

Department of the Interior would administer \$15 million in these grants.

WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION AND RENEWABLE BIOMASS UTILIZATION ACT

This bill would revise the definition of “renewable biomass” in section 201 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 so as to facilitate and encourage the use of biomass removed from certain additional forest lands as an energy source, in order to reduce the risk of severe wildfires to communities, infrastructure, and water supplies.

Specifically, the bill would expand the current definition of “renewable biomass” to include biomass removed from lands within the wildland-urban interface in connection with an authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects.

The bill uses the definitions of “hazardous fuel reduction project” and “wildland-urban interface” that are used in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.

That Act defines the term “wildland-urban interface” as including “an area within or adjacent to an at-risk community that is identified ... in a community wildfire protection plan” or, with regard to a community that has not developed a community wildfire protection plan, lands within a specified distance from the community’s boundary (a distance that can vary depending on the presence of steep slopes or other geographic features) as well as areas adjacent to an evacuation route for an at-risk community that require hazardous fuel reduction to provide safer evacuation from an at-risk community.

These definitions provide greater specificity than the term “immediate vicinity” now used in this part of the new energy law, and will broaden the scope of its applicability. I supported enactment of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, and I think it is appropriate to follow its example in this respect.

RECOGNIZING COREY DYLAN JEPSON FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Corey Dylan Jepson, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 374, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Corey has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. He has held several leadership positions in the troop including Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader. Not only has Corey had many accomplishments within his troop, but he has also earned the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Corey Dylan Jepson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING VERIDIAN HOMES’ BUILDER OF THE YEAR 2008 AWARD

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Veridian Homes for receiving Professional Builder magazine’s Builder of the Year for 2008, one of the homebuilding industry’s most prestigious and coveted awards. This honor not only demonstrates a unique level of innovation but also a vigorous dedication to quality and customer service.

As the largest residential builder in the State of Wisconsin, Veridian builds nearly 500 homes and condominiums each year. This level of productivity has earned it a market share of over 30 percent while offering a variety in price, style, and size. In only 4 short years, Veridian Homes has claimed the spotlight as an industry leader despite the uncertainties presented by the current market.

Co-founders David Simon and Jeff Rosenberg have successfully combined the conventional wisdom of community development with a creative blend of environmentally conscious business practices and quality improvement strategies. All of Veridian’s homes and condominiums meet Green Built Home and Energy Star program standards. The company has also built six LEED-certified homes and initiated its own recycling program, in addition to actively experimenting with more resource and material-efficient processes.

Even more impressive, though, is their attention to partnership and accountability. Simon and Rosenberg have consistently demanded feedback from their employees, trade partners, and customers alike to ensure a level of continuous development. This customer and product-first approach leaves no aspect of quality improvement unattended.

To the truest extent, Veridian Homes has made Wisconsin a great place to live. I am proud to have such an extraordinary innovator and trendsetter right here in Dane County. I wish Veridian Homes many more years of success as a model for excellence and customer satisfaction.

CONGRATULATING DR. HAN SEUNG-SOO ON HIS NOMINATION AS PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to my friend, Dr. Han Seung-soo, on his nomination as the next Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea by President-Elect Lee Myung-Bak.

Dr. Han, currently serving as Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General on Climate Change, has had a long and distinguished career in public service. He has previously served as South Korea’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economy, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Minister of Trade and Industry, Ambassador to the

United States, and Chief of Staff to the President of the Republic of Korea. He served three terms in the South Korean National Assembly and thus has been, like us, a member of his country’s legislature.

Moreover, in recognition of his exemplary record as a diplomat, Dr. Han was also elected President of the 56th session of the UN General Assembly in 2001. He was to be officially elected to the presidency on the fateful morning of September 11, 2001 but was, instead, sworn in on the next day. His leadership was instrumental in the passage of a resolution by the UN General Assembly session denouncing the terrorist attacks. He wrote about these experiences in his new book entitled “Beyond the Shadow of 9–11: A Year at the United Nations General Assembly.” He recently sent me a signed copy of his memoirs, which I greatly appreciate.

Over the years, Dr. Han and I have crossed paths on more than one occasion due to our mutual interest in international environmental policy and, in particular, the issues surrounding global climate change. As chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and Global Environment, I have always been personally impressed by Dr. Han’s depth and breadth of knowledge, his ability to listen to people with different—and sometimes technically complex—ideas, and his capacity for synthesizing the best of available knowledge for eventual decisionmaking.

