

National Historic Trail, the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail, and the Oregon National Historic Trail.

In 1998, the Federal Government donated the trails center and surrounding property to the State Historical Society of Iowa. Federal ownership was transferred to the State subject to a condition that if the trails center is not being used for the purposes specified in the 1989 Act, the land and the center would revert to the United States.

Since 1998, the State has owned and operated the trails center. Presently, visitation at the center is very low, the hours of operation are limited, and maintenance is falling behind. The State of Iowa would like to remove the trails center from its responsibility and possibly transfer the property to the city of Council Bluffs.

The National Park Service currently does not own or directly manage any of the land associated with the 1989 Act. Moreover, it is the Committee's understanding that the National Park Service does not have any interest in taking over operation of the trails center or ownership of the property.

I commend Representative YOUNG for his outstanding work on behalf of his constituents. I would also like to thank the minority for their help and cooperation moving this legislation forward.

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

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

H.R. 2600 authorizes the conveyance to the State of Iowa the reversionary interest on the Western Historic Trails Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

In 1989, Congress authorized the Department of the Interior to partner with the State of Iowa to create a trails interpretative center to support three National Historic Trails that cross through the region.

In 1988, the Secretary of the Interior transferred approximately 400 acres to the State of Iowa for use as a visitor center. Ownership was then transferred to the State with a reversionary clause that limits the use of the property to a visitor center.

The National Park Service does not operate or maintain the current visitor center. However, under current law, if the State stops using the site for its intended purpose, ownership will revert back to the Federal Government.

Since its establishment, the trails interpretative center has not lived up to its expectations. Visitation is low and the facility is in need of significant maintenance.

The National Park Service and the State of Iowa have determined that termination of the reversionary interest makes both fiscal and operational sense. This will allow the State to sell the property to the city of Council Bluffs, allowing the city to maintain the facility.

As long as the State continues to provide National Historic Trail inter-

pretive services following the terms of the original agreement, Congress should be allowed to release the reversionary interest to this particular property.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1500

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank both of my colleagues from California. I want to thank the chairman and ranking member of the committee for their leadership and working together with me, the National Park Service, the State of Iowa, Pottawattamie County, and the city of Council Bluffs on this bill.

The National Park Service holds reversionary rights to a small parcel of land in Council Bluffs in Pottawattamie County which highlights Lewis and Clark's travels with an interpretation center, as well as highlighting the California National Historic Trail and the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail. However, the National Park Service has limited resources and a limited desire to effectively operate this property with the hundreds of properties it already maintains across the country.

So by listening to the Park Service, the State of Iowa, Pottawattamie County, the city of Council Bluffs, and local leaders and residents, a consensus and commonsense solution evolved to allow the city of Council Bluffs to accept responsibility for the property in determining its best use while still recognizing and highlighting the spirit and history of these historic trails.

I thank my colleagues from California, the ranking member, and the chairman of the committee.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. COOK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2600, as amended.

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.

INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL PARK ACT

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1488) to retitle Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore as Indiana Dunes National Park, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1488

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 "Indiana Dunes National Park Act".

SEC. 2. INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE RETITLED AS INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL PARK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Public Law 89-761 (16 U.S.C. 460u et seq.) is amended—

(1) by striking "National Lakeshore" and "national lakeshore" each place it appears and inserting "National Park"; and

(2) by striking "lakeshore" each place it appears and inserting "Park".

(b) NONAPPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(1) shall not apply to the title of the map referred to in the first section of Public Law 89-761 (16 U.S.C. 460u), or to the title of the maps referred to in section 4 of Public Law 89-761 (16 U.S.C. 460u-3).

SEC. 3. PAUL H. DOUGLAS TRAIL.

The 1.6 mile trail within the Indiana Dunes National Park designated the "Miller-Woods Trail" is hereby redesignated as the "Paul H. Douglas Trail".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. COOK) and the gentleman from California (Mrs. TORRES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members 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 California?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1488 would redesignate Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore as Indiana Dunes National Park.

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore was established by Congress in 1966. The designation of the national lakeshore as a unit of the National Park Service was the culmination of decades of work by conservationists, area residents, and elected officials.

The original law included 8,330 acres of land and water. The National Park Service conservation advocates continued to seek expansion of the boundaries, and five subsequent laws increased the size of the national lakeshore to more than 15,000 acres.

