

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.

**LAKE THUNDERBIRD EFFICIENT
USE ACT OF 2011**

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3263) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to allow the storage and conveyance of nonproject water at the Norman project in Oklahoma, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3263

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 “Lake Thunderbird Efficient Use Act of 2011”.

SEC. 2. NORMAN PROJECT, OKLAHOMA.

Public Law 86-529 (74 Stat. 225) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 10. LAKE THUNDERBIRD.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary of the Interior determines that there is enough excess capacity in the reservoir on the Little River known as ‘Lake Thunderbird’ that nonproject water can be stored in Lake Thunderbird, the Secretary of the Interior may, in accordance with the reclamation laws, amend an existing contract, or enter into 1 or more new contracts, with the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District for the storage and conveyance of nonproject water in Norman project facilities to augment municipal and industrial supplies for the cities served by the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District.

“(b) COSTS.—If any additional infrastructure is needed to enable the storage and conveyance of non-project water in Norman project facilities under subsection (a) or any other provision of this Act, the costs of constructing, operating, and maintaining the infrastructure shall be the responsibility of the non-Federal entity contracting with the Secretary of the Interior for storage and conveyance rights.”.

SEC. 3. EFFECT.

Nothing in this Act or an amendment made by this Act authorizes any expansion of the storage capacity of Lake Thunderbird.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 3263, introduced by our colleague from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), allows the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District to store water purchased from Oklahoma City in Lake Thunderbird. This legislation is necessary since Federal regulations do not allow water transfers from out-of-basin areas unless Congress expressly authorizes such a transfer.

This bill specifically states that any cost associated with its enactment will be borne by the project beneficiary. It is a no-nonsense bill that will provide additional water storage during times of drought. I thank Congressman COLE for sponsoring this commonsense bill, and I urge adoption of the measure.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

As my colleague stated, H.R. 3263 authorizes storage of nonproject water in Lake Thunderbird Reservoir. The ability to store water at Lake Thunderbird Reservoir will provide reclamation and the managers with flexibility in managing the system.

The administration supports H.R. 3263, and we have heard from the tribes around the region who do not object to this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I’m pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE).

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member MARKEY for their help in moving this legislation and also the staff of the Natural Resources Committee who have been very supportive and helpful.

I rise today in support of my legislation, H.R. 3263, the Lake Thunderbird Efficient Use Act of 2011. Lake Thunderbird is a Bureau of Reclamation project which provides municipal water to Norman, Del City, and Midwest City, all major municipalities in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area.

In recent years, the watershed that feeds Lake Thunderbird has not been able to keep that lake full. The water that remains is of poor quality and ill-suited for drinking water and recreation. Lake Thunderbird was built to provide water to a water-starved region, and this legislation would help the Bureau of Reclamation meet the original goals of this project.

The bill allows the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District to acquire and store water from outside of the Bureau of Reclamation system in Lake Thunderbird. Any cost associated with this action would be paid for by the conservancy district. This legislation costs Federal taxpayers nothing.

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Frankly, Mr. Speaker, in my view, this is the type of action that we should be able to take administratively; however, under current law, it requires congressional consent.

Mr. Speaker, I first initiated this legislation in the 110th Congress when central Oklahoma was in the midst of a significant drought. In July of 2011, Oklahoma recorded the driest month ever recorded by any of the 50 States since records have been kept. Central Oklahoma remains in a drought that is forecast to continue and worsen this summer.

H.R. 3263 is important to the economic growth of central Oklahoma. The Oklahoma City metropolitan area has seen tremendous growth over the past decade and has been a positive economic force at a time of great challenges to the national economy. Water must be available to support the continued growth of this region. This straightforward and commonsense legislation is an important tool to support further growth in central Oklahoma.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their cooperation, and I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on this legislation.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, if I might inquire of the chairman if he has any additional speakers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I have one more speaker.

Mr. GRIJALVA. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield such time as he may consume to another Member from Oklahoma, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD).

Mr. LANKFORD. I would like to, as well, thank my colleague, TOM COLE, for his work on this. He is the one who has really sponsored this, has focused on it, has driven it through to completion. It is a very important thing for communities that are both in his district and in my district as well.

H.R. 3263 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to simply amend an existing contract with the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District for the storage of nonproject water in Lake Thunderbird. It’s very simple and straightforward. This bill would allow the district to augment water if the Secretary determines that there is enough excess capacity in the reservoir.

Since the summer of 2010, Oklahoma has been in a severe drought. This has seriously endangered the quality and supply of our drinking water. To address this devastating shortage, the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District could purchase water from Oklahoma City to supply high-quality water through the Atoka pipeline to Midwest City, Del City, and Norman. Regrettably, Congress must act before this resource can be tapped. It is imperative that we remedy the storage issues faced by these cities, and Congress shouldn’t stand in the way of this.