Last November, speaking in Bangkok at the Committee on Managing Globalization of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP, Dr. Han noted the need for rapid economic growth in Asia and the Pacific—home to two-thirds of the world’s poor. However, he pointed out, actions on climate change could be compatible with economic growth, saying: “We can turn the crisis of climate change into a new economic opportunity.”

The choice of Dr. Han Seung-soo to be Prime Minister by President-Elect Lee Myung-Bak provides excellent evidence that the U.S.-Korea alliance partnership will continue to further consolidate and deepen under their leadership. During Dr. Han’s tenures as both the Republic of Korea’s Foreign Minister and Ambassador to the United States, he cultivated many friends and admirers in Washington.

Let me also take this opportunity to say that I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of the resolution congratulating Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the presidency of the Republic of Korea. I look forward to working with his incoming administration on the important challenges facing the region, especially peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula.

Madam Speaker, I hope that my colleagues will join me in offering their own congratulations to Dr. Han Seung-soo and wish him well in his new responsibilities.

HONORING COACH JIM ALGEO

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Coach Jim Algeo on celebrating his 40th anniversary as

Coach of the Lansdale Catholic High School football team. I am proud that such a dedicated and honorable man has served the constituents of my district for the past four decades.

For the past 40 years, Coach Jim Algeo has been a teacher and head football coach at Lansdale Catholic High School. Through far more than football plays and academics, Coach Algeo has also taken great pride in preparing the young men on his team for life by teaching them to live by the admirable motto: "Faith, Family, and Football."

Coach Algeo's well-rounded approach mentoring players has enabled Lansdale Catholic to achieve a winning record with five PAC-10 titles and six District 1 crowns during his tenure as head coach. Coach Algeo has been recognized with numerous distinctions and awards, including the Pennsylvania State Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Associated Press PA Class AA Coach of the Year and the Maxwell Football Club Lifetime Achievement Award. Together, these inspired young men and their determined coach were able to bring home the PIAA AA State Championship in 2004.

Coach Algeo lives his personal life with the same commitment as his life on the field, sharing the past 48 years with the Crusaders' biggest cheerleader, Mickey Algeo. Together Jim and Mickey have raised nine children, and are the proud grandparents of 16 loving grandkids.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating Coach Jim Algeo's 40th anniversary milestone and in wishing him many more years of enriching the lives of those around him. In the many roles Coach Algeo has been blessed to fulfill in his life, he has set an example for all of us to follow

WILD MONONGAHELA: A NATIONAL LEGACY FOR WEST VIRGINIA'S SPECIAL PLACES

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce legislation to designate additional areas as wilderness within the Monongahela National Forest in our State of West Virginia. Joining me in this initiative are my West Virginia colleagues Representatives SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO and ALAN MOLLOHAN.

Our senior Senator, ROBERT C. BYRD, is fond of noting that: "West Virginia is one of the most beautiful and unique places. It is the most southern of the northern and the most northern of the southern; the most eastern of the western and the most western of the eastern. It is where the East says good morning to the West, and where Yankee Doodle and Dixie kiss each other good night."

Indeed, West Virginia is a most beautiful and unique place. And with the introduction of our legislation, "Wild Monongahela: A National Legacy for West Virginia's Special Places," we are striving to keep it that way.

This is about the heart and soul of West Virginia. Our southern mountains have been yielding their coal for generations and our northern ridge lines are being targeted by the merchants of wind power. More development is coming, and, in most cases, it is welcomed.

But as West Virginians we are intimately connected to our land. Our roots are planted deep in our misty hollers and our majestic mountains. We know that we will be judged by future generations on our stewardship of this land that is West Virginia. And so I believe that it is of paramount importance that we, once again, set aside some of God's handiwork in our forests by preserving these Federal lands in their pristine state.

We hunt these woods; we fish these streams. These few areas that we are proposing to conserve in their natural state represent a significant national resource. But more importantly to us, they constitute a fundamental right of West Virginians to retain a vital link to our heritage, and to know that, forever more, these lands will remain in their natural state as our Creator forged them. We cherish this as nothing less and nothing more than our birthright as West Virginians.

