

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this bill and reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, as we get ready to celebrate our 250th anniversary—and, actually, we are already in it with some of the Revolutionary War battles being fought already over 250 years ago—we look forward to Americans being able to have a very affordable day when they can go to our parks and Federal lands for free.

It is already an exciting time in America. I commend the gentlewoman who brought this bill to us and the effort that she has put forth to make sure that Americans can have an affordable day on our Federal lands.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Utah (Ms. MALOY), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Ms. MALOY. Mr. Speaker, Americans are preparing to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States in 2026.

How do you properly celebrate 250 years of freedom? One very uniquely American way is to spend time in what Wallace Stegner called “the best idea we ever had,” our national parks.

National parks provide our connection to history, nature, and shared heritage, including our bright future as a nation. The Semiquincentennial Tourism and Access to Recreation Sites Act, which doesn’t exactly roll off the tongue, so we call it the STARS Act, designates Constitution Day, September 17, 2026, as a fee-free day at National Park Service sites and extends fee waivers to Federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the United States Forest Service.

This allows Americans to experience our national history, natural treasures, and natural resources that preserve and protect the legacy that began in 1776.

This legislation is complementary to the Department of the Interior’s effort to launch the digital America the Beautiful passes, expand motorcycle access, create a resident-focused fee structure, and otherwise improve the experience for Americans.

The STARS Act highlights Constitution Day to encourage reflection on America’s founding principles. Get out and enjoy this Nation’s natural resources, learn something new, or just celebrate with loved ones in one of our parks.

Free access encourages families and communities to visit, learn, and participate in the national celebration together. Americans just might come together during this major national commemoration by getting outside in a forest, historic park, bird refuge, or go on an iconic hike.

The STARS Act is about connecting Americans with history, nature, and the founding principles of our Republic. We can celebrate America’s birthday in

a very American way that invites all people, regardless of politics, religion, age, or income bracket to be united in taking part in the freedoms we enjoy as a result of our Constitution.

Maybe, just maybe, by joining together to mark this milestone, we can awaken a fresh reverence and respect for our founding documents, our collective national blessings, and the ideas that changed the world two-and-a-half centuries ago.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

□ 1510

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I am enthusiastically in support of this policy, but I think I have to underscore, again, that our public lands belong to all Americans, as the previous sponsor mentioned, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status, or background.

The stories preserved at sites like Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial in my district serve as powerful reminders of what happens when we allow fear and prejudice to override our values of inclusion and justice. In this moment in our history as we celebrate the semiquincentennial of our Nation, we are also watching history attempt to repeat itself with the rounding up of Americans and the rounding up of folks living in this country who are being persecuted in our streets and on our public lands.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation and urge all my colleagues to support it, as well. I also urge us to learn from our history and to move forward more equitably.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I, once again, thank Representative MALOY and Chairman BOOZMAN for their leadership on the STARS Act in their respective Chambers of Congress.

This is a good bill that gives every American the opportunity to celebrate the 250th anniversary of our Nation’s independence in the very places that conserve our history and our heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues 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 gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4285, 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.

DALLES WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 655) to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain

Federal land to the City of The Dalles, Oregon, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 655

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 “Dalles Watershed Development Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) CITY.—The term “City” means the City of The Dalles, Oregon.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 3. THE DALLES CONVEYANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If, not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the City submits a written request to the Secretary for conveyance of the land described in subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall, as soon as practicable thereafter, convey to the City, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to such land.

(b) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The land described in this paragraph is the parcel of real property generally depicted as “parcel A” on the map, consisting of approximately 150 acres of National Forest System land located in the Mount Hood National Forest in Oregon.

(2) MAP.—

(A) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “map” means the map entitled “The Dalles Conveyance Parcel A” and dated November 4, 2024.

(B) MINOR ERRORS.—The Secretary may correct minor errors in the map.

(C) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—A copy of the map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of Forest Service.

(3) SURVEY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the National Forest System land to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be—

(1) subject to valid existing rights;

(2) made without consideration;

(3) made by quitclaim deed; and

(4) subject to such additional terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(d) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—As a condition of the conveyance under subsection (a), the City shall pay all costs associated with the conveyance, including the cost of a survey under subsection (b)(3).

(e) USE OF CONVEYED LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The land conveyed to the City under subsection (a) shall be used by the City for public purposes, including for municipal water supply and use and related infrastructure needs or expansions.

(2) REVERSION.—If the land conveyed under subsection (a) is used in a manner that is inconsistent with the requirement of paragraph (1), all right, title, and interest in and to the land shall revert to the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HURD) and the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. RANDALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HURD of Colorado. 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 H.R. 655, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 655, sponsored by my colleague, Representative BENTZ.

