

GRIJALVA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1388, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL LAND CONVEYANCE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 761) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. certain Federal land associated with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail in Nebraska, to be used as a historical interpretive site along the trail, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 761

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

SECTION 1. LAND CONVEYANCE, LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL, NEBRASKA.

(a) *CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.*—The Secretary of the Interior may convey, without consideration, to the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. (a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with operational headquarters at 100 Valmont Drive, Nebraska City, Nebraska 68410), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the federally owned land under jurisdiction of the Secretary consisting of two parcels as generally depicted on the map titled “Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail”, numbered 648/80,002, and dated March 2006.

(b) *SURVEY; CONVEYANCE COST.*—The exact acreage and legal description of the land to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary. The cost of the survey and all other costs incurred by the Secretary to convey the land shall be borne by the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc.

(c) *CONDITION OF CONVEYANCE, USE OF CONVEYED LAND.*—The conveyance authorized under subsection (a) shall be subject to the condition that the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. use the conveyed land as an historic site and interpretive center for the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

(d) *DISCONTINUANCE OF USE.*—If Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. determines to discontinue use of the land conveyed under subsection (a) as an historic site and interpretive center for the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. shall convey lands back to the Secretary without consideration.

(e) *ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.*—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (a) or the conveyance, if any, under subsection (d) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States. Through a written agreement with the Foundation, the National Park Service shall ensure that the operation of the land conveyed under subsection (a) is in accordance with National Park Service standards for preservation, maintenance, and interpretation.

(f) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—To assist with the operation of the historic site and interpretive center, there is authorized to be appropriated \$150,000 per year for a period not to exceed 10 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and the gentleman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend 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. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 761, sponsored by Representative FORTENBERRY of Nebraska, would transfer to a nonprofit foundation an existing visitor center for the Lewis and Clark Historic Trail in Nebraska. The legislation turns the site over to the nonprofit entity which currently manages the facility in partnership with the National Park Service.

This measure includes a reversionary clause and other safeguards to protect the Federal investment in the center.

We have no objection to H.R. 761 and support its passage by the House today.

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

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 761 and yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 761 has been adequately explained by the majority. I am pleased that Mr. FORTENBERRY has brought us this legislation that will benefit both his constituents and taxpayers across the Nation.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, along with my colleagues from Nebraska, I am pleased to offer my support for H.R. 761, a bill that would authorize the conveyance of certain federal lands by the Secretary of Interior to the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. and authorize the appropriation of annual funds to operate the Center.

The journey of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark does not belong to Nebraska, but to all of America.

The Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center features descriptions of 178 plants and 122 animals recorded by Lewis and Clark during their explorations.

This center should be a destination for any person who is interested in American history, in the species of flora and fauna then found in the unexplored regions of our country, or in the spirit of expansion that helped form our country.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill authorizing the transfer of Federal lands associated with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail in Nebraska to the private nonprofit foundation. It is a valuable resource for every American.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to offer my strong support for H.R. 761, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey a Lewis and Clark visitor center in my district from the National Park Service to a well-respected non-profit organization. As the sponsor of this bill, I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation.

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the distinguished gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), the Chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and the distinguished gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the Ranking Member on the Committee, as well as the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA), the Chairman of the National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee, and the distinguished gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), the Ranking Member on the Subcommittee for their outstanding work in bringing this legislation to the floor.

The Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center is the culmination of a vision that was outlined 20 years ago. Starting with the efforts of former Congressman Doug Beuter, the Center's completion required a great deal of hard work and dedication for which the entire Nebraska City community should be proud.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Nancy Hoch from Nebraska City, who has played such a key role in the construction of the visitor center and its ongoing operation. Her vision and leadership have been instrumental in making the center such an outstanding success.

The bill is very straightforward. It would simply convey certain federal land near Nebraska City associated with the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center to the related non-profit group, the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. The bill also authorizes \$150,000 annually for 10 years to operate the facility. This legislation would actually save the federal government about \$50,000 a year since the National Park Service currently provides about \$200,000 for the center.

It is important to note that I worked with the National Park Service in drafting the language for the bill and this proposed conveyance fits with the long-range plans for the center. I also believe that it would be the most cost-effective option for the Park Service.

H.R. 761 is cosponsored by both of my colleagues from Nebraska, Representatives LEE TERRY and ADRIAN SMITH. A companion bill in the Senate, S. 471, has the support of both Nebraska senators, CHUCK HAGEL and BEN NELSON.

The Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center is an outstanding resource and impressive facility. The non-profit organization associated with it includes a committed group of individuals who have spent many years making the center a reality and ensuring that it provides a meaningful and educational experience for those who visit. This legislative action is needed to fulfill the original plan for operating the visitor center.

The Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center is truly unique. It is the only visitor center or museum in the United States to focus on the flora and fauna and scientific discoveries recorded by Lewis and Clark.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition was a watershed mark in American history. Two centuries later, the courageous story of these two outstanding explorers and the Corps of Discovery continues to inspire Americans of all ages. This legislation will help ensure that future generations will have the opportunity to learn about this remarkable journey.