By way of background, the Monongahela National Forest is comprised of over 919,000 acres of Federal land in 10 counties of the eastern portion of West Virginia. The forest is a major recreational resource for West Virginians as well as people from neighboring States, hosting approximately 3 million visitors annually. Currently, the forest has five federally designated wilderness areas comprising 78,041 acres: Otter Creek, Dolly Sods, Laurel Fork North and South, and the Cranberry Wilderness.

As part of the revision of the Forest Plan completed in 2006, 18 roadless areas were inventoried and evaluated for their wilderness potential. As a result of this process, the West Virginia Delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives is proposing to designate seven of the evaluated areas as wilderness. Totalling 47,128 acres, three of the areas are additions to existing wilderness: the Cranberry Expansion in Webster and Pocahontas Counties, the Dolly Sods Expansion in Tucker County and the Dry Fork Expansion in Tucker County to the Otter Creek Wilderness. The other four are proposed new wilderness areas: Big Draft in Greenbrier County, Cheat Mountain in Randolph County, Roaring Plains West in Pendleton and Randolph Counties and Spice Run in Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties.

Under the new Land and Resource Management Plan for the Monongahela National Forest, all seven areas are now being managed essentially as wilderness. Cheat Mountain, the Cranberry Expansion, the Dry Fork addition to Otter Creek Wilderness and Roaring Plains West are under Management Prescription 5.1, Recommended Wilderness. Meanwhile, the Big Draft area, the Dolly Sods Expansion and the Spice Run area are under Management Prescription 6.2, Backcountry Recreation. This management prescription emphasizes a non-motorized setting with a largely natural environment and a lack of management-related disturbance.

Before I describe the special attributes of the seven areas contained in our legislation, I would like to note the support this initiative has among working men and women in West Virginia. I am proud that the West Virginia AFL-CIO passed a resolution last October in support of additional wilderness in the Monongahela National Forest. Their resolution states that "wilderness forest areas and the outdoor recreation, hunting and fishing they provide improve the quality of life for all West Virginians." The resolution further notes that

"protected wilderness helps diversify and stabilize economies by attracting and retaining business, residents, and a local workforce, in addition to generating travel and tourism, one of the fastest growing sectors of West Virginia."

I am also proud that people of faith in West Virginia support additional wilderness. The Reverend Dennis Sparks, executive director of the West Virginia Council of Churches, wrote to me as follows: "An area of federal land belonging to all Americans, the Monongahela National Forest can uniquely provide opportunities for reflection and inspiration that are becoming ever scarcer in our rapidly modernizing and developing world. We believe that carefully protecting this wonderful national forest and its wilderness-quality lands not only has a sound Biblical basis, but is also the best and most practical course of action for safeguarding the world which we will pass along to our children."

Similarly, Bob Marshall, D.V.M., wrote: "Like me, you were probably raised by parents who took you to church, where you learned many of the morals and ethics that guide your decisions today. I was taught to 'Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself.' These words still speak to me today, and have led me to believe that West Virginia needs to preserve as much of our wild lands as possible, through the Wilderness proposal."

This proposal also enjoys the support of various West Virginia chapters of Trout Unlimited. The vice president of the Mountaineer Chapter, Randy Kesling, wrote to me as follows: "National Forest Wilderness Areas are the tap-roots into the landscape of our beginnings—the original forest. The U.S. Forest Service itself calls them 'ecological anchors in a fragile landscape.' Today we are at another crossroad in the natural history of this great forest. This is in every sense a watershed moment—to set this fragile forest on the path to recovery." He concluded: "The Mountaineer Chapter of Trout Unlimited believes that Wilderness Designation provides the best path to that recovery."

Mr. Don Gasper, who worked for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources for many years, and who is a highly respected fish biologist, wrote: "You lawmakers in Congress have an important opportunity right now to permanently protect some of the most special remaining wild places in the Monongahela National Forest."

Many communities across West Virginia have registered their support for wilderness. The Honorable John Manchester, the mayor of the City of Lewisburg in Greenbrier County, and that city's Council, passed a resolution which in part states: "wilderness forest areas encompass the development of rural communities as people are attracted to, or stay in, places that are clean, beautiful and where they have ample opportunities to connect with nature. . . ."

The Honorable Martin Saffer, a Pocahontas County Commissioner, wrote: "I encourage you to take quick action to introduce legislation to protect some of our most special landscapes. This is truly a watershed moment. The time is now."

In addition, the Fayette County Commission wrote in support, stating: "Wildlands in the National Forest enhance our area's natural resource based tourism economy, increase the