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Senate

IMPROVING FUEL ECONOMY

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I am here to cheer the announcement by the Ford Motor Company that it will voluntarily improve the fuel economy of its fleet of sport utility vehicles by 25 percent over a period of 5 years. At a time when gas prices are skyrocketing and sales of SUVs are increasing, this announcement couldn't come at a better time. Ford's decision to make SUVs more fuel efficient is welcome news. I have long said that the industry has existing technology to allow cars to go farther on a gallon of gas and to save consumers money at the gas pump. Ford has set an example that other auto manufacturers should follow immediately. I am anxiously awaiting a response from the remaining two of the big three and hope they will join Ford in its pursuit of cleaner, more efficient vehicles.

I hope the manufacturers, now having pledged to improve fuel efficiency, will join me in my efforts to study an increase in corporate average fuel economy standards. As my colleagues know, I have long been an advocate of raising CAFE standards and scored a breakthrough victory earlier this year that paves the way for the Department of Transportation and the National Academy of Sciences, once again, to study fuel efficiency standards and their relationship to such issues as vehicle safety and to recommend the findings to Congress by July 1, 2001. I look forward to working with the automotive industry to ensure that this study is fair and balanced.

Many constituents and colleagues are surprised to learn of my advocacy for CAFE standards. My motivation is a simple one and is based on the success of the original CAFE standards statutes. I have never been swayed by doomsday predictions from automakers that claim they would be forced to manufacture a fleet of subcompact cars if we allowed the Department of Transportation to study and

impose an increase in CAFE standards. We have come a long way from absolute opposition to a study of the issue to today's major announcement by the Ford Motor Company that will be of tremendous benefit to consumers who want cleaner, more efficient SUVs. This announcement reaffirms my faith in the ability of American automobile manufacturers to produce fuel-efficient vehicles that are the envy of the world. The debate over raising CAFE standards has come a long way, and I look forward to continuing this debate when Congress returns from its August recess.

BREACHING COLUMBIA AND SNAKE RIVER DAMS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, on a third and separate subject, during the course of this past week, four Northwest Governors, two Republicans and two Democrats—the Governors of Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon—released a framework that shows great promise toward the recovery of endangered salmon on the Columbia and Snake Rivers. They have done so without recommending that any dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers be breached and destroyed. I agree wholeheartedly with the following statement from their plan:

The region must be prepared in the near term to recover salmon and meet its larger fish and wildlife restoration obligations by acting now in areas of agreement without resorting to breaching the four Snake River dams.

That is a reasonable statement. Unfortunately, it is not one which Vice President GORE and the Federal agencies now concerned with salmon enhancement endorse in their countervailing recommendations of today to keep moving forward with plans to destroy those dams.

I agree with the bipartisan Governors' plan in many of its elements, including the principle that perform-

ance standards must be scientifically based, subject to scientific peer review, reasonably obtainable, and measurable. I agree with the Governors that the National Marine Fisheries Service should work together with local, State, and tribal governments and private landowners on what specific improvements are needed for recovery. I agree with the Governors that we need real leadership and that the President of the United States should appoint one official in the region who will be accountable and who will efficiently oversee Federal agency fish recovery efforts.

Over the past decade, we have squandered more than a billion dollars and commissioned dozens of studies that have done little to promote a consensus on how best to save salmon. The Governors and I agree that local salmon recovery plans that avoid Federal methods of duplication and top-down planning are a much more effective method of saving salmon. I agree with the Governors that States should move ahead to designate priority watersheds for salmon and steelhead plans that are to be developed within 1 year and that the Federal agencies should have clear numerical goals so that success may be measured in those watersheds.

The appropriations subcommittee of this Congress last year directed the National Marine Fisheries Service to provide numerical goals for all of the listed fish in the Puget Sound and Columbia River regions and a schedule for all other areas and to provide this information to Congress by July 1 of this year. Instead of fulfilling this request, those agencies have said they will not have any goals until the fall of 2001 and that they have only begun the technical recovery planning for any species of fish they seek to recover. In other words, once again the administration says what we ought to do without knowing what those steps are designed to accomplish.

I agree with the Governors and their recommendation that the Army Corps

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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S7793

of Engineers, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must develop a long-term management plan to address predation by fish-eating birds and marine mammals, including seals and sea lions, and do so by the end of the year. I agree with the Governors that the National Marine Fisheries Service should work with the region to conduct an intensive study to address the role of the ocean in fish recovery and ask that the management of fish and fresh water reflect new information about the ocean as it is developed.

In short, I believe the Governors have a plan that will work. I have supported millions of dollars in salmon recovery money to be given to the States and to local volunteer groups and will work with them.

On the other hand, today the National Marine Fisheries Service has come out with its top-down recommendations, recommendations that, I want to point out, once again call for very specific measures and steps to be taken but do not state any goals for recovery and do not allow us to know what they believe success will be or how that success will be measured.

In the course of the last week or 10 days, the newspapers in the Pacific Northwest have been filled with statements that the Federal Government had abandoned the idea of dam removal as an element in salmon recovery at least for a decade. And the implication was that they had abandoned it forever.

Not so, Mr. President. What does the biological opinion that was issued today say in that respect?

