

testament to the commitment growers have to maintain strong and healthy trees. The retail value of all Christmas trees harvested in 2004 was \$1.4 billion. Live-cut Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since 1850. By 1900, one in five American families decorated live-cut trees during Christmas. By 1930, the tree had become a nearly universal part of the American Christmas. For generations, American families have traveled hundreds and thousands of miles to celebrate the holiday season together at home around the Christmas tree. This year, more than 10,000 trees were donated to American troops by over 750 Christmas tree farmers across the Nation. These Christmas trees were delivered to over 37 bases across 19 States and over 15 countries abroad to spread the holiday spirit to our men and women in uniform who are bravely and honorably serving our Nation throughout this Christmas season.

I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Agriculture and the majority leader for their assistance in getting this resolution to the floor. I urge my colleagues to support this measure, recognizing this important industry, not just for its economic and environmental impact, but also for its cultural contribution to the Christmas holiday. Thank you to Christmas tree growers across the country for their contribution to our economy, our environment, and our Nation's heritage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 15.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the joint resolution was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.J. Res. 15.

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

There was no objection.

GEORGE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOREST LAND CONVEYANCE

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3454) to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in the George Washington National Forest in Alleghany County, Virginia, that con-

tains the cemetery of the Central Advent Christian Church and an adjoining tract of land located between the cemetery and road boundaries.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3454

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

SECTION 1. LAND CONVEYANCE, CENTRAL ADVENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH CEMETERY AND ADJOINING TRACT, GEORGE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOREST, ALLEGHANY COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

(a) CONVEYANCE REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall convey, without consideration, to the Central Advent Christian Church of Alleghany County, Virginia (in this section referred to as the "recipient"), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of real property in the George Washington National Forest, Alleghany County, Virginia, consisting of not more than 8 acres, including a cemetery encompassing approximately 6 acres designated as an area of special use for the recipient, and depicted on the Forest Service map showing tract G-2032c and dated August 20, 2002, and the Forest Service map showing the area of special use and dated March 14, 2001.

(b) CONDITION OF CONVEYANCE.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the condition that the recipient accept the real property described in such subsection in its condition at the time of the conveyance, commonly known as conveyance "as is".

(c) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the real property to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary. The cost of the survey shall be borne by the recipient.

(d) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support today of H.R. 3454. This bill, sponsored by Mr. BOUCHER from Virginia, would convey property in the George Washington National Forest to the Central Advent Christian Church of Alleghany County, Virginia. The parcel will consist of no more than 8 acres, and included in this parcel will be a cemetery encompassing approximately 6 acres.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3454 requires that the church accept the property at the time of the conveyance in an "as is" condition. The exact acreage and legal description of the property to be conveyed will be determined in a survey of USDA's approval. USDA will also set additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance of the property.

The United States Forest Service has acknowledged that this particular

tract of forest land is difficult to manage. Owning a cemetery tract is inconsistent with the Forest Service mission, which is why they have attempted to sell this property several times without success. I understand the Central Advent Christian Church has already been doing basic maintenance on the cemetery grounds. Conveying this land to the church would enable them to make more significant repairs to the property. This effort deserves congressional support.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today in support of H.R. 3454 which our distinguished ranking member on the Agriculture Committee (Mr. GOODLATTE) has cosponsored with Congressman BOUCHER. H.R. 3454 requires the U.S. Forest Service to convey, without consideration, 8 acres of the George Washington National Forest in Alleghany County, Virginia, to the Central Advent Christian Church. The conveyance includes a 6-acre cemetery and 2 additional acres between the cemetery and Interstate 64.

While typically the Forest Service would sell this property under existing authority, they did not receive any bids when they attempted to sell it. Clearly, the Forest Service should not be in the business of owning a cemetery, particularly that has been managed by the community church since 1941 under a special use permit. The church has tried to acquire the property, but for financial and other reasons has been unsuccessful.

The cemetery also creates some management problems for the agency, since there is a fair amount of maintenance associated with it.

This conveyance makes sense for the Federal Government and for the community church. It will allow the Forest Service to focus on the land Congress intended the agency to manage.

I urge adoption of this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3454, bipartisan legislation which will authorize the conveyance by the Forest Service to the Central Advent Christian Church in Alleghany County, Virginia of a small parcel of land containing a cemetery currently operated by the church. The church and the land in question are located in my Congressional District.

For 66 years, the Central Advent Christian Church has been operating its cemetery through a Special Use permit granted by the U.S. Forest Service. The historic cemetery contains more than 300 graves, two-thirds of which are located on land owned by the U.S. Forest Service. In recent years, maintenance of this land has become difficult for the Forest Service, taking valuable staff time to remove discarded flowers and other items.

It is the desire of the families of those buried in the cemetery, the members of Central Advent Christian Church and the Forest Service that the cemetery be transferred into church ownership, and the bill before the House takes the entirely appropriate step of authorizing the conveyance.

This measure authorizes the transfer of the 6.08 acres constituting the cemetery and a small additional tract, which would otherwise be landlocked by this transfer, to the church. The total amount of land to be conveyed to the church will not exceed 8 acres. Conveyance of the property will be contingent on the completion of a survey acceptable to the Forest Service at the church's expense.

