

feet of water this year alone. Such water supply deficiencies discourage economic growth, imperil the environment and compromise the health and safety of Southern California residents.

As a result of dwindling supplies and increasing demands, communities continue to seek non-traditional methods to produce dependable water sources, including through water recycling and desalination. H.R. 142 would enhance Southern California's water supply by constructing a water recycling project, a desalination demonstration and reclamation project, and a regional brine lines project. Upon full implementation, these projects will create an estimated 50,000 new acre feet of water annually for the region.

PRADO BASIN NATURAL TREATMENT SYSTEM

H.R. 142 will provide Southern California with additional new water annually through the construction of a water recycling project. The Prado Basin Natural Treatment System will naturally treat the Santa Ana River flow through wetlands development. By assisting Mother Nature in the creation of these wetlands, we will improve the water quality of the Santa Ana River, thereby recharging the Orange County Water District's groundwater basin.

Currently-constructed wetlands have demonstrated an ability to reduce nitrate contaminants to level that permit water supply use. The expanded program will result in more than 1,200 acres to treat three tributaries to the Santa Ana River. This will mean additional treated water that can be made available to the citizens of the region. The new system will help drought-proof the region and protect against salt water intrusion. In addition, the restoration of natural wetlands allows for the amount of water to be stored behind the currently underutilized Prado Dam to be increased.

In a region that is prone to droughts, the expansion of this water supply will deliver non-potable (non-drinkable) water for irrigation and industrial purposes so that our limited supply of potable water can be reserved for drinking water purposes.

LOWER CHINO DAIRY AREA DESALINATION DEMONSTRATION AND RECLAMATION PROJECT

H.R. 142 expands groundwater desalination in the Chino Basin from the current 9,000 acre feet per year to 40,000 acre feet per year, which would provide a vital new drinking water supply for a rapidly increasing population in San Bernardino County, including Jurupa Community Services District, Santa Ana Mutual Water Company in Riverside County, and the cities of Norco, Chino, Chino Hills and Ontario in San Bernardino County.

As former President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "We need a farsighted program for meeting urgent water needs by converting saltwater to fresh water." Once deemed impractical and costly, desalination has evolved into one of America's most effective and reliable solutions to water supply shortages. Desalination provides drinking water directly into the delivery system and is blended with other sources of potable water in many cases. The construction of a desalination demonstration and reclamation project in the Lower Chino Dairy Area offers a viable method of meeting the region's water supply needs into the future.

BASIN NATURAL TREATMENT SYSTEM PROJECT

One of the main challenges to desalination is the transport of the salts, also known as

brine, to outfall stations. H.R. 152 seeks to address this obstacle by providing a means to safely and efficiently discard excess brine from desalination plants. Specifically, this legislation calls for the construction of a regional line to transport excess brine to the Pacific Ocean, where it can be safely filtered through an ocean-outfall pump station. This will prevent many of the environmental hazards that can occur from inadequate disposal of excess brine, thus protecting groundwater reserves for the over six million resident of Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

These projects will help ensure the water needs of Southern California's communities are met, and I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HAYWORTH. 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 Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 142, as amended.

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

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Prado Basin Natural Treatment System Project, to authorize the Secretary to carry out a program to assist agencies in projects to construct regional brine lines in California, and to authorize the Secretary to participate in the Lower Chino Dairy Area desalination demonstration and reclamation project."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING CONTINUED USE OF CERTAIN LANDS WITHIN SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3932) to amend Public Law 99-338 to authorize the continued use of certain lands within the Sequoia National Park by portions of an existing hydroelectric project, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3932

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION TO REISSUE PERMIT.

The first section of Public Law 99-338 is amended by striking "one renewal" and inserting "3 renewals".

SEC. 2. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

Section 3 of Public Law 99-338 is amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 3. The permit shall contain the following provisions:

"(1) A prohibition on expansion of the Kaweah Project in Sequoia National Park.

"(2) A requirement that an independent safety assessment of the Kaweah Project be conducted,

and that any deficiencies identified as a result of the assessment would be corrected.

"(3) A requirement that the Secretary prepare and submit to Congress an update of the July 1983 report on the impact of the operations of the Kaweah No. 3 facility on Sequoia National Park.

"(4) Any other reasonable terms and conditions that the Secretary of the Interior deems necessary and proper for the management and care of Sequoia National Park and the purposes for which it was established."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) and the gentleman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3932, introduced by the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES) and amended by the Committee on Resources, would amend Public Law 99-338 to authorize the continued use of certain lands within the Sequoia National Park by portions of an existing hydroelectric project.

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The legislation would provide the authority necessary for Southern California Edison Company to continue operating the Kaweah hydroelectric project partly located in the park until the year 2016, with an option to extend until 2026. The bill also requires the company to pay the park compensation, which shall be determined in consultation with the Secretary.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3932, as amended, is supported by the majority and the minority of the Committee on Resources and by the administration. I urge adoption of this legislation.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. BORDALLO asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, the majority has already explained the purpose of H.R. 3932. While it is unusual to have a hydroelectric facility in a national park, this is a nearly 100-year-old use that has been and will continue to be held to a very high standard to ensure that there is no degradation of park resources.

