

First, the bill would enact into law a 1996 Executive Order designed to protect sacred lands. Specifically, it ensures access and ceremonial use of sacred lands and mandates all federal land management agencies take the necessary steps to prevent significant damage to sacred lands.

Second, my bill gives Indian tribes the ability to petition the government to place federal lands off-limits to energy leasing or other incompatible developments when they believe those proposed actions would cause significant damage to their sacred lands.

This is an extremely important provision. The tribes would no longer have to depend on the good graces of federal bureaucrats to protect these lands. Rather, the tribes themselves could initiate those protections.

Third, the bill respects the confidentiality requirements of some Native American religions. And finally, the bill would permit sacred lands be transferred from the Federal government to the affected Indian or co-management plans to be implemented.

If you look to our national parks, forests and monuments you see the commitment to preserve many of our country's natural treasures. The Federal government has put its full weight behind protecting these lands, and we can do the same for Indian country.

At a time when the Bush administration is promoting increased energy development, we must enact comprehensive legislation that prohibits the further loss of Native American sacred lands. We must not stand idly by as these unique places are wiped off the face of the earth.

HONORING VIRGINIA ROCKWELL

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand before this body of Congress today to recognize a dedicated school counselor. Virginia Rockwell has served as a kindergarten through twelfth grade counselor for schools in Swink, Colorado for the past 21 years. For two decades, Virginia has provided enthusiastic service to our state's youth. Now, as she enters retirement, it is my pleasure to honor the character and achievements that have defined Virginia's dedicated career.

While Virginia has always been reluctant to take credit for her students' achievements, she has turned out a remarkable number of accomplished scholars, athletes and dedicated citizens. However, some of the students of which she is most proud are those who had to work the hardest to graduate. Virginia's commitment to her students and caring touch have not gone unnoticed. She was the state multi-level Counselor of the Year and runner up nationally in the early 1990s. Having little experience with schools in rural areas when she started, Virginia has come to appreciate the support and unique relationships that she has made while working in Swink. Upon her retirement, Virginia's peers and students will certainly reciprocate the touch of sadness that she experiences when her students graduate.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand before this Congress today to express my gratitude for Virginia Rockwell's many years of service. In-

dividuals like Virginia symbolize the dedication and commitment necessary to impart strong values to our next generation and allow them the opportunity to succeed. Virginia Rockwell has answered a noble call that demands our admiration and respect. Thank you, Virginia, for your many years of dedicated and selfless public service.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FRANK AND SUE MENEGATTI

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to stand before this body of Congress today to recognize Frank and Sue Menegatti of Walsenburg, Colorado. Frank and Sue have spent years managing The Capps Ranch Limited Partnership. During this time, they have enhanced stream quality, increased wildlife populations and protected the lands under their care from the ravages of fire. For their conscientious stewardship, Frank and Sue have received the Colorado Agricultural Outlook Forum's Leopold Conservation Award.

The exemplary efforts of Frank and Sue are all the more notable in light of the devastating drought that Colorado experienced in 2002. Frank and Sue have constructed ponds, developed twenty-five springs, and laid twenty-six miles of subterranean water pipeline in order to increase their ability to store water and protect it from evaporation. Their labor has benefited Colorado for many years, particularly at critical times, and it has helped develop a successful ranch while also caring for the natural beauty of Colorado's environment. Today, their ranch provides a habitat for twice as many elk, antelope, deer and sage grouse as it did before they began their remarkable stint as stewards.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to bring Frank and Sue's achievements to the attention of this body of Congress and this nation. Frank and Sue Menegatti serve as role models and inspirations not only to ranchers, but also to all who understand the need to protect our nation's great natural beauty for future generations.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HEPPNER FLOOD

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 2003

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observance of one of the most tragic events in the history of Oregon and a defining chapter in the story of the small town of Heppner. June 14, 2003, will mark the 100th anniversary of the Heppner Flood, a natural catastrophe of unprecedented scale in my state that took the lives of 247 Oregonians, almost a quarter of the town's 1,146 residents. Though generations have passed since the people of Heppner witnessed nature's awesome, destructive wrath, even today the residents of this resilient community carry with

them the painful memory of the devastation that occurred a full century ago.