Again Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote for H.R. 761.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. 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 Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 761, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SNOQUALMIE PASS LAND CONVEYANCE ACT

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1285) to provide for the conveyance of a parcel of National Forest System land in Kittitas County, Washington, to facilitate the construction of a new fire and rescue station, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1285

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 "Snoqualmie Pass Land Conveyance Act".

SEC. 2. LAND CONVEYANCE, NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND, KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON.

(a) *CONVEYANCE REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall convey, without consideration, to the King and Kittitas Counties Fire District #51 of King and Kittitas Counties, Washington (in this section referred to as the "District"), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of National Forest System land in Kittitas County, Washington, consisting of approximately 1.5 acres within the SW¼ of the SE¼ of section 4, township 22 north, range 11 east, Willamette meridian, for the purpose of permitting the District to use the parcel as a site for a new Snoqualmie Pass fire and rescue station.*

(b) *REVERSIONARY INTEREST.—If the Secretary determines at any time that the real property conveyed under subsection (a) is not being used in accordance with the purpose of the conveyance specified in such subsection, all right, title, and interest in and to the property shall revert, at the option of the Secretary, to the United States, and the United States shall have the right of immediate entry onto the property. Any determination of the Secretary under this subsection shall be made on the record after an opportunity for a hearing.*

(c) *SURVEY.—If necessary, the exact acreage and legal description of the lands to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary. The cost of a survey shall be borne by the District.*

(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 Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and the gentleman from Washington (Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend 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. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1285, introduced by Representative DOC HASTINGS of Washington, conveys 1.5 acres of land in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest to facilitate the construction of a new fire and rescue station.

Snoqualmie Pass Fire and Rescue is in need of a new fire station as the current station has numerous deficiencies. The fire station is important to the community and often responds to fires on Federal lands.

Mr. Speaker, it is our understanding that there are ongoing discussions in Washington State to address some lingering issues related to this conveyance, and we support those efforts.

With that understanding, we have no objection to H.R. 1285, and support its adoption by the House today.

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

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The majority has adequately explained the bill. I would like to commend Congressman DOC HASTINGS and his staff for their work on this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, the Snoqualmie Pass Land Conveyance Act would transfer an acre and a half of Forest Service land to the King and Kittitas Counties Fire District No. 51—also known as Snoqualmie Pass Fire and Rescue. This land would be conveyed at no cost, but would have to be used by the Fire District specifically for the construction of a new fire station or it would revert back to the federal government.

Snoqualmie Pass Fire and Rescue serves a portion of two counties on both sides of the Cascade Mountains along Interstate 90. This is a very rural area, with a small number of full-time residents, but it is also the major transportation corridor for goods and services between Eastern and Western Washington, as well as a destination for winter recreation. In recent years, this area has been the scene of major winter snowstorms, multi-vehicle accidents, and even avalanches. The Fire District is often the first responder to incidents in the area.

For decades, the Fire District has been leasing its current site from the Forest Service. They operate out of an aging building that was never designed to be a fire station. Through their hard work and dedication, they have served their community ably despite this building's many shortcomings. However, with traffic on the rise and the need for emergency services in the area growing, the Fire District needs to move to a true fire station.

They have identified a nearby site that would better serve the public safety needs of interstate travelers. This location would provide easy access to the interstate in either direction, reducing response times in emergencies. The parcel is on Forest Service property, immediately adjacent to a freeway interchange, between a frontage road and the interstate itself. The parcel was formerly a disposal site during construction of the freeway and is now a gravel lot.

I acknowledge that the Forest Service does not normally support conveyances of land free of charge. However, I believe an exception should be made in this particular circumstance because of the important public service provided by the Fire District, the heavy traffic and emergency calls created by non-residents in the area, the distance of Snoqualmie Pass from other communities with emergency services, and because of the high amount of federal land ownership in the area, which severely limits the local tax base. In fact, the Forest Service has acquired 20,000 acres in King and Kittitas counties at a cost of more than \$52 million over just the last ten years. I would also note again that under this bill, this land would revert back to the Forest Service if for whatever reason a new fire station is not built on the property.

Passage of this legislation would not guarantee that a new station would be built—the Fire District would have to work hard to gather the financing that would be required from state and local sources, as well as any applicable federal grants or loans. However, the conveyance of this site at no cost would help this Fire District hold down the overall cost of this project.

I first introduced this legislation last year, with my colleague from Washington, Mr. Reichert. Unfortunately, the bill was not considered before the end of the last Congress. We reintroduced the bill in early March and were pleased the Natural Resources Committee held a subcommittee hearing on the bill in April to take testimony on the issues involved. At a subsequent markup of the bill last month, the acreage involved was reduced to acre and a half to address concerns that a fire station would not require three acres. With this change, the bill was approved by voice vote in committee.

Last week, at a meeting in the region, several environmental interest groups expressed reservations about the conveyance. Over the next several weeks, it is understood these groups will meet with the Fire District to discuss their concerns. I am committed to working with my colleagues from Washington state in the Senate, as well as the Natural Resources Committee, to facilitate these discussions to ensure we have the public safety infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of this unique area. I am confident this can be done with little or no impact to the environment. It is my hope that the parties can reach agreement on this issue by September when