It is amazing that it takes an act of Congress for an Oklahoma lake to buy water from another Oklahoma lake. No

Federal funds are needed, only Congress giving the permission to allow Oklahomans the flexibility to use their own water as needed. I am strongly in support of this. This is the type of thing that should be widely bipartisan. It is a simple fix, and hopefully we can fix this legislatively in the future to not have to have an act of Congress just for us to use our own water in each State.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and urge adoption of the measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3263.

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.

AUTHORIZATION OF CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN LANDS IN LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 241) to authorize the conveyance of certain National Forest System lands in the Los Padres National Forest in California, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 241

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

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The term “Federal land” means the approximately 5 acres of National Forest System land in Santa Barbara County, California, as generally depicted on the map.

(2) **FOUNDATION.**—The term “Foundation” means the White Lotus Foundation, a nonprofit foundation located in Santa Barbara, California.

(3) **MAP.**—The term “map” means the map entitled “San Marcos Pass Encroachment for Consideration of Legislative Remedy” and dated June 1, 2009.

(4) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 2. LAND CONVEYANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to the provisions of this section, if the Foundation offers to convey to the Secretary all right, title, and interest of the Foundation in and to a parcel of non-Federal land that is acceptable to the Secretary—

(1) the Secretary shall accept the offer; and

(2) on receipt of acceptable title to the non-Federal land, the Secretary shall convey to the Foundation all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Federal land.

(b) **APPLICABLE LAW.**—The land exchange authorized under subsection (a) shall be subject to section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716).

(c) **TIME FOR COMPLETION OF LAND EXCHANGE.**—It is the intent of Congress that the land exchange under subsection (a) shall be completed not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) **AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY TO CONDUCT SALE OF FEDERAL LAND.**—If the land exchange under subsection (a) is not completed by the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary may offer to sell to the Foundation the Federal land for fair market value.

(e) **ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.**—The land exchange under subsection (a) and any sale under subsection (d) shall be subject to—

(1) valid existing rights;

(2) the Secretary finding that the public interest would be well served by making the exchange or sale;

(3) any terms and conditions that the Secretary may require; and

(4) the Foundation paying the reasonable costs of any surveys, appraisals, and any other administrative costs associated with the land exchange or sale.

(f) **APPRAISALS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The land conveyed under subsection (a) or (d) shall be appraised by an independent appraiser selected by the Secretary.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—An appraisal under paragraph (1) shall be conducted in accordance with nationally recognized appraisal standards, including—

(A) the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions; and

(B) the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(g) **MANAGEMENT AND STATUS OF ACQUIRED LAND.**—Any non-Federal land acquired by the Secretary under this Act shall be managed by the Secretary in accordance with—

(1) the Act of March 1, 1911 (commonly known as the “Weeks Law”) (16 U.S.C. 480 et seq.); and

(2) any laws (including regulations) applicable to the National Forest System.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. 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 Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 241 authorizes the Forest Service to convey, for appraised market value, approximately 5 acres of the Los Padres National Forest to the White Lotus Foundation.

Due to steep topography, there is limited access to the White Lotus Foundation other than a short access road that crosses Forest Service land. This bill would allow the foundation to acquire this parcel and ensure public access to their facility.

So I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, as authored by our colleague from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 241, sponsored by the gentleman from California, provides for the conveyance of 5 acres of

land from Los Padres National Forest to the White Lotus Foundation. This conveyance allows for better access to a retreat area owned by the foundation.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the author of this legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY).

Mr. GALLEGLY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my legislation, H.R. 241. This bill will authorize the Forest Service to convey a small parcel of land on the perimeter of the Los Padres National Forest to a nonprofit organization, the White Lotus Foundation.

In 1983, the White Lotus Foundation inherited property in the hills above Santa Barbara, California, on the border of the Los Padres National Forest. After operating at this location for over 25 years, the Forest Service sent a letter to the foundation notifying them of a 1/20-of-an-acre encroachment on Forest Service land.

The encroachment in question is located on a loop of the only road that allows White Lotus and the rest of the public access to and from the White Lotus property. Due to the steep topography, the foundation no longer has any other reasonable alternatives.

The loop lies on flat ground which holds equipment storage for fire and flood emergencies and provides access to a water pump and other necessary equipment. There is no other flat ground on which to move these items, and without this space, the foundation will be forced to cease operations.

My legislation authorizes the Forest Service to enter into a land exchange with the White Lotus Foundation for land worth no less than the appraised market value. If this land exchange does not occur within 2 years, the Forest Service is allowed to convey the land that would benefit White Lotus and to determine the amount to be conveyed. If the Forest Service does not feel that this land conveyance is in its best interest, it does not have to sell any Federal land to White Lotus. However, if the land sale does move ahead, my legislation will not cost the taxpayers a single penny. White Lotus will pay for the land, the survey, and all administrative costs and related costs.

There are no exemptions from NEPA or any other environmental laws. The land in question is not protected wilderness or any other specifically designated area.

In closing, I want to thank the chairman, the ranking member, and my colleagues for allowing this to be brought to the floor today.

I urge the support for my legislation, H.R. 241.

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