

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5818

To relinquish all Federal interests in certain lands in the State of Louisiana to correct errors resulting from possible omission of lands from previous surveys, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 9, 2014

Mr. FLEMING introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To relinquish all Federal interests in certain lands in the State of Louisiana to correct errors resulting from possible omission of lands from previous surveys, 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) On December 8, 1842, the Surveyor Gen-
6 eral of the United States Government approved an
7 original survey of lands in Northern Louisiana,

1 which included the lands surrounding Lake
2 Bistineau (subject lands).

3 (2) Under the Equal Footing Doctrine, the
4 State of Louisiana was entitled to the lands under-
5 lying the navigable waters in place at statehood
6 within its limits.

7 (3) In 1901, the State of Louisiana transferred
8 over 7,000 acres of land to the Commissioners of the
9 Bossier Levee District through Louisiana Act Num-
10 ber 89 of 1892.

11 (4) The State of Louisiana conducted a survey
12 in 1901 that followed the same path around Lake
13 Bistineau as the Original Survey of 1842.

14 (5) The Bossier Levee District subsequently
15 conveyed the subject lands to private ownership in
16 1904. Lands within the subject lands continued to
17 be bought and sold in good faith based on the sta-
18 bility of this title.

19 (6) On September 16, 1967, the Bureau of
20 Land Management (BLM) submitted a re-survey of
21 the subject lands for Section 30–T16N–R10W and
22 two adjacent islands. The re-survey presented a new
23 line to represent what the BLM surveyors believed
24 was the contour of Lake Bistineau 155 years earlier,
25 when Louisiana joined the Union. The BLM ap-

1 proved the re-survey on January 15, 1969. That re-
2 survey was filed in the Federal Register, but the
3 BLM has presented no records of notifying all of the
4 affected landowners of the re-survey's effects or that
5 the re-survey could be contested.

6 (7) On September 27, 2013, the BLM notified
7 certain affected landowners that title to their prop-
8 erty would “appear to be still vested in the United
9 States”.

10 (8) There are estimated to be over 200 acres
11 and over 50 residential homes on the recently dis-
12 puted lands.

13 **SEC. 2. RELINQUISHMENT OF FEDERAL INTERESTS IN**
14 **LANDS.**

15 As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment
16 of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall execute doc-
17 uments required to relinquish all Federal interests in the
18 Property.

19 **SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

20 The effective date of the relinquishment pursuant to
21 section 2 shall be December 8, 1842.

22 **SEC. 4. PROPERTY DEFINED.**

23 For the purposes of this Act, the term “Property”
24 means the lands shown on that certain Dependent Re-Sur-
25 vey, Extension Survey and Survey of Two Islands , Sec-

1 tions 17, 29, and 30. Said survey being completed on No-
2 vember 24, 1967 and approved on January 15, 1969, con-
3 sisting of the lands lying between the “original record me-
4 ander courses of Lake Bistineau” and the re-survey’s rep-
5 resentation of a 148.60 ft contour line for Lake Bistineau,
6 being shown as Lots 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. All
7 lands located within Township 16 North, Range 10 West,
8 Bossier Parish, Louisiana.

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