

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.

□ 1650

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

the lives of its residents and businesses.

I ask for my colleagues to please join me in supporting this bill.

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. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2947 releases a reversionary interest held by the United States to a parcel of land in Cook County, Minnesota. The release of this interest will allow Cook County to use this land for a local highway.

We have no objections to this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. This is another great solution to a problem that should have been solved at some other level. I appreciate the gentleman for bringing it back.

I urge its adoption, and 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. 2947.

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.

BOUNDARY MODIFICATION AND TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION, CIBOLA NATIONAL FOREST, NEW MEXICO

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 491) to modify the boundaries of Cibola National Forest in the State of New Mexico, to transfer certain Bureau of Land Management land for inclusion in the national forest, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 491

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

SECTION 1. BOUNDARY MODIFICATION AND TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION, CIBOLA NATIONAL FOREST, NEW MEXICO.

(a) BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.—

(1) MODIFICATION.—The boundaries of Cibola National Forest in the State of New Mexico, are modified to include the land depicted for such inclusion on the Forest Service map titled “Crest of Montezuma Proposed Land Transfer” and dated October 26, 2009.

(2) AVAILABILITY AND CORRECTION OF MAP.—The map referred to in paragraph (1) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Forest Service. The Chief of the Forest Service may make technical and clerical corrections to the map.

(b) TRANSFER OF BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LAND.—

(1) TRANSFER.—The Secretary of the Interior shall transfer to the administrative ju-

risdiction of the Secretary of the Agriculture, for inclusion in, and administration as part of, Cibola National Forest, the public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management and identified as the “Crest of Montezuma” on the map referred to in subsection (a).

(2) EFFECT OF TRANSFER ON EXISTING PERMITS.—In the case of any permit or other land use authorization for public land transferred under paragraph (1) that is still in effect as of the transfer date, the Secretary of Agriculture shall administer the permit or other land use authorization according to the terms of the permit or other land use authorization. Upon expiration of such a permit or authorization, the Secretary of Agriculture may reauthorize the use covered by the permit or authorization under authorities available to the Secretary on such terms and conditions as the Secretary considers in the public interest.

(c) LAND ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—Subject to the appropriation of funds to carry out this subsection and the consent of the owner of private land included within the boundaries of Cibola National Forest by subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture may acquire the private land.

(d) MANAGEMENT OF ACQUIRED LAND.—

(1) MANAGEMENT.—Any federally owned lands that have been or hereafter may be acquired for National Forest System purposes within the boundaries of Cibola National Forest, as modified by subsection (a), shall be managed as lands acquired under the Act of March 1, 1911 (commonly known as the Weeks Act; 16 U.S.C. 515 et seq.), and in accordance with the other laws and regulations pertaining to the National Forest System.

(2) WITHDRAWAL FROM MINING AND CERTAIN OTHER USES.—The land depicted on the map referred to in subsection (a) and acquired by the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby withdrawn from—

(A) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(B) location, entry, and patent under the public land mining laws; and

(C) operation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws and the mineral materials laws.

(e) RELATION TO LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND ACT.—For purposes of section 7 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–9), the boundaries of Cibola National Forest, as modified by subsection (a), shall be considered to be boundaries of the Cibola National Forest as of January 1, 1965.

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

This legislation would authorize the transfer of a parcel of land known as the Crest of Montezuma from the Bu-

reau of Land Management to the Forest Service.

The Crest of Montezuma is remote from the current BLM-managed areas. It can be better managed by the Forest Service as part of the Cibola National Forest. Both agencies agree and support this legislation.

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

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. I rise in support of this legislation, and applaud Congressman HEINRICH for his hard work. It is hard to reach consensus on these issues, and he has achieved that with this legislation.

With that, I yield such time as he may consume to Congressman HEINRICH of New Mexico, this bill's sponsor.

Mr. HEINRICH. I want to thank my friend from Massachusetts for the time today and for her leadership on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, the Cibola National Forest provides a stunning backdrop to the city of Albuquerque and much of central New Mexico. Stretching north to south through the Sandia and Manzano Mountains, this national forest demonstrates the value of preserving wild places near urban areas.

H.R. 491 would expand the boundaries of the forest to streamline management and improve recreational access for local residents. It would transfer a 917-acre parcel, known as the Crest of Montezuma, from the Bureau of Land Management to the Forest Service.

The Crest of Montezuma is an isolated BLM parcel adjacent to Cibola National Forest. The bill would also extend the forest boundary around three small parcels of private land adjacent to the Crest of Montezuma to allow the future purchase of these parcels subject to available funds.

The owners of these parcels are willing sellers and eager to see their land permanently protected for the public good.

H.R. 491 has strong local support from local residents, including from the Las Placitas Association, a 300-member citizen group that represents residents near the Crest of Montezuma. Local sportsmen also support the bill because of the importance of these lands as wildlife habitat.

Over the last 3 years, I've received many letters from constituents asking me to make sure that the Crest of Montezuma is managed in a way that preserves its role as a wildlife corridor and opens it up for recreation for local residents.

I am pleased to sponsor this bill to add these critical lands to the Cibola National Forest, and I ask my colleagues for their support.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I have no other speakers. Do you have anyone else on this issue?

Ms. TSONGAS. We do not. I yield back the balance of my time.