

H.R. 6380

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, September 5, 2025.
Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 528, the "Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration Act of 2025." Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forego any further consideration of this bill. However, by foregoing consideration at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Agriculture also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees, should it become necessary, and ask that you support such a request.

We would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 528 and request a copy of our letters on this matter be published in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration

Sincerely,

GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, September 8, 2025.
Hon. GLENN THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I write regarding H.R. 528, the "Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration Act of 2025," which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on July 23, 2025.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and appreciate your willingness to forgo further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Agriculture will not formally consider H.R. 528 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Agriculture to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill and will include such letters in the committee report on H.R. 528. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in strong support of Representative PETTERSEN's H.R. 528, the Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration Act.

Madam Speaker, this legislation would establish a program at the Department of the Interior to address ecological damage caused by unforeseen events, including wildfires and weather events, and support efforts to restore ecosystems, particularly those where disruption has hindered the natural recovery.

As the impacts of climate change cause more frequent and intense natural disasters, we must take a whole-

of-government approach to respond to these crises and rebuild. This includes critical investments in predisaster mitigation measures, like strengthening infrastructure and housing, enhancing early detection, supporting our country's wildland firefighters, and focusing on post-disaster resilience.

These kinds of upfront investments will ensure communities impacted by wildfire can rebuild and recover in a way that makes them more resilient against future natural disasters. This bill is a commonsense step toward better land management and stronger community resilience in the face of climate-driven wildfires and extreme weather.

□ 1740

Recovery after a wildfire is a lengthy and challenging process, and this bill will help build stronger, more resilient communities that can stand up against the threat of wildfires for generations to come.

Madam Speaker, I urge support of H.R. 528, and I urge my colleagues to support this critical piece of legislation. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, this bill is a bipartisan, commonsense step to help land managers within the Department of the Interior tackle forest reforestation after wildfires, storms, and floods by working with capable non-Federal partners in the areas that need help the most. This legislation will help restore desolate landscapes to thriving forests.

As I mentioned before, the legislation previously passed the House as part of the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act. I hope to see that legislation sent to the President's desk soon so that land managers have every tool they need to restore forest health, prevent wildfires, and protect communities.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this 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 Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 528, 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.

CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL PARK ACT

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6380) to establish the Chiricahua National Park in the State of Arizona as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

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 "Chiricahua National Park Act".

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL PARK, ARIZONA.

(a) DESIGNATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chiricahua National Monument in the State of Arizona established by Presidential Proclamation 1692 (54 U.S.C. 320301 note; 43 Stat. 1946) shall be known and designated as "Chiricahua National Park" (referred to in this Act as the "National Park").

(2) BOUNDARIES.—The boundaries of the National Park shall be the boundaries of the Chiricahua National Monument as of the date of enactment of this Act, as generally depicted on the map entitled "Chiricahua National Park Proposed Boundary", numbered 145/156,356, and dated March 2021.

(3) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, or other record of the United States to the Chiricahua National Monument shall be considered to be a reference to the "Chiricahua National Park".

(4) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any funds available for the Chiricahua National Monument shall be available for the National Park.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary of the Interior shall administer the National Park in accordance with—

(1) Presidential Proclamation 1692 (54 U.S.C. 320301 note; 43 Stat. 1946);

(2) Presidential Proclamation 2288 (54 U.S.C. 320301 note; 52 Stat. 1551); and

(3) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including—

(A) section 100101(a), chapter 1003, and sections 100751(a), 100752, 100753, and 102101 of title 54, United States Code; and

(B) chapter 3201 of title 54, United States Code.

SEC. 3. TRADITIONAL CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS SITES.

(a) PROTECTION OF SITES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure the protection of traditional cultural and religious sites in the National Park in accordance with the laws (including regulations) applicable to the Secretary.

(2) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consult with Indian Tribes in accordance with laws applicable to the protection of cultural and religious sites.

(b) ACCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in accordance with Public Law 95-341 (42 U.S.C. 1996 et seq.)—

(A) shall provide access to the sites described in subsection (a)(1) by members of Indian Tribes for traditional cultural and customary uses; and

(B) may, on request of an Indian Tribe, temporarily close to general public use one or more specific areas of the National Park to protect traditional cultural and customary uses in the area by members of the Indian Tribe.

(2) LIMITATION.—In closing a portion of a designated area under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall limit the closure to the smallest practicable area for the minimum period necessary for the traditional cultural and religious activities.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term "Indian Tribe" has the meaning given such term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(2) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) and the gentleman from Maryland (Ms. ELFRETH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam 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. 6380, the bill before us for consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6380, the Chiricahua National Park Act, introduced by Representative CISCOMANI of Arizona. This simple, bipartisan bill redesignates the Chiricahua National Monument as Chiricahua National Park.

Located in southeast Arizona, Chiricahua is a remarkable place that is known as the Land of Standing-Up Rocks. It is a home to unique volcanic formations, miles of scenic trails, and a landscape shaped by both natural forces and human history. From its ancient volcanic hoodoos and pinnacles to historic sites conserving the history of prehistoric and indigenous people, early pioneers, and ranchers, there is truly no place in the country like Chiricahua.