The National Park Service supports this legislation, as amended, and we appreciate the willingness of the majority to work with us to see that high standards for the use of national parks

are maintained and that the park is adequately compensated for this use of park resources.

We support this legislation.

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES), the author of this important legislation.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by expressing my thanks to the Committee on Resources, the gentleman from California (Chairman POMBO) and their staff for their hard work on this legislation, H.R. 3932.

This bill is a simple maintenance of the law which has to be accomplished every 20 years to renew the Secretary of the Interior's authority to issue permits for the operation of a hydroelectric power facility in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park. This facility was built over 100 years ago and continues to generate power today. If this authority is not renewed, power generation would be halted. This bill is critical, and I urge quick passage.

Again, I offer thanks to the Committee on Resources for moving this bill quickly to the floor.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3932, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend Public Law 99-338 to authorize the continued use of certain lands within the Sequoia National Park by portions of an existing hydroelectric project, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONVEYANCE TO GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO OF DECOMMISSIONED NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION SHIP

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4158) to provide for the conveyance to the Government of Mexico of a decommissioned National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ship, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4158

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF NOAA VESSEL WHITING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce shall convey to the Government of

Mexico, without consideration, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration vessel WHITING—

(1) for use as a hydrographic survey platform in support of activities of the United States-Mexico Charting Advisors Committee; and

(2) to enhance coordination and cooperation between the United States and Mexico regarding hydrographic surveying and nautical charting activities in the border waters of both countries in the Gulf of Mexico and in the Pacific Ocean.

(b) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE.—The Government of the United States shall not be responsible or liable for any remediation, maintenance, or operation of a vessel conveyed under this section after the date of the delivery of the vessel to the Government of Mexico.

(c) DEADLINE.—The Secretary shall seek to complete the conveyance by as soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) DELIVERY OF VESSEL.—The Secretary shall deliver the vessel WHITING pursuant to this section at the vessel's homeport location of Norfolk, Virginia, at no additional cost to the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) and the gentleman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4158.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4158 will transfer a decommissioned NOAA vessel, the *Whiting*, to the Government of Mexico.

The United States is an active partner in the U.S.-Mexico Charting Advisors Committee which addresses regional issues on charting, research and data collection. As part of the cooperative activities of this committee, the Government of Mexico contacted NOAA indicating an interest in obtaining the vessel from the United States. The Government of Mexico does not have a vessel dedicated to hydrographic surveys, and the *Whiting* would be the first ship to fill that role.

The *Whiting* is 163 feet in length, draws 12 feet of water, has a cruising speed of 12 knots and a cruising range of 5,700 nautical miles. It was removed from service in 2002 after 40 years of conducting hydrographic surveys in the Great Lakes and along the East and Gulf Coasts of the United States.

Under the terms of H.R. 4158, all rights, title and interest in the *Whiting* are transferred to the Government of Mexico. The vessel must be used as a hydrographic platform in support of activities of the U.S.-Mexico Charting Advisors Committee.

The ship will be delivered at the vessel's current home port of Norfolk, Virginia, and the United States will not be responsible for any remediation, maintenance or operation of the *Whiting* after delivery. I urge an "aye" vote on H.R. 4158, and compliment the author, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), for his leadership.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. BORDALLO asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, as noted, H.R. 4158 is a noncontroversial piece of legislation to convey to the Government of Mexico at no cost to the U.S. taxpayer the decommissioned hydrographic survey vessel *Whiting* from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

I want to go on record to commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ) for recognizing the value of conveying the vessel to help strengthen the Mexican Government's civilian hydrographic survey capabilities in the Gulf of Mexico and to participate in joint hydrographic operations with the United States.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4158, sponsored by Mr. ORTIZ, which seeks to convey to the Government of Mexico, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration vessel, *Whiting*.

The NOAA and U.S. Navy are the main U.S. representatives of the MesoAmerican-Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission that coordinates the hydrographic surveys and charting activities of member nations. Since 1963, the *Whiting* had been in service for the NOAA, conducting hydrographic surveys along the east and Gulf Coast of the United States and the Great Lakes. In March 2003, NOAA replaced the *Whiting* with a former U.S. Navy hydrographic survey vessel.

As of August 2003, Mexico did not have a vessel dedicated to hydrographic surveys. The *Whiting* could fill that role, as it was decommissioned by the NOAA in May 2003. By conveying the *Whiting* to the Government of Mexico, Mexican dependence on NOAA and U.S. Navy assets for hydrographic surveys would decrease. In addition to the lessened dependence, the regional capacity would be strengthened. Such a conveyance would foster the exchange of information in the Gulf Coast and improve navigational safety for all vessels sailing in the Gulf of Mexico.

NOAA possesses no authority to transfer ships to foreign governments, and thus, this legislation would authorize such a transfer. With the passage of this legislation, the United States would bear no responsibility for any remediation, maintenance, or operation of the *Whiting* after delivery.

This legislation is exemplary in its effort to contribute globally, without putting a burden on the shoulders of the U.S. By conveying the *Whiting*, a vessel decommissioned by NOAA, to Mexico, Mexico would gain valuable and necessary infrastructure, without cost to the United States, and it would allow it to contribute to the NOAA efforts, for which the