

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present to the House H.R. 1836, introduced by our colleague from New York, MIKE FORBES, to add a 98-acre ocean-front parcel of land in Montauk, NY, to the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge.

During our committee's deliberations on this bill, a local supervisor and a group of concerned citizens testified in strong support of protecting this property called Shadmoor, which is essential habitat for several highly endangered plants.

While it is unclear how much it will cost the Federal Government to purchase this tract of land, I am encouraged by the fact that the local community in the Town of East Hampton, NY, has voted to share in the acquisition costs. This is a positive step in the right direction.

I am prepared to support H.R. 1836 based on this innovative cost-sharing commitment and the stipulation that those private citizens who now own Shadmoor are fully compensated for their property prior to its inclusion in the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge complex.

I urge an "aye" vote on H.R. 1836 and I compliment Congressman MIKE FORBES for his outstanding leadership in this matter.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House is considering H.R. 1836, the Amagansett National Wildlife Refuge Act, which was introduced by Representative MICHAEL FORBES.

H.R. 1836 would allow the Secretary of the Interior to acquire a 98-acre ocean-front parcel of land in Montauk, East Hampton Town, NY, known as Shadmoor.

This parcel contains one of the largest populations of New York State's most endangered plant, the sandplain gerardia.

The Shadmoor property represents valuable habitat for this endangered plant. I urge all Members to support the legislation.

Mr. STUDDS. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further request for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maine [Mr. LONGLEY] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill. H.R. 1836.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1836, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maine?

There was no objection.

TENSAS RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE AUTHORIZATION INCREASE

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 2660) to increase the amount authorized to be appropriated to the Department of the Interior for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2660

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. INCREASE IN AMOUNT AUTHORIZED TO BE APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR FOR THE TENSAS RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.

Section 5(1) of the Act entitled "An Act to establish the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge", approved June 28, 1980 (Public Law 96-285, 94 Stat. 597), as amended by section 2 of Public Law 99-191 (99 Stat. 1327), is amended to read as follows:

"(1) beginning October 1, 1995, not to exceed \$20,000,000 to the Department of the Interior; and".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. JONES] and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS] each will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. JONES].

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. JONES asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering H.R. 2660, a bill to increase the amount authorized to be appropriated to the Department of the Interior for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge. This bill was introduced by Congressman JIM MCCRERY on November 17, 1995. It will increase the amount that is authorized to be appropriated, for the acquisition of land, in the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge in Talulah, LA.

The Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge was established on June 28, 1980, by Public Law 96-285 to preserve the largest remaining privately owned bottom land and hardwood tract in the Lower Mississippi River Delta. The act has authorized \$20 million for land acquisition, through the Department of the Interior's Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The diverse habitat at the Tensas River Refuge supports a tremendous variety of wildlife, including the largest white-tailed deer herd in Louisiana, bald eagles, numerous species of small mammals and birds, and the Louisiana black bear. The Tensas River population is one of only two known populations of this subspecies in existence.

The wetlands, lakes, and bayous in the refuge provide habitat for an equally diverse variety of aquatic life including fish, reptiles, amphibians, crustaceans, and the American alligator. This aquatic habitat is particularly important because the Tensas River is the only major waterway in the Louisiana delta that has not been extensively altered by channelization.

To date, Congress has appropriated \$20 million for land acquisition at the

refuge, but additional funds may be necessary to complete the acquisition process. H.R. 2660 authorizes an additional \$20 million for land acquisition, subject of course to appropriations. The bill will allow the Fish and Wildlife Service to acquire the remaining critical lands necessary to complete the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge.

At present, the National Wildlife Refuge System is comprised of 508 refuges, which are located in all 50 States and 5 U.S. territories. These units range in size from a single acre refuge in Minnesota, to the 19.3 million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. In the last decade, 81 refuges and approximately 3.6 million acres have been added to the System.

The Tensas River Refuge is an important component in this nationwide system, and I urge an "aye" vote on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STUDDS. Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill and, I hesitate to add, costs a little bit more than the Boston Harbor Island so I can assume we are going to get enormous support when the time comes. It is an excellent bill, and I urge Members to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. MCCRERY].

(Mr. MCCRERY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. JONES] for yielding me this time. I do not intend to use all of it. Mr. JONES eloquently stated the reasons for introduction of the bill and reasons for Members to vote for it today.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman SAXTON and the ranking member, Mr. STUDDS, from the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans for their willingness to support this bill and for their work in bringing it to the floor today.

The Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge is a case study in responsible environmental policy. Created in 1980, the refuge now includes some 64,000 acres in Madison and Tensas parishes in northeastern Louisiana and represents a commitment to preserving the largest single tract of bottomland hardwoods remaining in the Mississippi River Delta. Widely supported in the community, the refuge has been constituted entirely from land acquired through donations or by purchases from willing sellers.

The bottomland forests in the refuge provide habitat for a diverse array of greenery. In addition, over 400 animal species make their home in the Tensas Refuge. Among endangered species, the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon make occasional appearances. Of particular note, the Tensas Refuge is the home of the largest remaining population of the Louisiana Black Bear.

