

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1509

To authorize the Bureau of Land Management to use vegetation sales contracts in managing land at Fort Stanton and certain nearby acquired land along the Rio Bonito in Lincoln County, New Mexico.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 9, 1997

Mr. DOMENICI (for himself and Mr. BINGAMAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To authorize the Bureau of Land Management to use vegetation sales contracts in managing land at Fort Stanton and certain nearby acquired land along the Rio Bonito in Lincoln County, New Mexico.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fort Stanton and Rio
5 Bonito Corridor Vegetation Management Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

1 (1) the lands under the jurisdiction of the Sec-
2 retary surrounding Fort Stanton, New Mexico, con-
3 tain historic and natural resources that warrant spe-
4 cial management considerations by the Bureau of
5 Land Management;

6 (2) the adjudication process for establishing
7 grazing preferences under the Act of June 28, 1934
8 (commonly known as the “Taylor Grazing Act”) (43
9 U.S.C. 315 et seq.) and other applicable laws has
10 not been conducted on lands acquired by the Sec-
11 retary at and near Fort Stanton, New Mexico, in-
12 cluding lands along the Rio Bonito in Lincoln Coun-
13 ty, New Mexico;

14 (3) in the management of renewable forage re-
15 sources on lands surrounding Fort Stanton, New
16 Mexico, vegetation sales contracts would be a bene-
17 ficial tool for the Bureau of Land Management to
18 use to maintain and enhance the condition of the
19 forage and other natural resources of the area;

20 (4) the management of grazing animals under
21 vegetation sales contracts requires fiscal resources
22 and personnel that exceed that of the grazing pref-
23 erence system in place on other public domain lands;
24 and

1 (5) disputes over the legal description of lands
2 acquired by the Secretary along the Rio Bonito in
3 Lincoln County, New Mexico, make it necessary for
4 the Bureau of Land Management to pursue reason-
5 able legal remedies under existing authorities to re-
6 solve such disputes with adjacent landowners.

7 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

8 (a) FORT STANTON.—The term “Fort Stanton”
9 means land under the administrative jurisdiction of the
10 Secretary at Fort Stanton, New Mexico, as depicted on
11 the map entitled “Fort Stanton and Rio Bonito Corridor,
12 NM”, dated May 13, 1997.

13 (b) RIO BONITO CORRIDOR.—The term “Rio Bonito
14 Corridor” means land under the administrative jurisdic-
15 tion of the Secretary near Fort Stanton, New Mexico,
16 within the area identified as the “Rio Bonito Corridor”,
17 as depicted on the map entitled “Fort Stanton and Rio
18 Bonito Corridor, NM”, dated May 13, 1997, which—

19 (1) was acquired by the Secretary before May
20 13, 1997; or

21 (2) is acquired by the Secretary (by purchase or
22 exchange) from willing landowners after May 13,
23 1997.

1 (c) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the
2 Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of
3 the Bureau of Land Management.

4 **SEC. 4. MAPS.**

5 The maps referred to in section 3 shall be made avail-
6 able for public inspection by the Bureau of Land Manage-
7 ment at the Roswell District Office in Roswell, New Mex-
8 ico, and at the New Mexico State Office in Santa Fe, New
9 Mexico.

10 **SEC. 5. MANAGEMENT OF FORT STANTON AND RIO BONITO**
11 **LAND.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of
13 the Act of June 28, 1934 (43 U.S.C. 315 et seq.), or any
14 other law relating to the establishment, leasing, or permit-
15 ting of grazing under a grazing preference, the Secretary,
16 in managing land within Fort Stanton and the Rio Bonito
17 Corridor that is under the jurisdiction of the Secretary,
18 may solicit competitive bids for and enter into vegetation
19 sales contracts for the purpose of using livestock grazing
20 as a vegetation management tool. Any such contracts en-
21 tered into with respect to the land before the date of enact-
22 ment of this Act are ratified.

23 (b) CONSISTENCY WITH LAND AND RESOURCE MAN-
24 AGEMENT PLANS.—Management of Fort Stanton and the
25 Rio Bonito Corridor shall be consistent with any applica-

1 ble land and resource management plan under the Federal
2 Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C.
3 1701 et seq.).

4 (c) DISTRIBUTION AND USE OF PROCEEDS.—Of the
5 proceeds of vegetation sales contracts entered into under
6 subsection (a)—

7 (1) 12½ percent shall be paid to the State of
8 New Mexico for distribution to Lincoln County, New
9 Mexico, to be used for purposes authorized by sec-
10 tion 10 of the Act of June 28, 1934 (43 U.S.C.
11 315i);

12 (2) 12½ percent shall be deposited in the gen-
13 eral fund of the Treasury of the United States; and

14 (3) 75 percent shall be deposited in a special
15 account in the Treasury of the United States and
16 shall be available to the Secretary, without further
17 Act of appropriation, for use in managing Fort
18 Stanton and the Rio Bonito Corridor and to achieve
19 the management goals and prescriptions identified in
20 applicable resource management plans for the Rio
21 Bonito acquired lands and the Fort Stanton area of
22 critical environmental concern, but none of the pro-
23 ceeds provided to the Secretary under this para-
24 graph shall be available for land acquisition.

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