

Sierra Mountains. Mammoth provides between 10 and 30 percent of the total employment in Mono County, and it's a primary recreation destination for tourists all throughout California and the United States. Each winter, Mammoth sees an average of 1.3 million visitors.

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These visitors pump vital money into the local economy by populating hotels, motels, restaurants, and stores throughout the region.

Tourism is the lifeblood of the eastern Sierra. Mammoth has operated on a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service since 1953. The base area of the mountain is aging rapidly and is in need of renovation and redevelopment in order to provide a safer, more enjoyable experience for visitors to Mammoth Mountain; however, these renovations are difficult to achieve under the terms of the special use permit.

Since 1998, Mammoth Mountain has been working with the Forest Service to complete a land exchange between their main base parcel and other desired Forest Service acquisitions. These acquisitions include high-resource value lands in the Inyo, El Dorado, Stanislaus, and Plumas National Forests. The exchange would allow the main base to undergo significant and needed renovations.

My legislation is meant to supplement and codify this agreement. It is needed for two reasons:

Number one, the two parcels that the Forest Service wants are outside Inyo National Forest boundaries. Both parcels are currently leased by the Inyo National Forest from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power;

Number two, there's more value in the Mammoth Mountain parcel than in all the land parcels exchanged in total. So Mammoth needs legislation for permission to pay a cash equalization to the Federal Government that will be used for future forest acquisition.

The agreement is widely supported by the local community because residents, business owners, local governments understand the great value of having Mammoth Mountain in their community. Besides jobs and recreation, Mammoth supports a significant portion of the tax base providing needed revenue throughout the region.

We've received numerous letters of support from community members, including those from Duane Hazard, chair of the Mono County Board of Supervisors; Vikki Bauer, member of the Mono County Board of Supervisors; the Mono Lake Committee; the Eastern Sierra Land Trust; and the Mammoth Lakes Town Council.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving my bill time on the floor. Mammoth Mountain has been a good steward of the environment, a solid partner in economic vitality for the region, and an honest party in negotiations with the Forest Service. This land exchange will be mutually beneficial for all parties involved, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2157.

ties involved, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2157.

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

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

Ms. TSONGAS. H.R. 2157 provides for a land exchange between the United States Forest Service and the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area. We applaud Congressman McKEON for this legislation and support the passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. BISHOP of Utah. This is another great bill. I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2157.

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. BISHOP of Utah. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

IDAHO WILDERNESS WATER RESOURCES PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2050) to authorize the continued use of certain water diversions located on National Forest System land in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in the State of Idaho, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2050

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 "Idaho Wilderness Water Resources Protection Act".

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF EXISTING WATER DIVERSIONS IN FRANK CHURCH-RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS AND SELWAY-BITTERROOT WILDERNESS, IDAHO.

(a) AUTHORIZATION FOR CONTINUED USE.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall issue a special use authorization to the owners of a water storage, transport, or diversion facility (in this section referred to as a "facility") located on National Forest System land in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness for the continued operation, maintenance, and reconstruction of the facility if the Secretary determines that—

(1) the facility was in existence on the date on which the land upon which the facility is located was designated as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System (in this section referred to as "the date of designation");

(2) the facility has been in substantially continuous use to deliver water for the beneficial use on the owner's non-Federal land since the date of designation;

(3) the owner of the facility holds a valid water right for use of the water on the owner's non-Federal land under Idaho State law, with a priority date that predates the date of designation; and

(4) it is not practicable or feasible to relocate the facility to land outside of the wilderness and continue the beneficial use of water on the non-Federal land recognized under State law.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) REQUIRED TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—In a special use authorization issued under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(A) allow use of motorized equipment and mechanized transport for operation, maintenance, or reconstruction of a facility, if the Secretary determines that—

(i) the use is necessary to allow the facility to continue delivery of water to the non-Federal land for the beneficial uses recognized by the water right held under Idaho State law; and

(ii) the use of nonmotorized equipment and nonmechanized transport is impracticable or infeasible; and

(B) preclude use of the facility for the storage, diversion, or transport of water in excess of the water right recognized by the State of Idaho on the date of designation.

(2) DISCRETIONARY TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—In a special use authorization issued under subsection (a), the Secretary may—

(A) require or allow modification or relocation of the facility in the wilderness, as the Secretary determines necessary, to reduce impacts to wilderness values set forth in section 2 of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131) if the beneficial use of water on the non-Federal land is not diminished; and

(B) require that the owner provide a reciprocal right of access across the non-Federal property, in which case, the owner shall receive market value for any right-of-way or other interest in real property conveyed to the United States, and market value may be paid by the Secretary, in whole or in part, by the grant of a reciprocal right-of-way, or by reduction of fees or other costs that may accrue to the owner to obtain the authorization for water facilities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, again we have a bill that does a great job in solving a problem that should have been solved a long time ago, especially if the Senate would ever listen to it.

