

in its midst a university which has the commitment and dedication of such an excellent Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and outside benefactors, together with its extraordinary student body and alumni.

Mr. Speaker, the faculty, students, and all who have worked with Dr. Ansell are better people because of his integrity, leadership, and dedication to the Colorado School of Mines family.

**QUINCY LIBRARY GROUP FOREST
RECOVERY AND ECONOMIC STABIL-
ILITY ACT OF 1997**

SPEECH OF

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 1997

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 858) to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a pilot project on designated lands within Plumas, Lassen, and Tahoe National Forests in the State of California to demonstrate the effectiveness of the resource management activities proposed by the Quincy Library Group and to amend current land and resource management plans for these national forests to consider the incorporation of these resource management activities:

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, with a vote of 429 to 1, the House has overwhelmingly approved Representative WALLY HERGER'S bill, H.R. 858, the Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery and Economic Stability Act of 1997. While Representative HERGER introduced the bill and the bill had bipartisan support, it really belongs to the Quincy Library Group, which is a coalition of local environmental group leaders, local timber firms, local business people, local government officials, and local labor union leaders. So that everyone knows what the Quincy Library Group agreement is, I ask unanimous consent to insert a copy of the agreement immediately following my remarks.

The bill was overwhelmingly approved because of Mr. HERGER'S bipartisan approach and because it is solution-oriented. It resolves forest conflict instead of promoting it. The bill embodies a new way of thinking about the Nation's forestry problems, the solutions for which come from the people who live in communities within our public forests. Thus, it draws on the community wisdom that our Government is supposed to be about. Our Nation is a government of the people because the people give us their wisdom.

Never in my years of serving as Alaska's only Congressman in this House have I seen such overwhelming support for a forestry bill and I truly believe that this level of enthusiasm results from the fact that everyone wins with the collaborative approach that the bipartisan sponsors and supporters have taken on this measure.

We did not come to the floor today with 429 votes. We would have probably received around 270 votes by my count on the Young substitute to H.R. 858, but that did not deter the sponsors of the bill and me from making further accommodations in the spirit that the Quincy Library Group agreement. We wanted to make people comfortable. We made ac-

commodations to Representative MILLER, the ranking member of the Committee on Resources and a person who I have grown to respect as a friend. We made many accommodations that Representative MILLER brought to us from the administration, which over the years has often supported the Quincy Library Group. Before that Mrs. CHENOWETH made some 50 changes to the bill in the subcommittee and in the full committee, many in response to administration and interest group concerns, before the bill was reported. I asked Senator FEINSTEIN, the lead on this issue in the other body for her recommendations and I incorporated those recommendations into my manager's amendment.

Because some modifications were made here on the floor, I want to explain them. I want to explain how the final Young substitute that we just agreed to differs from the Young substitute that appeared in the RECORD as amendment No. 1. I also want to explain some of the major amendments that were adopted in the committee and subcommittee.

The substance of the bill is Section 2. Section 2(a) is simply the definition of the Quincy Library Group agreement, which forms the basis of the bill. My amendment No. 1 and the final product agreed to by the House included clarifications that the library group agreement is for ecologic and economic health of lands and communities. This is a community stability proposal, which by its nature concerns ecologic health of the land and economic health of the communities. These are mutually exclusive and the Quincy plan integrates them. Ecologic health and economic health is what sustainable development is all about.

In subsection (b), the Young substitute basically requires implementation of the Quincy Library Group plan and, in particular, a cornerstone of the plan that is referenced in subsection (d) involving strategic fuelbreaks and group selection harvests. In subsection (b) where we direct the Quincy program, we added a proviso that required one environmental impact statement. We also added a requirement that the environmental impact statement be completed within 200 days of enactment.

The Young amendment No. 1 contained a subsection (i) that was mostly removed because we added the single EIS in subsection (b) at Mr. MILLER'S urging. However, I want to be clear that my substitute would have provided for a total of five EIS's over the course of the pilot project, one for the entire 5-year program including the first year's site-specific segment of the program and one site-specific EIS for each subsequent year's program. Mr. MILLER requested that I remove that provision and do only one EIS. We agreed to a 200-day timeframe for the EIS. The Quincy group has waited long enough for their consensus to reach the ground. This means that within 200 days after enactment, the program will be implemented.

We made no changes from my substitute, amendment No. 1, in subsection (b)(2) where the pilot project area is explained. The total acreage of the national forests that the pilot project covers is about 2.5 million acres. However, one key to the Quincy proposal is that fuelbreaks and other subsection (d) activities are only eligible for part of that 2.5 million acre area. Specifically those activities will be carried out on lands that are "Available for Group Selection" as identified on the QLG map. This

is a cornerstone of the agreement because the land base was essentially that which would leave the roadless areas out of areas that would receive fuelbreak, thinning, group selection, and other silviculture treatments under the QLG plan. "Available for Group Selection" area is about 1.6 million acres. Areas outside of the "Available for Group Selection" were essentially those recommended over the years for protection by local environmental groups that are participants in the Quincy Library Group and by national environmental groups.