In October 1916, shortly after the National Park Service was established, NPS Director Stephen Mather held hearings in Chicago to gauge public sentiment on a Sand Dunes National Park. In a Department of the Interior report published after the hearings, Director Mather stated: "No national park or other Federal reservation offers this phenomenon for the pleasure and edification of the people, and no national park is as accessible. Furthermore, the dunes offer to the visitor extraordinary scenery, a large variety of plant life, magnificent bathing beaches, and splendid opportunities to camp and live in the wild close to nature."

Despite Director Mather's support, the national park proposal was abandoned at the onset of World War I, and

several years later, in 1925, Indiana Dunes State Park was established. Redesignation of the national lakeside as a national park would make Indiana Dunes the 60th national park in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on H.R. 1488, the Indiana Dunes National Park Act. This act seeks to rename the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to the Indiana Dunes National Park, one of the over 400 units of the National Park System.

Upon successful redesignation, the Indiana Dunes National Park would become the 60th national park, areas which are known for their variety of resources, for encompassing large land and water areas, and for providing protection of resources within their boundaries.

Designated in 1966, Indiana Dunes protects over 15,000 acres, 50 miles of trails, and provides both summer and winter recreational activities for over 2 million visitors who trek to the lakeshore each year.

When the lakeshore was admitted into the National Park System in 1966, it was through the hard work of President Kennedy in 1963-64 to create a compromise for the national lakeshore and a port to promote the industrial needs of the area.

Sponsors of this bill, including our esteemed colleague Representative VISCLOSKY, believe that renaming the lakeshore as the Indiana Dunes National Park will capture the spirit and intent of the first National Park Service Director Stephen Mather.

Director Mather visited the area in 1916 and recommended the area be included as a national park within the newly designated National Park System. Sadly, the United States' entry into World War I precluded that addition. Now, 101 years later, this bill seeks to redesignate 15,000 acres of the Indiana Dunes National Park.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY), the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman for yielding.

I want to begin by thanking Chairman BISHOP and Ranking Member GRIMALVA for all of their work on this legislation, as well as Chairman MCCLINTOCK and Ranking Member HANABUSA and Mrs. TORRES for their diligence.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation we are considering today represents a very small change—one word—but it would have an enormous benefit of rightly placing the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore where it belongs as the Nation's 60th national park and the first national park in the State of Indiana.

As mentioned, located along the southern shore of Lake Michigan, the Indiana Dunes are a natural wonder and home of a vast array of rare plants. According to the National Park Service, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is the seventh most biologically diverse National Park Service unit.

I believe the chairman and Mrs. TORRES ably described the history of the dunes and its evolution. I thank them for that, and I would thank all of the citizens over that half century and more that petitioned for the creation of this great park.

The lakeshore currently does encompass about 15,000 acres of wetlands and marshes, beaches, oak savannahs, and sand dunes. It is clear that the title of the Indiana Dunes National Park is fitting for such a unique natural resource.

The American taxpayers, over a number of generations, have invested in the preservation of the park. It is incumbent that we do everything possible to encourage citizens and travelers from around the world to visit it, to learn about it, to recreate, and to simply enjoy the environment of northwest Indiana's lakeshore. H.R. 1488 helps to achieve this goal.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that the act is supported in a bipartisan fashion by the entire Indiana delegation. I would also like to thank Senators DONNELLY and YOUNG, who have introduced a companion measure in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YOUNG of Iowa). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. COOK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1488, as amended.

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.

RESILIENT FEDERAL FORESTS ACT OF 2017

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 2936.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BERGMAN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 595 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2936.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. YOUNG) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1513

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2936) to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes, with Mr. YOUNG of Iowa in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIMALVA) will each control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

□ 1515

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 2936, the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017.

As I stated last Congress, our national forests are facing an epidemic of declining health, which is a direct result of policies which have led to a dramatic decrease in managed acres creating catastrophic wildfires that have increased in size and frequency.

The past two fire seasons have been some of the most expensive on record, and this year appears to be no exception. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue recently announced that wildland fire suppression costs for this fiscal year have exceeded \$2 billion, making 2017 the most expensive year on record.

While the suppression costs are staggering, these fires come at a greater cost to local communities, private property, and pristine landscapes. Most importantly, they also result in the loss of life.

For too long, our good folks at the Forest Service have been unable to do the work needed to manage our forest fuel loads. Over the years, the problem has compounded with more severe fires. Furthermore, these fires have consumed more and more of the Forest Service budget that was intended for management. This cycle has gone on for far too long.