Every year, visitors to this area enjoy unique outdoor recreational activities, including hiking, stargazing, camping, bird-watching, and horseback riding. Across the country, outdoor recreation contributes \$1.3 trillion to the U.S. economy. Last year, Arizona saw the second highest growth rate in its outdoor recreation activity amongst all States.

By creating the Nation's 64th national park and Arizona's fourth national park, Representative CISCOMANI's legislation would further boost Arizona's outdoor recreation economy, create jobs, and support small businesses in rural gateway communities.

Importantly, this bipartisan bill does not expand the site's boundaries or change its management. It simply recognizes the national significance of Chiricahua by elevating it to full national park status. The change would place Chiricahua alongside other flagship parks and help raise its profile and support increased tourism.

The bill has significant local support. Representative CISCOMANI has worked hard with all affected stakeholders to address any potential concerns. Representative CISCOMANI added new language to the bill this Congress to ensure continued access for traditional uses for Tribes in a way that respects cultural heritage while maintaining public access to the park without creating new precedents.

In short, this bill honors a place of exceptional natural, historical, and cultural value without changing its footprints or management framework.

I commend Representative CISCOMANI for the years of hard work that he has put in to make the dream of Arizona's fourth national park a reality.

I cannot think of a better time than during America's 250th anniversary to send this meaningful legislation to the President's desk, and I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6380, offered by my colleague, Representative CISCOMANI of Arizona, which would redesignate the Chiricahua National Monument as the Chiricahua National Park.

Located in the unique Sky Island ecosystem of southeastern Arizona, Chiricahua National Monument is known as the Wonderland of Rocks, which sounds magical. This unique and stunning landscape is filled with pinnacles, spires, and balancing rocks that inspire a sense of awe and wonder.

Chiricahua's rock formations are also a biodiversity hotspot that supports a variety of wildlife amid the flowering desert environment. This includes Apache foxes, javelinas, black bears, mountain lions, white-tailed deer, and over 200 bird species.

The monument is truly a special place that protects beautiful and important ecosystems, but that is only a part of its story. Tribal communities have deep ties and connections to the landscape.

Justine Jimmie, the deputy attorney general of the San Carlos Apache Tribe, testified on this proposal during the 2024 hearing before the House Committee on Natural Resources. Her written statement noted: "The land that is now Chiricahua National Monument has been our homeland since time immemorial—long before the formation of the United States and before the U.S. Cavalry took our land to give to settlers, pioneers, and miners."

This history is a history that cannot be ignored, which is why Tribal engagement has been such a critical component in building support for this bill, and I thank the bill sponsor for doing that.

The bill ensures Tribes can continue to access important and sacred sites, even permitting temporary closure of areas of the park for Tribal ceremonies. That is a key part of upholding our trust obligations and ensuring Tribal support for this redesignation.

The National Park Service itself has noted that the wealth of cultural and natural resources across Chiricahua's landscape makes it a strong candidate for national park status.

I am excited about the prospect of designating our Nation's next national park, but I also want to be very clear about what comes next. Our parks and public lands have been short-staffed and underresourced by the current administration, with nearly a quarter of the National Park Service staff departing the agency, some voluntarily and

many others involuntarily, since the beginning of last year.

Madam Speaker, after approving the designation of this new national park, I urge for full resources and full staffing so that it can meet its mission.

As Congress continues to come together to create new national parks to protect our Nation's most special places, we must continue to do everything in our power to make sure our national parks have the staffing and resources they need for the next 250 years and beyond.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN and my colleague, Representative WITTMAN, for this time.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my bill, the Chiricahua National Park Act.

I also thank my colleague from Maryland because these were not easy words to pronounce: Chiricahua, javelinas, and so on. Arizona threw her a curveball on this one, but she did very well with all of that.

For more than a century, the remarkable landscape of Chiricahua National Monument in southeastern Arizona has inspired visitors from across the country. Known as the Wonderland of Rocks, this extraordinary area protects towering volcanic rock formations, deep canyons, and one of the most biologically diverse mountain ranges in the entire Southwest.

For the people of Cochise County and southeastern Arizona, Chiricahua is more than a beautiful landscape. It is a source of pride, a place where families enjoy the outdoors, and a very important part of the region's identity.

This legislation simply redesignates the monument as a national park, recognizing its national significance without expanding its footprint or changing existing land management.

Just as important, this bill supports economic opportunity in rural Arizona. The redesignation would help raise Chiricahua's national profile, attract more visitors, and strengthen tourism across southeastern Arizona. That is why this effort is widely supported by the local business community, along with local leaders and stakeholders who see the potential for responsible economic growth tied to outdoor recreation and conservation.

□ 1750

Arizona is already home to world-renowned parks like Grand Canyon National Park, Saguaro National Park, and Petrified Forest National Park. With this legislation, we would add another extraordinary landscape to this list.

