

storm surges, and accompanying losses of human life and property;

Whereas the scientific community has long established that coral reefs are subject to a wide range of natural and anthropogenic threats;

Whereas a wide variety of destructive fishing practices, including the use of cyanide, other poisons, surfactants, and explosives, are contributing to the global decline of coral reef ecosystems;

Whereas the United States has taken measures to protect national coral reef resources through the designation and management of several marine protected areas, containing reefs of the Flower Garden Banks in the Gulf of Mexico, the Florida Keys in south Florida, and offshore Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa;

Whereas the United States, acting through its agencies, has established itself as a global leader in coral reef stewardship by launching the International Coral Reef Initiative and by maintaining professional networks for the purposes of sharing knowledge and information on coral reefs, furnishing near real-time data collected at coral reef sites, providing a repository for historical data relating to coral reefs, and making substantial contributions to the general fund of coral reef knowledge; and

Whereas 1997 has been declared the "International Year of the Reef" by the coral reef research community and over 40 national and international scientific, conservation, and academic organizations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

[That the Congress recognizes the significance of maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems, by—

(1) promoting comprehensive stewardship for coral reef ecosystems;

(2) encouraging research, monitoring, and assessment of and education on coral reef ecosystems; and

(3) improving the coordination of coral reef efforts and activities of Federal agencies, academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and industry.] That the Congress recognizes the significance of maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems, by—

(1) promoting comprehensive stewardship for coral reef ecosystems;

(2) discouraging unsustainable fisheries or other practices that are harmful to coral reefs and human health;

(3) encouraging research, monitoring, and assessment of and education on coral reef ecosystems;

(4) improving the coordination of coral reef efforts and activities of Federal agencies, academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and industry; and

(5) promoting preservation and sustainable use of coral reef resources worldwide.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I am pleased to rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 8. The United States is beginning to take steps to maintain and protect our coral reef ecosystems. This resolution encourages us to continue to improve our stewardship of these treasures in the sea. Coral reefs are among the most biologically diverse and productive marine habitats. They occur throughout the world's tropical and subtropical regions and in the waters of two U.S. states, including my home state of Hawaii.

Mr. President, coral reefs are vital to coastal economies, serving as the basis for coastal and marine tourism in several U.S. states and territories. Reefs also make substantial economic con-

tributions by supporting subsistence and commercial reef fisheries. Coral reefs and the ecosystems they support are under increasing pressure, primarily from human activity. Of approximately 600,000 square kilometers of coral reefs worldwide, estimates are that 10 percent have been degraded beyond recovery and an additional 30 percent are likely to decline significantly within the next 20 years.

We must strengthen our commitment to be stewards of coral reefs, to discourage harmful fisheries and other practices, to monitor and assess the health of these unique systems; and improve research of and education about coral reef ecosystems. Further, we must ensure that we balance preservation with sustainable use of our coral reef resources. We must identify factors contributing to the global decline of coral reef ecosystems and discourage overfishing and other practices that are harmful to coral reefs and human health.

It is significant that this resolution is passed during the International Year of the Reef to focus attention on research and public awareness of coral reef issues. The resolution is an important step to promote preservation and sustainable use of coral reef resources worldwide. I appreciate the help of other Senators who have worked to see that our coral reefs are provided the attention that they deserve.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee amendment to the concurrent resolution be agreed to; that the concurrent resolution, as amended, be agreed to; that the amendment to the preamble be agreed to; and that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to. I further ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee amendment was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 8), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

MEASURE DISCHARGED AND REFERRED—S. 813

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Veterans' Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 813 and that the bill be referred to the Judiciary Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE CALENDAR

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of the

following bills, en bloc: S. 587, S. 588, S. 589, and S. 591. I ask unanimous consent that any committee amendments be agreed to; that the bills be read a third time and passed; that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the bills appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD, with the above occurring en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HINSDALE COUNTY LANDS EXCHANGE ACT