June 14, 1903, was like any other Sunday in the peaceful town of Heppner, when the humble, God-fearing townspeople went about their lives, worshipping together and resting from a week spent toiling in their fields, minding their stores and tending their flocks and herds. As evening approached, none sensed the pending calamity that would befall the close-knit community and alter the lives of its residents forever.

Mr. Speaker, the rain came in an instant, swelling streams and unleashing a torrent that careened toward the town and destroyed everything in its wake. Trees were uprooted, structures crushed liked matchbox houses and homes and livestock were swept away in the deadly cascade. So, too, were many of the people of Heppner—men, women and children who drowned by the hundreds. An account of the disaster in the East Oregonian newspaper later estimated that more than three billion pounds of water passed through Heppner that night at a rate of 70 million pounds per minute.

Whole families were swept from the face of the earth, joining the horrendous flotsam of bodies and debris that rushed forward and disappeared into the churning water. With astonishing and merciless speed, the Heppner Flood destroyed the town's water system, ruined the railroad, took down telegraph lines and collapsed the bridges over Willow Creek. In a few short minutes, what had been a sleepy, idyllic Oregon town was transformed into a seething, watery graveyard. Scarcely a resident of the town could be found who had not lost a friend or family member or suffered the loss of property. Many of the hundreds of dead lay buried in the Heppner Masonic Cemetery, where today their descendants tend their graves and honor their precious memories.

The outpouring of assistance from nearby communities following this tragedy said much about the compassion and humanity of the people of the Northwest. In a poignant letter to Heppner's Mayor, Frank Gilliam, three little girls in Colfax, Washington, sent \$11 they collected by selling homemade candy to help victims of the flood. Mayor Gilliam, touched by the gesture, wrote a note of thanks that tragically captured the sorrow that had been visited upon his town. "Two weeks ago yesterday morning, Heppner was a happy little town," he wrote. "Our church bells rang and our little ones sang songs of praise and worshipped by their mother's side. Evening came, and with it the storm, and many of our precious little children were carried away to worship at the throne of God. Those who have gone before are happy now, while those of us who remain are sad. Sad because of the little ones who are no more—who cannot be with us to cheer our weary way."

Mr. Speaker, a century has passed since the disaster, yet the Heppner Flood remains the worst natural disaster in the history of Oregon. Though the buildings that had been torn down would be rebuilt, the fields would be replanted and herds replenished, the overwhelming human loss would remain like an open wound, the horror of the flood a constant nightmare from which the survivors would never awaken. In my travels to Heppner, I have come to know many descendants of both

survivors and victims of the flood. It is a profound honor to represent them in the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, as a tribute to the victims of this devastating event, I ask that my colleagues observe one minute of respectful silence.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO GAGLIANO'S
ITALIAN MARKET

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to recognize a local business that

truly symbolizes the "American Dream." Tony and Josephine Gagliano own and operate Gagliano's Italian Market, a Pueblo, Colorado fixture for the last 80 years. As the store has evolved over time, it continues to provide a distinct taste of home to numerous Puebloans. For this reason, I would like to pay tribute to the unique service that the Gagliano family has provided to the Pueblo Community.

Joe and Carmela Gagliano, the market's founders, were washed out of their home in Pueblo's flood of 1921. They recovered from that flood and embarked on a venture in the grocery business. Joe and Carmela's market originally catered to the basic needs of the growing Italian-American community in Pueblo. Today, Gagliano's Italian Market sells products that range from Italian foods to Italian

cookware, dishes, pasta makers, and novelty items. Josephine, Joe and Carmela's daughter, does most of the baking with help from her grown children and their families. The Gaglianos are proud to serve the Pueblo community and are enthusiastic about continuing this family tradition.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the Gagliano's story before this body of Congress and this nation. The Gaglianos provide a unique service to the community by honoring their family's culture and tradition. Their strength of spirit and dedication to the "American Dream" are the characteristics that have made this nation great. I congratulate them on their successes and wish them all the best with their future endeavors.