Madam Speaker, this is a common-sense, bipartisan step that protects a national treasure in my district while supporting rural communities.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Chiricahua National Park Act.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Speaker, I thank the sponsor of the bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this exciting legislation to create America's next national park.

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

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, H.R. 6380 recognizes the national significance of the Chiricahua in southeastern Arizona while helping unlock more tourism and investment for surrounding communities.

Elevating this site to national park status will raise its profile, attract more visitors, and support local jobs without expanding its boundaries or changing its management.

I thank Representative CISCOMANI once again for his strong leadership, his dedication, and his passion for this effort.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6380, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to redesignate the Chiricahua National Monument in the State of Arizona as Chiricahua National Park, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LOWER COLORADO RIVER MULTI-SPECIES CONSERVATION PROGRAM AMENDMENT ACT OF 2025

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 831) to establish an interest-bearing account for the non-Federal contributions to the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 831

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 "Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program Amendment Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. INTEREST-BEARING FUND.

Section 9402 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-11; 123 Stat. 1328) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(c) INTEREST-BEARING ACCOUNT FOR NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—

"(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

"(A) AGREEMENT.—The term 'Agreement' means the agreement entitled the 'Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation

Program Funding and Management Agreement' and dated April 4, 2005.

"(B) FUND.—The term 'Fund' means the Non-Federal Funding Account for the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program established by paragraph (2).

"(C) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'non-Federal contribution' means an amount contributed by a State Party for the non-Federal cost share described in section 8 of the Agreement.

"(D) STATE PARTY.—The term 'State Party' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Agreement.

"(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the 'Non-Federal Funding Account for the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program', consisting of—

"(A) any amounts deposited in the Fund under paragraph (3); and

"(B) any interest earned on investment of amounts in the Fund under paragraph (4).

"(3) DEPOSITS TO FUND.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 8.4 of the Agreement, the Secretary of the Treasury shall deposit in the Fund—

"(i) any unexpended non-Federal contributions provided before the date of enactment of this subsection; and

"(ii) any non-Federal contributions provided on or after the date of enactment of this subsection.

"(B) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—

"(i) EXPENDITURE.—Amounts deposited in the Fund under subparagraph (A) shall be made available to the Secretary, without further appropriation, for expenditure—

"(I) as provided in the Program Documents; and

"(II) in accordance with this section.

"(ii) INTEREST.—Amounts derived from interest earned on amounts in the Fund under subparagraph (A) shall be made available, subject to appropriation of amounts derived from such interest, to the Secretary for expenditure—

"(I) as provided in the Program Documents; and

"(II) in accordance with this section.

"(4) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury may invest any portion of the Fund that is not, as determined by the Secretary, required to meet the current needs of the Fund.

"(B) REQUIREMENT.—Investments under subparagraph (A) may be made only in interest-bearing obligations of the United States.

"(5) TRANSFERS OF AMOUNTS.—

"(A) TRANSFER OF PREVIOUSLY CONTRIBUTED FUNDS.—The amounts required to be deposited in the Fund under paragraph (3)(A)(i) shall be transferred from the general fund of the Treasury to the Fund not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection.

"(B) TRANSFER OF FUTURE CONTRIBUTED FUNDS.—As soon as practicable after the date on which amounts described in paragraph (3)(A)(ii) are contributed, those amounts shall be transferred to the Fund.

"(C) RESPONSIBILITY OF STATE PARTIES.—In accordance with the Agreement, on deposit of amounts in the Fund under paragraph (3), the State Parties shall not be responsible for any losses due to investment of those amounts the Fund."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) and the gentleman from Maryland (Ms. ELFRETH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 831, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 831, the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program Amendment Act of 2025, sponsored by Representative CALVERT from California.

The Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program aims to conserve native fish populations, increase habitat for migratory birds in the Lower Colorado River Basin, and allow for continued water and power deliveries.

The Federal Government contributes 50 percent of its funding, and three Lower Basin States provide the remainder. In recent years, however, the pace of funding has outpaced the pace of work, leaving available funds idle.

This legislation would authorize the Bureau of Reclamation to place the program's non-Federal funds in an interest-bearing account, providing approximately \$2 million annually that would otherwise be borne by the Lower Basin States.

I commend Representative CALVERT for his continued leadership, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 831.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Speaker, if I could, this is the last of a marathon of bills. I think the breadth of the bills we saw today are a testament to this committee, from protecting sequoias in California to addressing invasive blue catfish in the Chesapeake to supporting national parks in Mississippi, Missouri, and Arizona to the bill before us now. I am just in awe of this committee's work product.

I thank the chair, the ranking member, and the committee staff. This is what Americans sent us to do, and I am grateful to be a part of it. I thank my colleague from Virginia for his professionalism, as well.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 831, offered by my colleague Representative CALVERT of California.

As we stand here today, the seven basin States are continuing negotiations on an agreement that will shape the future of the Colorado River, which has ramifications across the region.

The post-2026 operations are critical to managing the already overallocated river in a changing climate which has led to unprecedented drought conditions and declining water levels at key reservoirs.

I appreciate the work the States have already done to move toward a solution