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H.R. 2660 would increase the authorization for the Tensas Refuge from \$10 million to \$20 million. These additional funds are needed to purchase inholdings and corridor easements. Again, all this will be accomplished with the full cooperation and support of the surrounding community. My constituents who live and work near the refuge fully understand the need to maintain this haven of natural beauty.

Completion of land purchase for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge will preserve a unique slice of southern habitat for enjoyment by countless future generations. Once again, I thank the members of the Resources Committee for their swift action in bringing this bill before the full House and strongly urge all Members to support its passage.

Mr. STUDDS. Mr. Speaker, to my utter astonishment, I have a request for time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON].

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here with the majority today in support of this legislation. It is a noncontroversial bill. It does the right thing in extending this area. But as we are handing out fig leaves today, this is clearly a case where fig leaves are deserved to both previous speakers on the other side.

On the key votes before the Congress and particularly for the one that authorized this particular program, roll-call 502, both individuals voted against the general proposition. It is as if to say today that if Jesse James had in one instance deposited funds in a bank, it would absolve him of being referred to as a bank robber.

We have had a year and a half of a general assault on the environment, that the basic legislation that establishes these programs was resisted and opposed, that if you went down each one of these bills, on the Republican side, 99 percent voted to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling; 99 percent voted to keep destructive riders in the fiscal year 1996 Interior appropriations bill; 86 percent of the Republicans voted against an amendment to the fiscal year 1996 Interior appropriations act which would restore land and water conservation funds vitally important to the refuge system; 82 percent voted to keep the salvage rider in the rescission bills.

It seems to me that while this is a good thing we are doing here today, we welcome the last two speakers on the other side, that they do deserve the fig leaf here because you cannot just come to the floor when it is one instance in your district or in your party and claim that you are taking some kind of environmental action. The assault on the environment over the last year and a half has been so extreme, it has frightened people that are not simply environmental activists but average citizens who have some concern about the state of this country and the state of our natural resources.

Mr. Speaker, again I would commend the gentleman for what they do today, but I would hope that we would not see them in every instance oppose the major pieces of legislation. Give this opportunity to the entire country and not just to one place and one district.

Mr. STUDDS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2660, the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge Act, introduced by Representative JIM MCCRERY.

H.R. 2660 would increase the authorization level for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge from \$10 million to \$20 million, and would make those funds available as of October 1 last year. This increase is necessary to cover the costs of buying critical habitat for the threatened Louisiana black bear. It is imperative that this legislation move forward, so the management plan for the threatened black bear can continue to be implemented.

We in Congress have been discussing prevention in the context of the Endangered Species Act. Here is a case where public input has resulted in the prevention of endangerment. This legislation deserves all our support.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2660 has been introduced by our distinguished colleague from Louisiana, JIM MCCRERY. This is a noncontroversial bill that simply increases the amount of the authorization level for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge.

It is my understanding that there is interest in expanding the boundaries of this refuge, but these efforts are constrained by the provisions of Public Law 96-285 that legislatively created the refuge.

H.R. 2660 will increase from \$10 million to \$20 million the amount of funds that may be appropriated to the Department of the Interior, and it makes those funds available as of October 1 last year. These modifications are necessary because the cost of acquiring certain lands for inclusion in the Refuge were more expensive than anticipated.

Finally, the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge had been deemed critical habitat for the threatened Louisiana black bear and the river is the only major waterway in the Louisiana delta that has not been extensively altered by channelization.

Congressman JIM MCCRERY has made a persuasive case, and I compliment him for his outstanding leadership on this legislation. I urge an "aye" vote on H.R. 2660.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. JONES] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2660, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2660, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

NORTH PLATTE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE BOUNDARY REVISION

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2679) to revise the boundary of the North Platte National Wildlife Refuge.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2679

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REVISION OF BOUNDARY OF NORTH PLATTE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.

(a) TERMINATION OF JURISDICTION.—The secondary jurisdiction of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service over approximately 2,470 acres of land at the North Platte National Wildlife Refuge in the State of Nebraska, as depicted upon a map entitled "Relinquishment of North Platte National Wildlife Refuge Secondary Jurisdiction", dated August 1995, and available for inspection at appropriate offices of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, is hereby terminated.

(b) REVOCATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER.—Executive Order Number 2446, dated August 21, 1916, is hereby revoked with respect to the lands referred to in section 1.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS] will each be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF].

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2679, introduced by the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BARRETT] will remove about 2,470 acres of land from the North Platte National Wildlife Refuge.

This legislation is a direct result of a report issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that recommended that these lands be divested from the refuge because they provide nothing significant toward the refuge or the national refuge systems' purposes and goals.

While these lands may have limited value within the refuge unit, they offer recreational opportunities to thousands of citizens who enjoy boating, fishing, sightseeing and swimming in Nebraska. Under the terms of this legislation, which is strongly supported by the Department of the Interior, these lands would be removed from the