My original substitute, amendment No. 1, would have gone the extra mile to ensure that the areas outside of those that are "Available for Group Selection"—the roadless areas for which environmental groups have long sought protection—would not be eligible for subsection (d) fuelbreaks, would not be eligible for any road building, and would not be eligible for any timber harvesting activities. The provision that would have done this was subsection (i)(5)(A)(i). This would have ensured that while the pilot project was being implemented or eligible to be implemented on the ground, the "Off Base" and "Deferred" land areas (essentially the roadless areas) would be ineligible for timber harvests, road building, and subsection (d) activities. That was my proposal in amendment No. 1, but Mr. MILLER required that it be removed, which in my view may lessen the protection of the roadless areas.

Subsection (c)(1), which removes spotted owl habitat from eligibility for harvest stayed in the compromise version. So did the riparian protection that was added in full committee. I might add that the riparian protection is straight from the Clinton Northwest Forest Plan, which was composed by scientists including the ex-chief of the Forest Service, Dr. Jack Ward Thomas. Personally, I think that this riparian protection may be too stringent, but it is part of the Quincy Library Group agreement and part of existing law that the Quincy group wants to follow. That is why it is in my substitute. It is part of the deal.

Mr. MILLER asked that I remove the provision that would have allowed more funding to be recommended and provided for riparian restoration projects, which I believe are an important part of the Quincy Library Group Agreement. The provision, subsection (c)(3), was removed.

The Quincy group's plan envisioned compliance with laws that ensured proper harvesting techniques and ensured forest standards would be met for management activities like fuelbreak construction. Nevertheless, we added a proviso that ensured that the resource management activities would be implemented to the extent consistent with the Federal laws that apply to such activities. This would included the interim guidelines for the spotted owl. Should final guidelines for the owl become effective, they would apply instead. This change makes the requirement of subsection (d) no less of a requirement than it was before. It simply means that in meeting the requirement of subsection (d)(1) and (2), for example, that the laws that guide good forest management and other applicable laws that would guide forest management activities apply to the carrying out the activities. The change does not make subsection (d) hollow.

Now for subsection (d). It requires fuelbreaks on not less than 40,000 acres and not more than 60,000 acres within the pilot

project area, meaning the "Available for Group Selection" area. This is a key to the Quincy plan because it will improve the ecology of the forest and the stability of the communities economically. Economic stability will improve because a more stable supply of timber will be available through the fuelbreak, thinning, and group selection requirements of subsection (d). People will work. The bill is not cast in terms of a particular volume of timber that is required to be harvested. Rather the bill requires acreage harvest for things like fuelbreaks and group selections, which might be part of a fuelbreak. The range of 40,000 to 60,000 acres was selected based on scientific information. The committee report explains that point. Even if 60,000 acres are treated with fuelbreaks and thinning each year it would take nearly 30 years to treat the entire land base that is "Available for Group Selection" under the Quincy plan.

Because there were allegations that the bill would allow too much harvesting, the committee added a maximum acreage of harvests 70,000 per year. While I do not think that too much of the group selection would be done outside of the fuelbreak system, 70,000 acres was selected because it would allow 60,000 acres of fuelbreaks plus some group selection.

Mr. MILLER, Mr. HERGER, and I agreed on new language concerning riparian management that was added to subsection (d). Mr. MILLER pointed out that riparian management is an important part of the Quincy Library Group agreement. While I believe my amendment No. 1 addressed riparian management by including the SAT guidelines for subsection (d) activities, we added some of the language suggested by Mr. MILLER and modified by me.

My modification to that language ties the riparian management into the SAT guidelines required for timber activities in riparian areas. Thus, under the SAT guidelines, there may be watershed assessments and watershed work that then opens the possibility of management of riparian areas. Flexibility that is needed if there is funding available for such activities. That is why we tied that new subsection (d) proviso on riparian management to the new subsection (f)(7) which ensures that amounts that are available for subsection (d)(1) and (d)(2) activities will remain available for those activities and not be transferred into subsection (d)(4) activities. In short, we wanted to ensure that riparian management, which may be very expensive, does not cut short the ability to achieve the critical fuelbreak and group selection work that will ultimately provide more revenue that could be directed by the appropriations committee to important riparian management or restoration efforts under (d)(4).

Subsection (e) simply requires cost effectiveness, something that is often missing in government. Cost effectiveness, means efficiency, not shoddy work or shortcuts on environmental protection.

We removed subsection (f) in the Young Amendment No. 1 at the request of the administration and Mr. MILLER. This will not affect implementation of the Quincy pilot project because other multiple use activities will be positively affected by implementation of the Quincy pilot project. For example, wildlife habitat will improve because it will not burn as readily or as badly.