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 587) to require the Secretary of the Interior to exchange certain lands located in Hinsdale County, Colorado, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. LARSON AND FRIENDS CREEK EXCHANGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In exchange for conveyance to the United States of an equal value of offered land acceptable to the Secretary of the Interior that lies within, or in proximity to, the Handies Peak Wilderness Study Area, the Red Cloud Peak Wilderness Study Area, or the Alpine Loop Backcountry Bi-way, in Hinsdale County, Colorado, the Secretary of the Interior shall convey to Lake City Ranches, Ltd., a Texas limited partnership (referred to in this section as "LCR"), approximately 560 acres of selected land located in that county and generally depicted on a map entitled "Larson and Friends Creek Exchange", dated June 1996.

(b) CONTINGENCY.—The exchange under subsection (a) shall be contingent on the granting by LCR to the Secretary of a permanent conservation easement, on the approximately 440-acre Larson Creek portion of the selected land (as depicted on the map), that limits future use of the land to agricultural, wildlife, recreational, or open space purposes.

(c) APPRAISAL AND EQUALIZATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The exchange under subsection (a) shall be subject to—

(A) the appraisal requirements and equalization payment limitations set forth in section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716); and

(B) reviews and approvals relating to threatened species and endangered species, cultural and historic resources, and hazardous materials under other Federal laws.

(2) COSTS OF APPRAISAL AND REVIEW.—The costs of appraisals and reviews shall be paid by LCR.

(3) CREDITING.—The Secretary may credit payments under paragraph (2) against the value of the selected land, if appropriate, under section 206(f) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716(f)).

The committee amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 587), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

EAGLES NEST WILDERNESS EXPANSION ACT

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 588) to provide for the expansion of the Eagles Nest Wilderness within the Arapaho National Forest and the White River National Forest, Colorado, to include land known as the Slate

Creek Addition, which has been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SLATE CREEK ADDITION TO EAGLES NEST WILDERNESS, ARAPAHO AND WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FORESTS, COLORADO.

(a) *SLATE CREEK ADDITION.*—If, before December 31, 2000, the United States acquires the parcel of land described in subsection (b)—

(1) on acquisition of the parcel, the parcel shall be included in and managed as part of the Eagles Nest Wilderness designated by Public Law 94-352 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note; 90 Stat. 870); and

(2) the boundary of Eagles Nest Wilderness is adjusted to reflect the inclusion of the parcel.

(b) *DESCRIPTION OF ADDITION.*—The parcel referred to in subsection (a) is the parcel generally depicted on a map entitled "Slate Creek Addition-Eagles Nest Wilderness", dated February 1997, comprising approximately 160 acres in Summit County, Colorado, adjacent to the Eagles Nest Wilderness.

The committee amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 588), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

COLORADO BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT AND LAND CONVEYANCE ACT

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 589) to provide for a boundary adjustment and land conveyance involving the Raggeds Wilderness, White River National Forest, Colorado, to correct the effects of earlier erroneous land surveys, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT AND LAND CONVEYANCE, RAGGEDS WILDERNESS, WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST, COLORADO.

(a) *FINDINGS.*—Congress finds that—

(1) certain landowners in Gunnison County, Colorado who own real property adjacent to the portion of the Raggeds Wilderness in the White River National Forest, Colorado, have occupied or improved their property in good faith and in reliance on erroneous surveys of their properties that the landowners reasonably believed were accurate;

(2) in 1993, a Forest Service resurvey of the Raggeds Wilderness established accurate boundaries between the wilderness area and adjacent private lands; and

(3) the resurvey indicates that a small portion of the Raggeds Wilderness is occupied by adjacent landowners on the basis of the earlier erroneous land surveys.

(b) *PURPOSE.*—It is the purpose of this section to remove from the boundaries of the Raggeds Wilderness certain real property so as to permit the Secretary of Agriculture to use the authority of Public Law 97-465 (commonly known as the "Small Tracts Act") (16 U.S.C. 521c et seq.) to convey the property to the landowners who occupied the property on the basis of erroneous land surveys.

