

**Calendar No. 646**

107<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

**S. 2565**

To enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River Valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2002

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

OCTOBER 8, 2002

Reported by Mr. BINGAMAN, without amendment

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**A BILL**

To enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River Valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2       This Act may be cited as the “Wild Sky Wilderness  
3 Act of 2002”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

5       (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

6           (1) Americans cherish the continued existence  
7 of diverse wilderness ecosystems and wildlife found  
8 on their Federal lands and share a strong sense of  
9 moral responsibility to protect their wilderness herit-  
10 age as an enduring resource to cherish, protect, and  
11 bequeath undisturbed to future generations of Amer-  
12 icans.

13           (2) The values an area of wilderness offer to  
14 this and future generations of Americans are greatly  
15 enhanced to the degree that the area is diverse in to-  
16 pography, elevation, life zones and ecosystems, and  
17 to the extent that it offers a wide range of outdoor  
18 recreational and educational opportunities accessible  
19 in all seasons of the year.

20           (3) Large blocks of wildlands embracing a wide  
21 range of ecosystems and topography, including low-  
22 elevation forests, have seldom remained undisturbed  
23 due to many decades of development.

24           (4) Certain wildlands on the western slope of  
25 the Cascade Range in the Skykomish River valley of  
26 the State of Washington offer an outstanding rep-

1       resentation of the original character of the forested  
2       landscape, ranging from high alpine meadows and  
3       extremely rugged peaks to low-elevation mature and  
4       old-growth forests, including groves with some of the  
5       largest and most spectacular trees in Washington,  
6       with diameters of eight feet and larger.

7           (5) These diverse, thickly forested mountain  
8       slopes and valleys of mature and old-growth trees in  
9       the Skykomish River valley harbor nearly the full  
10      complement of the original wildlife and fish species  
11      found by settlers of the 19th century, including  
12      mountain goats, bald eagles, black bear, pine  
13      marten, black-tailed deer, as well as rare and endan-  
14      gered wildlife such as northern spotted owls and gos-  
15      hawks, Chinook and Coho salmon, and steelhead and  
16      bull trout.

17          (6) An ecologically and topographically diverse  
18      wilderness area in the Skykomish River valley acces-  
19      sible in all seasons of the year will be enjoyable to  
20      users of various kinds, such as hikers, horse riders,  
21      hunters, anglers, and educational groups, but also to  
22      the many who cherish clean water and clean air, fish  
23      and wildlife (including endangered species such as  
24      wild salmon), and pristine mountain and riverside  
25      scenery.

1 (b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress hereby de-  
2 clares that it is the policy of the United States—

3 (1) to better serve the diverse wilderness and  
4 environmental education needs of the people of the  
5 State of Washington and its burgeoning metropoli-  
6 tan regions by granting wilderness protection to cer-  
7 tain lower elevation wildlands in the Skykomish  
8 River valley of the State of Washington; and

9 (2) to protect additional lands adjacent to the  
10 Henry M. Jackson Wilderness designated by the  
11 Washington Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law  
12 98–339), in further tribute to the ecologically en-  
13 lightened vision of the distinguished Senator from  
14 the State of Washington and former Chairman of  
15 the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Re-  
16 sources (formerly the Senate Interior and Insular  
17 Affairs Committee).

18 **SEC. 3. ADDITIONS TO THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRES-**  
19 **ERVATION SYSTEM.**

20 (a) ADDITIONS.—The following Federal lands in the  
21 State of Washington are hereby designated as wilderness  
22 and, therefore, as components of the National Wilderness  
23 Preservation System: Certain lands which comprise ap-  
24 proximately 106,000 acres, as generally depicted on a map

1 entitled “Wild Sky Wilderness Proposal”, dated May  
2 2002, which shall be known as the Wild Sky Wilderness.

3 (b) MAPS AND LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—As soon as  
4 practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the  
5 Secretary of Agriculture shall file a map and a legal de-  
6 scription for the wilderness area designated under this Act  
7 with the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of  
8 the United States Senate and the Committee on Resources  
9 of the United States House of Representatives. The map  
10 and description shall have the same force and effect as  
11 if included in this Act, except that the Secretary of Agri-  
12 culture may correct clerical and typographical errors in  
13 the legal description and map. The map and legal descrip-  
14 tion shall be on file and available for public inspection in  
15 the office of the Chief of the Forest Service, Department  
16 of Agriculture.