I appreciate the efforts of Chairman PETERSON and his staff as well as my colleague from Virginia, Mr. GOODLATTE, in working with me on this legislation, and I thank Mr. GOODLATTE, who also represents a portion of Alleghany County, for cosponsoring the bill with me. H.R. 3454 enjoys bipartisan support in the House and its passage would benefit both the Forest Service and the members of the Central Advent Christian Church.

I urge approval of the measure.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I wish to express strong support for H.R. 3454, which I've cosponsored with my colleague Mr. BUCHER. H.R. 3454 would authorize the U.S. Forest Service to convey roughly 8 acres of the George Washington National Forest in Alleghany County, Virginia, to the Central Advent Christian Church.

These 8 acres contain a 6 acre cemetery and 2 acres between the cemetery and the adjoining interstate. The cemetery has been managed by the Church since 1941, under a special use permit, with no fees.

It's frustrating to me that limited federal dollars are being spent to manage this property that is clearly not in line with the mission of the Forest Service. That's why I've cosponsored this legislation. This bill will help relinquish the Forest Service of this responsibility so they can focus on the lands that our forefathers intended them to manage.

Several times, the Forest Service has attempted to sell this property but to no avail. The local community church lacks the resources to purchase the property. While I would of course prefer that we sell the land, I believe it is in the federal government's interest to convey the land to the Church rather than spending additional resources on it.

I urge adoption of this important legislation.

Ms. FOXX. I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3454.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just considered.

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

There was no objection.

CONVEYANCES UNDER FLORIDA NATIONAL FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1374) to amend the Florida National Forest Land Management Act of 2003 to authorize the conveyance of an additional tract of National Forest System land under that Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1374

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCES UNDER FLORIDA NATIONAL FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2003.

(a) ADDITIONAL CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—Subsection (b) of section 3 of the Florida National Forest Land Management Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-152; 117 Stat. 1919) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (17);

(2) by redesignating paragraph (18) as paragraph (19);

(3) by inserting after paragraph (17) the following new paragraph:

“(18) tract W-1979, located in Leon County consisting of approximately 114 acres, within T. 1 S., R. 1 W., sec. 25; and”;

(4) in paragraph (19), as so redesignated, by striking “(17)” and inserting “(18)”.

(b) ADDITIONAL USE OF PROCEEDS.—Paragraph (2) of subsection (i) of such section (117 Stat. 1921) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (A);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (B) and inserting “; and”;

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) acquisition, construction, or maintenance of administrative improvements for units of the National Forest System in the State.”.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON USE OF PROCEEDS.—Subsection (i) of such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(3) GEOGRAPHICAL AND USE RESTRICTION FOR CERTAIN CONVEYANCE.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), proceeds from the sale or exchange of the tract described in subsection (b)(18) shall be used exclusively for the purchase of inholdings in the Apalachicola National Forest.

“(4) RESTRICTION ON USE OF PROCEEDS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS.—Proceeds from any sale or exchange of land under this Act may be used for administrative improvements, as authorized by paragraph (2)(C), only if the land generating the proceeds was improved with infrastructure.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1374. H.R. 1374, introduced by Representatives ALLEN BOYD of Florida

and Ander Crenshaw of Florida, would amend the Florida National Forest Land Management Act of 2003 and permit a land conveyance in Leon County. This bill would allow the United States Forest Service to sell a 114-acre parcel in the Apalachicola National Forest known as the “Flea Market Tract.” The parcel is surrounded by commercial development, including a major highway to the north, a power line easement to the south, and private land primarily developed to the east and west.

The configuration and development makes adequate land management difficult and the tract unsuitable as managed forest land. H.R. 1374 specifies that the proceeds of the sale of the tract be used for the purpose of acquiring private lands within the Apalachicola National Forest.

H.R. 1374 is supported by the United States Forest Service, the City of Tallahassee, and Leon County, as well as by local businesses, church and civic groups. It is a project that is worthy of congressional support.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo the sentiments of my colleague and express support for H.R. 1374, which authorizes the sale of 114 acres in the Apalachicola National Forest in Florida, the proceeds of which can be used only to purchase private inholdings from willing sellers. H.R. 1374 passed the Agriculture Committee last week by a voice vote.

The land proposed for sale is a small tract that is extremely difficult for the U.S. Forest Service to manage, given its proximity to the City of Tallahassee and the surrounding development. Properties such as this, which contribute little to meeting the Forest Service mission, unfortunately diverts scarce resources from other lands that need management.

In addition to relieving the Forest Service of the management problems this tract creates, the bill will also help the agency reduce the number of private inholdings within the forest if the private owners are interested in selling. Inholdings are a common problem throughout many national forests in the East and create significant access and management issues for the landowners and the agency.

I urge adoption of this bipartisan legislation, and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I now would yield such time as he may consume to the author of the bill, Mr. BOYD from Florida.

(Mr. BOYD of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOYD of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend, the distinguished chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Mr. PETERSON, for granting me time to speak on behalf of this legislation and also thank him and the ranking member, Mr. GOODLATTE,