(c) *BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.*—The boundary of the Raggeds Wilderness, Gunnison and White River National Forests, Colorado, as designated by section 102(a)(16) of Public Law 96-560 (94 Stat. 3267; 16 U.S.C. 1132 note), is hereby modified to exclude from the area encompassed by

the wilderness a parcel of real property approximately 0.86-acres in size situated in the SW¹/₄ of the NE¹/₄ of Section 28, Township 11 South, Range 88 West of the 6th Principal Meridian, as depicted on the map entitled "Encroachment-Raggeds Wilderness", dated November 17, 1993.

(d) *MAP.*—The map described in subsection (c) shall be on file and available for inspection in the appropriate offices of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.

(e) *CONVEYANCE OF LAND REMOVED FROM WILDERNESS AREA.*—The Secretary of Agriculture shall use the authority provided by Public Law 97-465 (commonly known as the "Small Tracts Act") (16 U.S.C. 521c et seq.) to convey all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the real property excluded from the boundaries of the Raggeds Wilderness under subsection (c) to the owners of real property in Gunnison County, Colorado, whose real property adjoins the excluded real property and who have occupied the excluded real property in good faith reliance on an erroneous survey.

The committee amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 589), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

DILLON RANGER DISTRICT TRANSFER ACT

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 591) to transfer the Dillon Ranger District in the Arapaho National Forest to the White River National Forest in the State of Colorado, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. INCLUSION OF DILLON RANGER DISTRICT IN WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST, COLORADO.

(a) *BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS.*—

(1) *WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST.*—The boundary of the White River National Forest in the State of Colorado is hereby adjusted to include all National Forest System lands located in Summit County, Colorado, comprising the Dillon Ranger District of the Arapaho National Forest.

(2) *ARAPAHO NATIONAL FOREST.*—The boundary of the Arapaho National Forest is adjusted to exclude the land transferred to the White River National Forest by paragraph (1).

(b) *REFERENCE.*—Any reference to the Dillon Ranger District, Arapaho National Forest, in any existing statute, regulation, manual, handbook, or other document shall be deemed to be a reference to the Dillon Ranger District, White River National Forest.

(c) *EXISTING RIGHTS.*—Nothing in this section affects valid existing rights of persons holding any authorization, permit, option, or other form of contract existing on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) *FOREST RECEIPTS.*—Notwithstanding the distribution requirements of payments under the sixth paragraph under the heading "FOREST SERVICE" in the Act entitled "An Act making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and nine", approved May 23, 1908 (35 Stat. 260, chapter 192; 16 U.S.C. 500), the distribution of receipts from the Arapaho National Forest and the White River National Forest to affected county governments shall be based on the national forest boundaries that existed on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

The committee amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 591), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

AUTHORIZING PRODUCTION OF RECORDS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Senate Resolution 135, submitted earlier today by Senators LOTT and DASCHLE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 135) to authorize the production of records by the Committee on Rules and Administration.

The Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Committee on Rules and Administration has received requests from various law enforcement entities for copies of committee records related to the committee's inquiry into the 1996 Louisiana U.S. Senate election. The committee anticipates future similar requests.

In accord with standard Senate practice, this resolution would authorize the Rules Committee to provide committee records in response to these requests.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; that the preamble be agreed to; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the resolution appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 135) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, and its preamble, is as follows:

S. RES. 135

Whereas, federal, state, and local law enforcement officials have requested that the Committee on Rules and Administration provide them with copies of records held by the committee related to the 1996 United States Senate election in Louisiana;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate can, by administrative or judicial process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that documents, papers, and records under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistently with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Committee on Rules and Administration, either through formal action or by joint action of the Chairman and Ranking Member, is authorized to provide to federal, state, and local law enforcement officials copies of records held by the committee related to the 1996 United States Senate election in Louisiana.

MORNING BUSINESS

(During today's session of the Senate, the following morning business was transacted.)