

bring this bill to final passage and hopefully on to signature by the President.

Finally, I would offer a note of appreciation and thanks to the former Members of Congress whose efforts made today's legislation possible. First, approximately twenty years ago, Senator William Armstrong of Colorado began this worthwhile process by proposing wilderness in Colorado, and in 1986 Senator Armstrong proposed protected status and management for the Spanish Peaks. His efforts set in place the foundation upon which today's bill is built. Second, I would like to thank the former Congressman from the Second District, Mr. Skaggs. Together, he and I introduced this legislation in the 104th Congress and again in the 105th Congress, which passed the House but due to time constraints did not pass the Senate. The efforts by both of these individual legislators helped make this bill possible.

The mountains known as the Spanish Peaks are two volcanic peaks in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. The eastern peak rises to 12,683 feet above sea level, while the summit of the western peak reaches 13,626 feet. The two served as landmarks for Native Americans as well as some of Colorado's other early settlers.

With this history, it's not surprising that the Spanish Peaks portion of the San Isabel National Forest was included in 1977 on the National Registry of Natural Landmarks. The Spanish Peaks area has outstanding scenic, geologic, and wilderness values, including a spectacular system of over 250 free standing dikes and ramps of volcanic materials radiating from the peaks. The lands covered by this bill are not only beautiful and part of a rich heritage, but also provide an excellent source of recreation. The State of Colorado has designated the Spanish Peaks as a natural area, and they are a popular destination for hikers seeking an opportunity to enjoy an unmatched vista of southeastern Colorado's mountains and plains.

The Forest Service originally reviewed and recommended the Spanish Peaks area for possible wilderness designation in 1979. The process since then has involved several steps, and during that time, the Forest Service has been able to acquire most of the inholdings within Spanish Peaks area. So the way is now clear for Congress to finish the job and designate the Spanish Peaks area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The bill before the House today would designate as wilderness about 18,000 acres of the San Isabel National Forest, including both of the Spanish Peaks as well as the slopes below and between them. This includes most of the lands originally recommended for wilderness by the Forest Service, but with boundary revisions that will exclude some private lands. I would like to note that Senator ALLARD and I have made significant efforts to address local concerns about the wilderness designation, including: (1) adjusting the boundary slightly to exclude certain lands that are likely to have the capacity for mineral production; and (2) excluding from the wilderness a road used by locals for access to the beauty of the Spanish Peaks. Senator ALLARD and I did not act to introduce this bill until a local consensus was achieved on this wilderness designation.

The bill itself is very simple. It would just add the Spanish Peaks area to the list of

areas designated as wilderness by the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993. As a result, all the provisions of that Act—including the provisions related to water—would apply to the Spanish Peaks area just as they do to the other areas on that list. Like all the areas now on that list, the Spanish Peaks area covered by this bill is a headwaters area, which for all practical purposes eliminates the possibility of water conflicts. There are no water diversions within the area.

Mr. Speaker, I close my statement by thanking all of my fellow members for your time and by urging all Members of the House to vote yes in support of passage of S. 503.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. 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 Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 503.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□

IMPROVEMENT OF NATIVE HIRING WITHIN THE STATE OF ALASKA

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 748) to improve Native hiring and contracting by the Federal Government within the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 748

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

SECTION 1. REPORT.

(a) Within six months after the enactment of this Act the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") shall submit a report detailing the progress the Department has made in the implementation of the provisions of sections 1307 and 1308 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and provisions of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. The report shall include a detailed action plan on the future implementation of the provisions of sections 1307 and 1308 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and provisions of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. The report shall describe, in detail, the measures and actions that will be taken, along with a description of the anticipated results to be achieved during the next three fiscal years. The report shall focus on lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior in Alaska and shall also address any laws, rules, regulations and policies which act as a deterrent to hiring Native Alaskans or contracting with Native Alaskans to perform and conduct activities and programs of those agencies and bureaus under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior.

(b) The report shall be completed within existing appropriations and shall be transmitted to the Committee on Resources of the United States Senate; and the Committee on Resources of the United States House of Representatives.

SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) In furtherance of the goals of sections 1307 and 1308 of the Alaska National Interest

Lands Conservation Act and the provisions of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) implement pilot programs to employ residents of local communities at the following units of the National Park System located in northwest Alaska:

- (A) Bering Land Bridge National Preserve,
- (B) Cape Krusenstern National Monument,
- (C) Kobuk Valley National Park, and
- (D) Noatak National Preserve; and

(2) report on the results of the programs within one year to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives.

(b) In implementing the programs, the Secretary shall consult with the Native Corporations, non-profit organizations, and Tribal entities in the immediate vicinity of such units and shall also, to the extent practicable, involve such groups in the development of interpretive materials and the pilot programs relating to such units.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

□ 1500

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 748 directs the Secretary of the Interior to complete and submit a report within 6 months after enactment of this act on the progress the Department has made in implementing section 1307 and 1308 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, called ANILCA.

Since ANILCA was enacted, the Department has failed to implement these two sections of the bill. This bill further requires the Secretary to include a detailed action plan for the implementation of ANILCA section 1307 and 1308 to consult with Alaska Native Corporations formed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, nonprofit organizations, and tribal entities in the immediate vicinity of the park units. It further requires the Secretary, to the extent possible, to involve such groups in developing materials and pilot programs.

I urge an aye vote on this important legislation for the Alaska Natives.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 748, legislation intended to encourage the Department of the Interior to improve Native hiring and contracting within the State of Alaska.

As I understand it, this legislation is supported by the Department of the Interior. I urge its passage.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska

(Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 748.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□

LAKE TAHOE RESTORATION ACT

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3388) to promote environmental restoration around the Lake Tahoe basin, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3388

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Lake Tahoe Restoration Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) Lake Tahoe, one of the largest, deepest, and clearest lakes in the world, has a cobalt blue color, a unique alpine setting, and remarkable water clarity, and is recognized nationally and worldwide as a natural resource of special significance;

(2) in addition to being a scenic and ecological treasure, Lake Tahoe is one of the outstanding recreational resources of the United States, offering skiing, water sports, biking, camping, and hiking to millions of visitors each year, and contributing significantly to the economies of California, Nevada, and the United States;

(3) the economy in the Lake Tahoe basin is dependent on the protection and restoration of the natural beauty and recreation opportunities in the area;

(4) Lake Tahoe is in the midst of an environmental crisis; the Lake's water clarity has declined from a visibility level of 105 feet in 1967 to only 70 feet in 1999, and scientific estimates indicate that if the water quality at the Lake continues to degrade, Lake Tahoe will lose its famous clarity in only 30 years;

(5) sediment and algae-nourishing phosphorous and nitrogen continue to flow into the Lake from a variety of sources, including land erosion, fertilizers, air pollution, urban runoff, highway drainage, streamside erosion, land disturbance, and ground water flow;

(6) methyl tertiary butyl ether—

(A) has contaminated and closed more than ⅓ of the wells in South Tahoe; and

(B) is advancing on the Lake at a rate of approximately 9 feet per day;

(7) destruction of wetlands, wet meadows, and stream zone habitat has compromised the Lake's ability to cleanse itself of pollutants;

(8) approximately 40 percent of the trees in the Lake Tahoe basin are either dead or dying, and the increased quantity of combustible forest fuels has significantly increased the risk of catastrophic forest fire in the Lake Tahoe basin;

(9) as the largest land manager in the Lake Tahoe basin, with 77 percent of the land, the Federal Government has a unique responsibility for restoring environmental health to Lake Tahoe;

(10) the Federal Government has a long history of environmental preservation at Lake Tahoe, including—

(A) congressional consent to the establishment of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agen-

cy in 1969 (Public Law 91-148; 83 Stat. 360) and in 1980 (Public Law 96-551; 94 Stat. 3233);

(B) the establishment of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit in 1973; and

(C) the enactment of Public Law 96-586 (94 Stat. 3381) in 1980 to provide for the acquisition of environmentally sensitive land and erosion control grants;

(11) the President renewed the Federal Government's commitment to Lake Tahoe in 1997 at the Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum, when he committed to increased Federal resources for environmental restoration at Lake Tahoe and established the Federal Interagency Partnership and Federal Advisory Committee to consult on natural resources issues concerning the Lake Tahoe basin;

(12) the States of California and Nevada have contributed proportionally to the effort to protect and restore Lake Tahoe, including—