17 **SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights,  
19 lands designated as wilderness by this Act shall be man-  
20 aged by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with  
21 the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this Act,  
22 except that, with respect to any wilderness areas des-  
23 ignated by this Act, any reference in the Wilderness Act  
24 to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed  
25 to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act.

1 (b) NEW TRAILS.—

2 (1) The Secretary of Agriculture shall consult  
3 with interested parties and shall establish a hiking  
4 trail plan designed to develop a system of hiking  
5 trails within or adjacent to or to provide access to  
6 the wilderness designated by this Act in a manner  
7 consistent with the Wilderness Act, Public Law 88–  
8 577 (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

9 (2) Within two years after the date of enact-  
10 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall  
11 complete a report on the implementation of the hik-  
12 ing trail plan required under this Act. This report  
13 shall include the identification of priority hiking  
14 trails for development.

15 (c) REPEATER SITE.—Within the Wild Sky Wilder-  
16 ness, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to use heli-  
17 copter access to construct and maintain, in a manner com-  
18 patible with the preservation of the wilderness environ-  
19 ment, a Forest Service communication repeater site to  
20 provide improved communication for safety and health  
21 purposes.

22 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION FOR LAND ACQUISITION.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture is  
24 authorized to acquire lands and interests therein, by pur-  
25 chase, donation, or exchange, identified as “Priority Ac-

1 quisation Lands” on the map entitled “Wild Sky Wilder-  
 2 ness Proposal”, dated May 2002. The boundaries of the  
 3 Snoqualmie National Forest and the Wild Sky Wilderness  
 4 shall be adjusted to encompass any land acquired pursu-  
 5 ant to this section.

6 (b) ACCESS.—Consistent with section 5(a) of the Wil-  
 7 derness Act (Public Law 88–577; 16 U.S.C. 1134(a)), the  
 8 Secretary of Agriculture shall assure adequate access to  
 9 private inholdings within the Wild Sky Wilderness.

10 (c) APPRAISAL.—Valuation of private lands shall be  
 11 determined without reference to any restrictions on access  
 12 or use which arise out of designation as a wilderness area  
 13 as a result of this Act.

14 **SEC. 6. LAND EXCHANGES.**

15 The Secretary of Agriculture shall exchange lands  
 16 and interests in lands, as generally depicted on a map enti-  
 17 tled Chelan County Public Utility District Exchange and  
 18 dated May 22, 2002, with the Chelan County Public Util-  
 19 ity District in accordance with the following provisions:

20 (1) If the Chelan County Public Utility District,  
 21 within ninety days after the date of enactment of  
 22 this Act, offers to the Secretary of Agriculture ap-  
 23 proximately 371.8 acres within the Snoqualmie Na-  
 24 tional Forest in the State of Washington, the Sec-  
 25 retary shall accept such lands.

1           (2) Upon acceptance of title by the Secretary of  
2     Agriculture to such lands and interests therein, the  
3     Secretary of Agriculture shall convey to the Chelan  
4     County Public Utility District a permanent ease-  
5     ment, including helicopter access, consistent with  
6     such levels as used as of date of enactment, to main-  
7     tain an existing snowtel site on 1.82 acres on the  
8     Wenatchee National Forest in the State of Wash-  
9     ington.

10          (3) The exchange directed by this Act shall be  
11     consummated if Chelan County Public Utility Dis-  
12     trict conveys title acceptable to the Secretary and  
13     provided there is no hazardous material on the site,  
14     which is objectionable to the Secretary.

15          (4) In the event Chelan County Public Utility  
16     District determines there is no longer a need to  
17     maintain a snowtel site to monitor the snow pack for  
18     calculating expected runoff into the Lake Chelan hy-  
19     droelectric project and the hydroelectric projects in  
20     the Columbia River Basin, the secretary shall be no-  
21     tified in writing and the easement shall be extin-  
22     guished and all rights conveyed by this exchange  
23     shall revert to the United States.





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