

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Does the gentlelady have any additional speakers?

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, Congressman SALAZAR was right. We met yesterday in Greeley, Colorado, with a lot of stakeholders of the Colorado River Basin who indicated to us that their economy is at stake. They professed to us that the Endangered Species Act actually helped maintain the quality of the water in the rivers. So, to me, that's a further indication of how important this particular bill is, to continue the collaboration of all the entities who would come to the table, put their differences aside and quit getting into litigation that is more costly to the taxpayer.

With that, I request that we support H.R. 2288.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2288, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

BUFFALO SOLDIERS IN THE NATIONAL PARKS STUDY ACT

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4491) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4491

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 "Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) In the late 19th century and early 20th century, African-American troops who came to be known as the Buffalo Soldiers served in many critical roles in the western United States, including protecting some of the first National Parks.

(2) Based at the Presidio in San Francisco, Buffalo Soldiers were assigned to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks where they patrolled the backcountry, built trails, stopped poaching, and otherwise served in the roles later assumed by National Park rangers.

(3) The public would benefit from having opportunities to learn more about the Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks and their contributions to the management of National Parks and the legacy of African-Americans in the post-Civil War era.

(4) As the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016 approaches, it is an especially appropriate time to conduct research and increase public awareness of the stewardship role the Buffalo Soldiers played in the early years of the National Parks.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to authorize a study to determine the most effective ways to increase understanding and public awareness of the critical role that the Buffalo Soldiers played in the early years of the National Parks.

SEC. 3. STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks.

(b) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The study shall include—

(1) a historical assessment, based on extensive research, of the Buffalo Soldiers who served in National Parks in the years prior to the establishment of the National Park Service;

(2) an evaluation of the suitability and feasibility of establishing a national historic trail commemorating the route traveled by the Buffalo Soldiers from their post in the Presidio of San Francisco to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks and to any other National Parks where they may have served;

(3) the identification of properties that could meet criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or criteria for designation as National Historic Landmarks;

(4) an evaluation of appropriate ways to enhance historical research, education, interpretation, and public awareness of the story of the Buffalo Soldiers' stewardship role in the National Parks, including ways to link the story to the development of National Parks and the story of African-American military service following the Civil War; and

(5) any other matters that the Secretary of the Interior deems appropriate for this study.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after funds are made available for the study, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing the study's findings and recommendations.

□ 1430

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in 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 gentlewoman from Guam?

There was no objection.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4491, introduced by Representative

JACKIE SPEIER of California, would authorize the National Park Service to conduct a special resource study to determine appropriate and feasible ways to commemorate the African American cavalrymen known as the Buffalo Soldiers and the important role that they played in the early years of the national parks. These soldiers played a critical role in protecting Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks and served as the Nation's first park rangers.

Under the proposed legislation, the National Park Service would evaluate alternatives to commemorate and interpret the roles of the Buffalo Soldiers. They would also evaluate the suitability and feasibility of establishing a national historic trail along the route used by the Buffalo Soldiers from their post in the Presidio of San Francisco to the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Representative SPEIER is to be commended for her work to highlight this important chapter in African American history and in the history of our national parks.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4491 received broad bipartisan support in committee, and I urge its adoption by the House today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the most important role of the national parks is to provide a link to our Nation's proud history. I believe in American exceptionalism. The story of our Nation is the story of the uniquely American principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and how they shaped and molded what has become the most successful Republic in the history of human civilization.

One aspect of that story is exemplified by the Buffalo Soldiers, Americans of African descent who transcended the prejudices of the post-Civil War era to serve as the first peacetime Army units comprised of African Americans. They took the heroism and patriotism of the famous 54th Massachusetts and other Civil War units and made them into a proud and permanent fixture within the American Armed Forces. Their members included Medal of Honor winner Louis H. Carpenter and Henry O. Flipper, the first American of African descent to graduate from West Point.

The Buffalo Soldiers made immeasurable contributions to the continental expansion of our Nation, to the protection of our first national parks, but perhaps most important is their immortal contribution to the unification of our Nation as a free people.

As Shakespeare said, Their story should the good man teach his son. This bill would develop a plan to do precisely that within the national park system. I urge its adoption.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4491, the Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act.

I commend this legislation which directs the Secretary of the Interior to study the role the Buffalo Soldiers played in the development of the National Park System. It is time more information comes to light regarding the contributions Buffalo Soldiers made to protect our National Parks until 1914. Few know the story of how Buffalo Soldiers once patrolled Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon parks.

As their service has been nearly forgotten, I praise this legislation which will ensure their efforts to our Country are remembered. Buffalo Soldiers remain an integral element in founding our National Parks. These American soldiers carried out mounted patrol duties in the Western frontier and were among the first park rangers and backcountry rangers patrolling parts of the West.