It says:

The reasonable and prudent alternative requires that further development of breaches as an option is necessary, and it requires the Corps of Engineers by fiscal year 2002 to seek appropriations to complete preliminary engineering and design work by 2005 for potential removal of the four lower Snake River dams.

It does that in spite of the fact that:

There is considerable uncertainty in assessing the status of listed fish under current conditions, and the alternative of breaching dams is highly dependent on the degree to which there is delayed mortality associated with juvenile fish passage at the dams and whether breaching would help even to answer these uncertainties.

Well, we have a set of Federal agencies that have disagreed with one another. The Corps of Engineers, a year ago, reached the conclusion that dam removal was a poor idea. It did so in spite of vastly underestimating, according to the General Accounting Administration, the adverse impacts on the society, the economy, and the environment of the Pacific Northwest. That recommendation was deleted from its formal opinion by orders of the White House.

Vice President GORE has visited the State of Washington on three or four occasions during the course of this year. Each time he has been asked to state his opinion on dam removal, including a specific request by one of his

supporters, the Governor of Oregon. He has ducked, dodged, and defied any attempt to get him to reach a conclusion on that particular subject. But I think this biological opinion released by the administration today shows what that opinion is. It is very simple: We will fool the people of the Pacific Northwest by saying we have probably abandoned the idea between now and the 8th of November, and then under these recommendations we can change our mind very rapidly when they won't have a direct say over who will manage the next national administration.

Contrast that position with the forthright and unconditional pledge of Governor Bush that the removal of our dams, the destruction of our physical infrastructure, is not an option; that we can and will recover the salmon resources in the Pacific Northwest by the use of our imaginations and by following the advice of the people whose lives are affected by these decisions—a view that I believe is entirely consistent with the recommendations this week of the four Governors—two Republicans and two Democrats, as I have already pointed out—from the Pacific Northwest itself.

Well, we do have something to say about this issue. I pledge I will do everything I can between now and the adjournment of this Congress in late September or early October to see to it this administration is not allowed to waste any more money—not a single dollar—on further studies to remove dams on the Columbia-Snake River system. We will call them to account for their own policies. Their own policies now say this decision should be moved down the road. Fine. We will move the whole decision down the road and hope that we will have a President who will be mindful of the views of the people of the Pacific Northwest and, in the meantime, we are not going to let them waste money to build a case for removing dams that ought to stay in place.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

BEND PINE NURSERY LAND CONVEYANCE ACT

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 486, S. 1936.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1936) to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to sell or exchange all or part of certain administrative sites and other National Forest System land in the State of Or-

egon and use the proceeds derived from the sale or exchange for National Forest System purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, 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. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Bend Pine Nursery Land Conveyance Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(2) STATE.—The term "State" means the State of Oregon.

SEC. 3. SALE OR EXCHANGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SITES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may, under such terms and conditions as the Secretary may prescribe, sell or exchange any or all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the following National Forest System land and improvements:

(1) Tract A, Bend Pine Nursery, comprising approximately 210 acres, as depicted on site plan map entitled "Bend Pine Nursery Administrative Site, May 13, 1999".

(2) Tract B, the Federal Government owned structures located at Shelter Cove Resort, Deschutes National Forest, buildings only, as depicted on site plan map entitled "Shelter Cove Resort, November 3, 1997".

(3) Tract C, portions of isolated parcels of National Forest Land located in Township 20 south, Range 10 East section 25 and Township 20 South, Range 11 East sections 8, 9, 16, 17, 20, and 21 consisting of approximately 1,260 acres, as depicted on map entitled "Deschutes National Forest Isolated Parcels, January 1, 2000".

(4) Tract D, Alsea Administrative Site, consisting of approximately 24 acres, as depicted on site plan map entitled "Alsea Administrative Site, May 14, 1999".

(5) Tract E, Mapleton Administrative Site, consisting of approximately 8 acres, as depicted on site plan map entitled "Mapleton Administrative Site, May 14, 1999".

(6) Tract F, Springdale Administrative Site, consisting of approximately 3.6 acres, as depicted on site plan map entitled "Site Development Plan, Columbia Gorge Ranger Station, April 22, 1964".

(7) Tract G, Dale Administrative Site, consisting of approximately 37 acres, as depicted on site plan map entitled "Dale Compound, February 1999".

(8) Tract H, Crescent Butte Site, consisting of approximately .8 acres, as depicted on site plan map entitled "Crescent Butte Communication Site, January 1, 2000".

(b) CONSIDERATION.—Consideration for a sale or exchange of land under subsection (a) may include the acquisition of land, existing improvements, or improvements constructed to the specifications of the Secretary.

(c) APPLICABLE LAW.—Except as otherwise provided in this Act, any sale or exchange of National Forest System land under subsection (a) shall be subject to the laws (including regulations) applicable to the conveyance and acquisition of land for the National Forest System.

(d) CASH EQUALIZATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may accept a cash equalization payment in excess of 25 percent of the value of land exchanged under subsection (a).

(e) SOLICITATIONS OF OFFERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary may solicit offers for sale or exchange of land under this section on such terms and conditions as the Secretary may prescribe.

(2) REJECTION OF OFFERS.—The Secretary may reject any offer made under this section if the