To introduce his bill, I would like to yield such time as he may consume to the sponsor of the bill, the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON).

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2050, the Idaho Wilderness Water Resources Protection Act.

This bipartisan, noncontroversial legislation is a technical fix intended to enable the Forest Service to authorize and permit existing historical water diversions within Idaho wilderness.

Last Congress, one of my constituents came to me for help with a problem. The Middle Fork Lodge has a water diversion within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Area that existed before the wilderness area was established and is protected under statute. The diversion was beginning to leak and was in desperate need of repairs to ensure that it did not threaten the environment and watershed, but it turned out the Forest Service did not have the authority to issue the lodge a permit to make the necessary repairs.

As we looked at this issue, we discovered that the Forest Service lacked the authority throughout both the Frank Church Wilderness area, of which there are 22 known water developments, and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, where there are three. These diversions are primarily used to support irrigation and minor hydropower generation for use on non-Federal lands. While the critical situation at the Middle Fork Lodge brought this issue to my attention, it is obvious that this problem is larger than just one diversion. At some point in the future, all 25 of these existing diversions will need maintenance or repair work done to ensure their integrity.

H.R. 2050 authorizes the Forest Service to issue special use permits for all qualifying historic water systems in these wilderness areas. I believe this is important that we get ahead of this problem and ensure the Forest Service has the tools necessary to manage these lands.

For these reasons, I've introduced H.R. 2050. The legislation, which was passed by the House last Congress, allows the Forest Service to issue the required special use permits to owners of historic water systems and sets out specific criteria for doing so. Providing this authority will ensure that existing water diversions can be properly maintained and repaired when necessary and preserves beneficial use for private property owners who hold water rights under State law.

I have deeply appreciated the cooperation of the Forest Service in addressing this problem. Not only have they communicated with me the need to find a systemwide solution to this issue, but at my request, they drafted this legislation to ensure that it only impacts specific targeted historical diversions—those with valid water rights that cannot feasibly be relocated outside of the wilderness area.

H.R. 2050 is bipartisan and noncontroversial. I know of no opposition to this bill. It is intended as a simple, reasonable solution to a problem that I think we can all agree should be solved as quickly as possible. I'm encouraged that the committee held hearings on this bill, and I am hopeful that we can

move it through the legislative process without delay so that the necessary maintenance to these diversions may be completed before the damage is beyond repair.

I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding this time to me.

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

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

Ms. TSONGAS. This legislation provides commonsense access to maintain water facilities within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness area. These water features were present prior to the congressional designation of Wilderness and are necessary to protect individual water rights in the State. We applaud Chairman SIMPSON for his legislation and support the passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Again, this is an issue that has been recognized and is a solution that Mr. SIMPSON has presented, and I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2050.

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. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

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RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST AND USE CONDITIONS, COOK COUNTY AIRPORT, COOK COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2947) to provide for the release of the reversionary interest held by the United States in certain land conveyed by the United States in 1950 for the establishment of an airport in Cook County, Minnesota.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2947

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

SECTION 1. RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST AND USE CONDITIONS, COOK COUNTY AIRPORT, COOK COUNTY, MINNESOTA.

(a) RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting on behalf of the United States, shall release, without consideration—

(1) the conditions imposed on the use of the parcel of land originally conveyed by the Secretary pursuant to section 16 of the Federal Airport Act (Act of May 13, 1946, ch. 251, 60 Stat. 170) to the State of Minnesota by deed executed May 31, 1950, for the establishment of an airport in Cook County, Minnesota; and

(2) the reversionary interest retained by the United States in connection with such conditions.

(b) INSTRUMENT OF RELEASE.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall execute and file in the appropriate office a deed of release, amended deed, or other appropriate instrument reflecting the release of the reversionary interest and conditions under subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Once again, we have a problem that should easily be corrected and a bill that does that.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. CRAVAACK) to explain his particular piece of legislation.

Mr. CRAVAACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2947.

This straightforward, commonsense bill will remedy an unintentional consequence of the restrictive language of the original deed set in Cook County, Minnesota.

In the 1950s, the Secretary of Agriculture granted a deed to the State of Minnesota to build an airport in Cook County. The deed only allowed the land to be used for airport purposes. That made sense at the time, but it now precludes the county from building a connector road on a sliver of the land. The connector project enjoys broad support throughout the community. H.R. 2947 does not seek any appropriation of Federal funds, nor does it authorize the project. It merely only proposes to remove a clause placed in the deed when the land was originally granted. This bill allows Cook County, Minnesota, to manage their own land as they see fit. The bill enjoys bipartisan support of Minnesota Senators and Minnesota State representatives.

I've reached out to the United States Forest Service, and they have responded by saying they have no objections and support this legislation moving forward. I look forward to quickly remedying this problem so that Cook County can create jobs and improve