This straightforward legislation would transfer 150 acres of U.S. Forest Service land to the City of The Dalles, Oregon.

The area encompassed by the legislation includes a dam and reservoir that the City currently operates under a special use permit from the Forest Service.

The Crow Creek Reservoir, located in the Mount Hood National Forest, is key to providing clean water for drinking, residential, and commercial uses in The Dalles. In fact, the existing infrastructure provides 80 percent of the City's annual water supply.

However, in order to access and maintain this critical water infrastructure, the City must perpetually reapply for special use permits from the Forest Service, a time-consuming and expensive process.

In addition to wasting time and personnel resources, the renewal process is estimated to cost the City at least \$150,000.

Between 2010 and 2020, the population of The Dalles increased by more than 11 percent. To address the needs of its current and future population, the City plans to increase the Crow Creek Reservoir's capacity from 900 to 3,000 acre-feet. Allowing the City to take full ownership of the land within the reservoir's watershed will allow local leaders to move ahead with planned capacity and safety improvements to the Crow Creek Reservoir without running into red tape and wasting taxpayer money.

This is a fiscally responsible bill that will cut costs for the local community and for the Forest Service. A land transfer will allow the City to advance upgrades to the Crow Creek Reservoir. H.R. 655 is a simple, practical step that saves money immediately and decreases costs over time by shrinking the Federal estate.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative BENTZ for his leadership on this issue and for his steadfast work on behalf of his constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 655, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 655, the Dalles Watershed Development Act, introduced by my colleague from the Pacific Northwest, Representative BENTZ from Oregon.

This bill would direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey approximately 150 acres of Federal land in the Mount Hood National Forest to the City of The Dalles, Oregon.

This land is vital to the City's watershed and supports roughly 80 percent of its annual water supply. Local ownership of this land will allow the City to better manage its water resources, protect water quality, and plan for future water infrastructure.

Under the bill, the land transfer would occur at no cost to the City and be subject to valid existing rights.

The City would cover the administrative expenses of the conveyance, including surveying, and the conveyance would be executed by quitclaim deed.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority for working with us to include language that guarantees the property is used by the City for the public in perpetuity. With this important update, the legislation offers a practical, bipartisan solution to address clear infrastructure need and to adapt to a changing climate in which water resources are becoming more and more scarce. I thank Representative BENTZ for his leadership on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 655, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my legislation, H.R. 655, the Dalles Watershed Development Act.

The City of The Dalles, located in my district, depends on its municipal watershed for almost all of its supply of drinking water. Protecting and managing this watershed is vital to the health, safety, and future of The Dalles community.

Today, that task is complicated by the fact that critical infrastructure, the Crow Creek Reservoir and the surrounding timbered area, is located on both City-owned and federally managed Forest Service lands.

The City operates these facilities under a special use permit, which is inefficient and costly and limits the City's ability to expeditiously expand and modernize this water supply.

The City of The Dalles is a growing City. It is an important City, and it is one that deserves this kind of help and attention. I am happy to bring this bill to achieve this purpose.

This bill offers a practical solution by transferring 150 acres of Forest Service land within the watershed of the City into the City's ownership. This transfer will allow the City of The Dalles to officially upgrade the Crow Creek Dam, increase its reservoir capacity by 2,100 acre-feet, eliminate the need for ongoing special use permits with Forest Service, and allow implementation of a comprehensive watershed management strategy. We would also save tens of thousands of dollars in administrative costs for both the City and the Forest Service.

Mr. Speaker, this is a narrowly tailored, community-driven proposal that directly supports clean water, public

safety, economic growth, and good government.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chair WESTERMAN and the members of the committee for their support of this bill, and I urge a "yes" vote on H.R. 655.

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, this legislation will eliminate the City's need to reapply for a special use permit to access land within its own municipal watershed and allow local leaders to move forward with a vital expansion of its reservoir capacity, which is necessary to serve its growing population.

Expanding the City's water supply will support the growing number of businesses and families that call The Dalles home. This legislation is straightforward, timely, returns power to local government, and saves taxpayer money. I thank Representative BENTZ for sponsoring this critical measure.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 655, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1520

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HURD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 655, 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.

CORMORANT RELIEF ACT OF 2025

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2293) to require the Secretary of the Interior to reissue certain regulations relating to the taking of double-crested cormorants at aquaculture facilities, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2293

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 "Cormorant Relief Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. REGULATIONS RELATING TO TAKING OF DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS AT AQUACULTURE FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall reissue the original depredation order in accordance with subsection (b).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The depredation order reissued under subsection (a) shall be the same as the original depredation order, except that the depredation order reissued under subsection (a) shall—

(1) apply to—

(A) each of the States of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin and any other State or territory of