendations on S. 2279 had not been received at the time the report on S. 2279 was filed. When the reports become available, the Chairman will request that they be printed in the Congressional Record for the advice of the Senate. The testimony provided by the National Park Service at the Subcommittee hearing follows:

STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE LOWEY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Thank you for the opportunity to present the position of the Department of the Interior on S. 2279, a bill to authorize the addition of land to Sequoia National Park. The Department supports Congressional efforts to protect the land that is the subject of this bill.

Acquisition of the 1,540-acre Dillonwood parcel would provide opportunities for research and conservation management, as well as recreational activities. The fact that it is contiguous to the Garfield Grove in Sequoia National Park would enhance these opportunities. Ranging in elevation from approximately 5,000–7,800 feet and adjacent to the southern boundary of Sequoia National Park, Dillonwood contains waterfalls on the Tule River, remote alpine locations, and magnificent vistas of the San Joaquin Valley. Dillonwood provides habitat for a number of threatened and sensitive species, including the California spotted owl, and the Pacific fisher. It is adjacent to an historical roost for the California condor. It is also populated by mountain lions and black bears. Bears have been frequently poached to harvest bear gall bladders for the foreign aphrodisiac market. The current owners have worked to eliminate this practice. The property is estimated to cost over \$10,000,000. We expect that private contributions could make up at least fifty percent of this purchase price.

S. 2279 would extend the boundary of Sequoia National Park to include the Dillonwood parcel. The park was established in 1890 to “perpetuate the environment in a natural state for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.” Several areas have been added to the park since 1890, including the Mineral King Area, formerly of the Sequoia National Forest, which was added to the park in 1978. Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are managed as one entity, covering over 864,411 acres. Preservation of the unique giant sequoia trees, native to the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, was and continues to be a primary purpose of the park. As noted above, the 1,540 acre parcel contains part of the Dillonwood sequoia grove that is an extension of the Garfield Grove, which is located within the park. The majority of the Dillonwood grove is within the boundary of the Giant Sequoia National Monument. The combined Garfield/Dillonwood Grove ranks among the top five groves in total number of mature sequoia trees and is larger than the world-famous Giant Forest Grove.

The Dillonwood Grove, which was logged between the 1880s–1950s, contains both ancient, old-growth monarchs and extensive stands of healthy, young sequoias. The diverse second-growth forest, which reproduced after the logging, contrasts dramatically with some of the older groves that have been protected within the park for over a century. Fire suppression in the park between the turn of the century and the 1960s impaired the regeneration of giant sequoias.

The Dillonwood Grove is presently within the boundary of the Giant Sequoia National Monument, proclaimed by President Clinton on April 15, 2000. The Presidential Proclamation provides that any land acquired by the Federal government within this boundary would become part of the National Monument. The President’s budget for the United States Forest Service also includes \$4 million toward the purchase of the Dillonwood Grove.

We believe the resources of the Dillonwood Grove are worthy of protection and we would be pleased to work with the Committee on the appropriate ways of preserving these resources for the enjoyment of future generations.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any of your questions.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee notes that no changes in existing law are made by the bill S. 2279, as ordered reported.