Mr. Speaker, the Buffalo soldiers blazed the trails and paved the way for what we now call our National Park System. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. R. 4491, the Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I again urge Members to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4491.

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.

RECOGNIZING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 211) recognizing the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the East Bay Regional Park District in California, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 211

Whereas, November 6, 2009, will mark the 75th anniversary of the historic passage of a ballot measure to create the East Bay Regional Park District (referred to in this preamble as the “District”) in California’s San Francisco Bay Area by a convincing “yes” vote of a 2½ to 1 margin in 1934 during the height of the Depression;

Whereas with the help of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Works Progress Administration, and private contractors, the District began putting people to work to establish the District’s first 3 regional parks—Tilden, Temescal, and Sibley;

Whereas over the intervening 75 years, the District has grown to be the largest regional park agency in the United States with nearly 100,000 acres of parklands spread across 65 regional parks and over 1,100 miles of trails in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties;

Whereas approximately 14,000,000 visitors a year from throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond take advantage of the vast and diverse District parklands and trails;

Whereas the vision of the District is to preserve the priceless heritage of the region’s natural and cultural resources, open space, parks, and trails for the future, and to set aside park areas for enjoyment and healthful recreation for current and future generations;

Whereas the mission of the District is to acquire, develop, manage, and maintain a high quality, diverse system of interconnected parklands that balances public usage and education programs with the protection and preservation of the East Bay’s most spectacular natural and cultural resources;

Whereas an environmental ethic guides the District in all that it does;

Whereas in 1988, East Bay voters approved the passage of Measure AA, a \$225,000,000 bond to provide 20 years of funding for regional and local park acquisition and development projects;

Whereas in 2008, under the strategic leadership of its Board of Directors and General Manager Pat O’Brien, East Bay voters approved passage of the historic Measure WW, a \$500,000,000 renewal of the original Measure AA bond—the largest regional or local park bond ever passed in the United States; and

Whereas throughout 2009, the District’s 75th Anniversary will be recognized through special events and programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the East Bay Regional Park District; and

(2) honors the board members, general managers, and East Bay Regional Park District staff who have dutifully fulfilled the mission of protecting open space and providing outdoor recreation opportunities for generations of families in the East Bay.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a lifelong citizen of Contra Costa County in the East Bay of the San Francisco Bay area, I have witnessed firsthand the East Bay Regional Park District’s steady drive to protect open spaces, benefiting millions of East Bay residents over several generations. The East Bay Regional Park District is today the largest regional park agency in the country.

Over the last 75 years, they have preserved nearly 100,000 acres of parkland, established 65 regional parks, and built over 1,100 miles of trails. Almost every weekend, I visit the East Bay Regional

Parks on one of their trails, one of the regional park systems, to walk with my family and enjoy the outdoors in the parks. Generally it is the Briones Regional Park that is near my home.

I commend the East Bay Regional Park District and all of the various board members throughout the last 75 years on not only reaching this milestone, but the vision that they conceptualized many, many years ago to provide this incredible asset to the residents of the San Francisco Bay area, specifically to the East Bay of San Francisco Bay.

I rise in strong support of this resolution commending the 75th anniversary of the East Bay Regional Park District. I want to thank Chairman RAHALL, Chairman GRIJALVA, Chairwoman BORDALLO, and Ranking Member BISHOP for their work to bring this resolution to the floor.

As a resident of this area, and very often talking to my neighbors and to people I represent in this area, the pride that our area has in the East Bay Regional Parks, the support that the citizens of this region have given the park district over the last 75 years is testament to a well-run system of parks throughout our area, of recreational facilities, of trails, of support for families with children, for people who ride horses, people who ride bikes, people who run, people who walk, and accommodating the open spaces and historical and cultural uses of the areas within the boundaries of the East Bay Regional Parks in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

I don’t represent this area alone. I share the representation of the park district with Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, Congressman PETE STARK, Congressman JOHN GARAMENDI and Congressman JERRY McNERNEY, and I know all of them share the pride that I do in the East Bay Regional Park System.

As I stated earlier, the vision that they have presented to the public and the support that it has received, and the cooperation they have received from farmers, from ranchers, from cities, from the counties, has just been an incredible model for other areas that have to deal with the issues of preserving open space and the competing uses of that space by various governmental jurisdictions and private landowners.

I also want to pay tribute to the grand old man in implementing this plan and working with all of the various landowners and the local jurisdictions and procuring these lands at a fair price to the taxpayers of our region, and that is Hewlett Hornbeck, who for so many years brought about the implementation of that vision of the board of directors of the regional parks.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the East Bay Regional Park District serves the people of San