(A) expenditures—

(i) exceeding \$200,000,000 by the State of California since 1980 for land acquisition, erosion control, and other environmental projects in the Lake Tahoe basin; and

(ii) exceeding \$30,000,000 by the State of Nevada since 1980 for the purposes described in clause (i); and

(B) the approval of a bond issue by voters in the State of Nevada authorizing the expenditure by the State of an additional \$20,000,000; and

(13) significant additional investment from Federal, State, local, and private sources is needed to stop the damage to Lake Tahoe and its forests, and restore the Lake Tahoe basin to ecological health.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to enable the Forest Service to plan and implement significant new environmental restoration activities and forest management activities to address the phenomena described in paragraphs (4) through (8) of subsection (a) in the Lake Tahoe basin;

(2) to ensure that Federal, State, local, regional, tribal, and private entities continue to work together to improve water quality and manage Federal land in the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit; and

(3) to provide funding to local governments for erosion and sediment control projects on non-Federal land if the projects benefit the Federal land.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD CARRYING CAPACITY.—The term "environmental threshold carrying capacity" has the meaning given the term in article II of the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact set forth in the first section of Public Law 96-551 (94 Stat. 3235).

(2) FIRE RISK REDUCTION ACTIVITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term "fire risk reduction activity" means an activity that is necessary to reduce the risk of wildlife to promote forest management and simultaneously achieve and maintain the environmental threshold carrying capacities established by the Planning Agency in a manner consistent, where applicable, with chapter 71 of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Code of Ordinances.

(B) INCLUDED ACTIVITIES.—The term "fire risk reduction activity" includes—

(i) prescribed burning;

(ii) mechanical treatment;

(iii) road obliteration or reconstruction; and

(iv) such other activities consistent with Forest Service practices as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(3) PLANNING AGENCY.—The term "Planning Agency" means the Tahoe Regional Plan-

ning Agency established under Public Law 91-148 (83 Stat. 360) and Public Law 96-551 (94 Stat. 3233).

(4) PRIORITY LIST.—The term "priority list" means the environmental restoration priority list developed under section 6.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with this Act and the laws applicable to the National Forest System.

(b) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORITY.—

(1) PRIVATE OR NON-FEDERAL LAND.—Nothing in this Act grants regulatory authority to the Secretary over private or other non-Federal land.

(2) PLANNING AGENCY.—Nothing in this Act affects or increases the authority of the Planning Agency.

(3) ACQUISITION UNDER OTHER LAW.—Nothing in this Act affects the authority of the Secretary to acquire land from willing sellers in the Lake Tahoe basin under any other law.

SEC. 5. CONSULTATION WITH PLANNING AGENCY AND OTHER ENTITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the duties described in subsection (b), the Secretary shall consult with and seek the advice and recommendations of—

(1) the Planning Agency;

(2) the Tahoe Federal Interagency Partnership established by Executive Order No. 13057 (62 Fed. Reg. 41249) or a successor Executive order;

(3) the Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee established by the Secretary on December 15, 1998 (64 Fed. Reg. 2876) (until the committee is terminated);

(4) Federal representatives and all political subdivisions of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit; and

(5) the Lake Tahoe Transportation and Water Quality Coalition.

(b) DUTIES.—The Secretary shall consult with and seek advice and recommendations from the entities described in subsection (a) with respect to—

(1) the administration of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit;

(2) the development of the priority list;

(3) the promotion of consistent policies and strategies to address the Lake Tahoe basin's environmental and recreational concerns;

(4) the coordination of the various programs, projects, and activities relating to the environment and recreation in the Lake Tahoe basin to avoid unnecessary duplication and inefficiencies of Federal, State, local, tribal, and private efforts; and

(5) the coordination of scientific resources and data, for the purpose of obtaining the best available science as a basis for decision-making on an ongoing basis.

SEC. 6. ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PRIORITY LIST.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop a priority list of potential or proposed environmental restoration projects for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

(b) DEVELOPMENT OF PRIORITY LIST.—In developing the priority list, the Secretary shall—

(1) use the best available science, including any relevant findings and recommendations of the watershed assessment conducted by the Forest Service in the Lake Tahoe basin; and

(2) include, in order of priority, potential or proposed environmental restoration projects in the Lake Tahoe basin that—