

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

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

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, in October 1987, BLM sold 3.8 million board feet of timber within the Elkhorn Ridge area in Mendocino County near Laytonville, CA. As the result of a lawsuit filed with the Federal district court in 1989 by the Sierra Club, the BLM reassessed the impacts of the sale on the area's wild and scenic river corridor, northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet and the at-risk coho salmon, currently petitioned for Federal listing.

The Elkhorn Ridge sale site lies within the South Fork Eel River Management Area, which has been identified as a tier 1 key watershed in the President's Northwest forest plan.

The BLM signed a record of decision on May 27, 1994, stopping the harvest of the timber sale. Eel River Sawmills filed a claim under the Contract Disputes Act for resolution of the Elkhorn Ridge timber sale contract, seeking damages of \$2.4 million.

The BLM's preferred option in resolving the timber contract is to substitute timber from less environmentally sensitive areas in the region. BLM has identified three suitable sale areas which would be nearly equal in value to the Elkhorn timber sale. BLM's Regional and the Department of the Interior Solicitors have concurred in BLM's determination that such a substitute would be in the public interest and the most suitable resolution to this legal dispute.

H.R. 2711 enjoys the support of the interested parties and would authorize such a substitute.

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2711 would implement a settlement agreement reached between Eel River Sawmills, Inc., and the Department of the Interior regarding the Elkhorn Ridge Timber sale.

We have no objection to this measure. Enactment of the bill will replace an environmentally destructive timber sale with one that is consistent with the President's forest plan. In addition, H.R. 2711 will negate the need to go to court to deal with the damage claim resulting in the canceling of the Elkhorn timber sale. The administration testified that they support the bill and believe it is in the best interests of the Government and the taxpayers to reach this agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS], the author of this legislation.

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my very good friend, the gen-

tleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE], for yielding me time, and a fellow member of the Gang of 7, least they forget too soon around here. I also want to thank other members of the Committee on Natural Resources, including the ranking minority member, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER], for their support of the immediately preceding bill as well as this particular legislation. Both of these bills are very important to my congressional district.

The conveyance of the Gasquet Mountain School property will help a very small rural and remote community in Del Norte County, the most northern county in my congressional district. It will help a financially strapped school district by providing them with a facility for permanent use. It will also provide a rural community with a meeting location for other community activities, although again the principal purpose of conveying this property is to provide the Gasquet School District with an additional permanent facility on land that has been previously owned by the Federal Government and managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

The Elkhorn timber sale substitution is an equitable resolution of a long-standing dispute between the Bureau of Land Management and a private timber company, the Eel River Sawmills, which is one of the largest and most important private employers in Humboldt County, the largest county in my congressional district.

This is, I think, sort of an example of how we might resolve disputed timber sales when, after the Federal Government has entered into a contractual obligation to sell timber harvesting rights or timber land to a private concern, environmental objections are raised.

Again, we believe that this bill does in fact substitute timber of equal value for the canceled Elkhorn Ridge timber sale. It should make the Eel River Sawmills, which was the successful bidder on the Elkhorn Ridge timber sale, financially whole, and it will provide them with a timber supply with which they can continue to operate their mill and continue to employ their work force, which, again, represents a significant private employer in my congressional district.

So I want to thank the gentleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE], and again thank the minority members of the Committee on Natural Resources for their bipartisan leadership and support of these two measures, H.R. 2709, conveyance of the Gasquet County school property, and I want to ask for their support for H.R. 2711, the bill pending before the House, the Elkhorn Ridge timber sales substitution, and urge passage of the legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2711.

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.

CALIFORNIA BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT TRANSFER

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3147) to provide for the exchange of certain Federal lands in the State of California managed by the Bureau of Land Management for certain non-Federal lands, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3147

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that the exchange of lands authorized by this Act will benefit both the private landowners and the United States by consolidating their respective land ownership patterns.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to authorize, facilitate, and expedite the land exchange set forth herein.

SEC. 2. MERCED IRRIGATION DISTRICT LAND EXCHANGE.

(a) CONVEYANCE.—The Secretary of the Interior may convey the Federal lands described in subsection (d)(1) in exchange for the non-Federal lands described in subsection (d)(2), in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER PROVISIONS OF LAW.—The land exchange required in this Act shall be carried out in accordance with section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716) and in accordance with other applicable laws.

(c) ACCEPTABILITY OF TITLE AND MANNER OF CONVEYANCE.—The Secretary of the Interior shall not carry out an exchange described in subsection (a) unless the title to the non-Federal lands to be conveyed to the United States, and the form and procedures of conveyance, are acceptable to the Secretary.

(d) LANDS TO BE EXCHANGED.—

(1) FEDERAL LANDS TO BE EXCHANGED.—The Federal lands referred to in this Act to be exchanged consist of approximately 179.4 acres in Mariposa County, California, as generally depicted on the map entitled "Merced Irrigation District Exchange—Proposed, Federal Land"; dated _____ 1995, more particularly described as follows:

T. 3 S., R. 15 E., MDM (Mount Diablo Meridian): sec. 35, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, containing approximately 40 acres.

T. 4 S., R. 15 E., MDM (Mount Diablo Meridian):

Sec. 14: E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, containing approximately 20 acres.