In our funding subsection we specified that normal reprogramming guidelines must be fol-

lowed to shift funds if they ordinarily could not be used for the purpose described. We wanted to provide maximum flexibility for the Forest Service to use existing accounts to cover QLG activities. So that the funds now spent for timber sales will be shifted into timber activities associated with fuelbreaks, group selection, individual tree selection to meet the requirements of subsection (d). My substitute also included a proviso that ensures that the amount of overhead and general administration will not be too high. We wanted the money to reach the ground and implement QLG projects. We also did not want other multiple use activities, for example grazing, to suffer a loss of funds in order to implement the requirements in the bill. At the request of the junior Senator from California, Mr. HERGER and I agreed to add a provision that directly authorized funds to be appropriated to carry out the pilot project.

Regarding subsection (g) of my new substitute agreed to by the House, the term of the pilot project will be at least 5 years. This is necessary because it is a critical component of the Quincy Library Group's agreement of stability for a 5-year period. While we want the normal forest planning process to deal with evaluating the incorporation of the subsection (d) and possibly other components of the Quincy agreement into the plan, there is a great need for community and economic stability for the near term of 5 years. This is so that investment decisions can be made, the timber supply that results from fuel removal will be stabilized, and the pilot project can be carried out over enough of a time period to evaluate the results from a scientific standpoint. This balance is consistent with the goals of the National Forest Management Act and principles of sustainable development which seeks to ensure economic and ecologic balance.

Concerning subsection (i), we left the proviso that requires the environmental impact statement is to be prepared in consultation with the QLG, thus ensuring that there are open lines of communication between the Forest Service and the QLG in designing the subsection (d) activities and so there are no FACA problems. We also left the proviso that ensures contracting flexibility.

Regarding the new subsection (i) in our compromise, it is the same as subsection (j) of the Young amendment No. 1. It requires the planning process to evaluate the Quincy subsection (d) requirements, the land allocations, and the other features of the Quincy plan. It then allows the plan to be amended or revised.

Reporting requirements of new subsection (j) and (k) are critical. They will allow us to evaluate performance from a fiscal standpoint and from an ecologic standpoint with reference to the goals of the Quincy agreement and the pilot project. My substitute and the House-passed bill switched the subsection (k) report to begin at the midpoint of the pilot project. That is because we wanted to make sure that the information provided in the report would begin to be available as the land management plan revision or amendment was being developed under new subsection (i). My amendment No. 1 and the House-passed bill also specifically included watershed monitoring as an aspect of the science-based assessment.

Finally, the new subsection (l) was a proviso included by Mr. HERGER and myself at the request of Members of the House and the junior Senator from California and to address a concern identified by the chairwoman of the Council on Environmental Quality. This proviso ensures that pilot project is not exempt from any Federal environmental law, which is consistent with the QLG agreement and H.R. 858 as introduced. We specifically chose the word "exempt" to ensure that the provisions in the bill have a meaning and, as a subsequently passed law, overlay the current law. Thus, the fuelbreak and group selection requirements of subsection (d) are indeed requirements, not meaningless abstractions that do not produce the desired results of enhanced ecologic conditions and community stability due to a consistent and larger, but quite sustainable, supply of timber from the "Available for Group Selection" acreage. Adding the explicit statement simply solidified the fact that the pilot project will not be exempt from Federal environmental laws. Thus, standard and guidelines for harvesting trees will apply, as will procedural laws like the National Environmental Policy Act, which will govern the subsection (b)(1) environmental impact statement for the project.

I add some closing thoughts. First, this bill was designed for the Quincy plan. It is the right mix for the Quincy situation. It is needed to get the agency focused on implementing the plan on the ground. Other community-based forest plans may need their own mix of provisions in law to get their particular plan off of the ground or they may need no provisions in law. It is my hope that the Forest Service can accommodate future plans like the Quincy plan, but I will not be shy about supporting similar calls for legislation where it is necessary.

Second, I think that because we have a consensus here on the Quincy plan itself and now on the bill, that it gives us something to watch—a test case—to see how well our environmental laws really work and whether and how they may need to be changed. If the Quincy plan ends up working out in terms of implementation, we may need to evaluate ways to make similar plans easier to implement. If the implementation of the new Quincy Library law and the plan still end up in gridlock, then perhaps it sets the stage to look even deeper for more fundamental changes in the underlying forestry law and restructure it to foster constructive compromise instead of continual conflict.

Last, I thank the 429 Members of the House who overwhelmingly supported this bill. I want to especially thank Representative WALLY HERGER for introducing the bill and working on it with his usual enthusiasm. I also thank VIC FAZIO, who was the cosponsor of the bill from the beginning and helped to put together the compromise today. He worked closely with Representative HERGER, Representative CHENOWETH, and Mr. MILLER on our compromise that went down to the wire. I think that we ended up with a very good bill. It is a model for the future and a model for solving problems. Most of all I want to thank the members of the Quincy Library Group for staying together and doing what they knew was right for the environment and their community.