Sec. 23: NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, containing approximately 40 acres.

T. 5 S., R. 15 E., MDM (Mount Diablo Meridian):

Sec. 2: Lot 1, containing approximately 57.9 acres.

Sec. 3: Lots 7 through 15, containing approximately 21.5 acres.

(2) NON-FEDERAL LANDS TO BE EXCHANGED.—The non-Federal lands referred to in this Act to be exchanged consist of approximately 160 acres in Mariposa County, California, as generally depicted on the map entitled "Merced

Irrigation District Exchange—Proposed, Non-Federal Land”, dated _____, 1995, more particularly described as T. 4 S., R17E MDM (Mount Diablo Meridian): sec. 2, SE¼.

(3) MAPS.—The maps referred to in this subsection shall be on file and available for inspection in the office of the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

(4) PARTIAL REVOCATION OF WITHDRAWALS.—The Executive order of December 31, 1912, creating Powersite Reserve No. 328, and the withdrawal of Federal lands for Power Project No. 2179, filed February 21, 1963, in accordance with section 24 of the Federal Power Act are hereby revoked insofar as they affect the Federal lands described in paragraph (1). Any patent issued on such Federal lands shall not be subject to section 24 of said Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE] and the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE].

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

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

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. RADANOVICH for his diligent work on H.R. 3147. H.R. 3147 will result in an equal value exchange of lands between the Bureau of Land Management [BLM] and the Merced Irrigation District [MID] supported by all interested parties.

In 1991, Congress added 8 miles of the Merced River upstream from Lake McClure in Mariposa County, CA, to the National Wild and Scenic River System. Lake McClure is the main reservoir of the Merced Irrigation District. The Bureau of Land Management manages a significant amount of land in the Lake McClure area.

Soon after the wild and scenic river designation, MID and the BLM began to discuss a possible land transfer to enhance their land management objectives. As a result of the discussions, MID and BLM worked out a land exchange in which BLM would convey several scattered parcels of land below Lake McClure in exchange for approximately 160 acres of land owned by MID along the national wild and scenic corridor. The land exchange proposal is contained in H.R. 3147.

H.R. 3147 will enable the BLM to consolidate its land ownership in the Merced River region and enhance one of their most important recreational areas in California. At the same time, H.R. 3147 will benefit MID by allowing them to consolidate their ownership of lands in the Lake McClure area.

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Continuing this unprecedented bipartisan harmony, we have no objection to

this measure and the administration supports this bill.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3147 provides for the exchange of lands between the Bureau of Land Management and the Merced Irrigation District. Under the legislation, 179 acres of scattered BLM lands within the irrigation district's water project area would be exchanged for 160 acres of land the irrigation district owns within the boundaries of the Merced Wild and Scenic River.

We have no objection to the measure. The administration supports the bill. It is an even value exchange that will benefit both the irrigation district and the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WICKER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill H.R. 3147, 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.

INDIAN HEALTH CARE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3378) to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to extend the demonstration program for direct billing of Medicare, Medicaid, and other third party payors.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3378

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

Section 405(c)(2) of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1645(c)(2)) is amended by striking “September 30, 1996” and inserting in lieu thereof “September 30, 1998”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE] and the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. DOOLITTLE].

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

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

H.R. 3378 would extend a demonstration project for direct billing of Medicare, Medicaid, and other third party payors. This bill will extend this demonstration project through September 30, 1998, rather than allowing it to sunset at the end of this month.

In 1988, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act established demonstra-

tion programs to authorize up to four tribally operated Indian Health Service hospitals or clinics to test methods for direct billing and receipt of payment for health services provided to Medicare and Medicaid eligible patients. The program was established to decide whether these collections could be increased through direct involvement of the tribal health care provider versus the current practice which required such billings and collections to be routed through the Indian Health Service.

Currently, there are four tribal health care providers participating in this demonstration project: the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation of Dillingham, AK; the South East Alaska Regional Health Consortium of Sitka, AK; the Mississippi Choctaw Health Center of Philadelphia, MS; and the Choctaw Tribe of Oklahoma of Durant, OK. All participants have expressed success and satisfaction with the demonstration project and report dramatically increased collections for Medicare and Medicaid services, thereby providing additional revenues for Indian health programs at these facilities. They also report a significant reduction in the turnaround time between billing and receipt of payment, and increased efficiency by being able to track their own billings and collections. Therefore, they can act quickly to resolve questions and problems.

The Indian Health Service is required to monitor participation and receive quarterly reports from the four participants. The law also requires the Indian Health Service to report to Congress on the demonstration program at the end of fiscal year 1996. This report is to evaluate whether the objectives have been fulfilled, and whether direct billing should be allowed for other tribal providers who operate an entire Indian Health Service facility.

H.R. 3378 extends this demonstration authority for 2 more years to give Congress time to review the report the Indian Health Service must submit on September 30, 1996, and determine the future of the program. Secretary Donna E. Shalala sent a letter to Chairman DON YOUNG on August 1 in support of H.R. 3378 for the administration. I urge my colleagues to support the extension of this productive demonstration program and to vote for final passage of H.R. 3378.

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

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to offer my support for this bill which would extend for 2 more years an important demonstration project contained in section 405 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. This demonstration project allows participating tribes and tribal organizations who operate their own hospitals