

the MMPA to regulate the take of depleted marine mammal stocks based on scientific evidence and the consideration of indigenous knowledge. It also maintains the authority of States to regulate or ban the sale of other ivory, such as elephant ivory. The artwork this bill would support is important to Alaska Native traditions and cultures.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 254, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the lead sponsor of the House companion to the bill.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 254, the Alaska's Right to Ivory Sales and Tradition Act, the ARTIST Act.

For generations, Alaska Native artisans along our north Pacific and Arctic coasts have carved walrus ivory into works of extraordinary beauty, a tradition handed down through families, woven into the culture life of entire communities, and for many, a vital source of income.

In recent years, well-meaning efforts to crack down on the illegal elephant ivory trade have swept up something they were never meant to touch: the legal, sustainable, lawfully harvested ivory at the heart of Alaska Native art. Buyers grew confused. Some States moved to ban these handicrafts outright. Alaska Native carvers, who have done nothing wrong, watched their livelihoods and their heritage put at risk.

The ARTIST Act fixes that. It makes it clear that authentic Alaska Native handicrafts may be bought and sold across this country. It stops States from outlawing a responsible tradition that predates them by centuries.

This is about cultural durability and the right of Alaska Native families to practice their traditions and provide for their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Senator DAN S. SULLIVAN for his leadership in carrying this bill through the Senate. With House action, the ARTIST Act will be one step away from restoring the rights of Alaska Native craftsmen.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleague to support S. 254.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, last year, a bipartisan group of members of our committee traveled to Alaska. As part of that visit, we held a roundtable with Alaska Native organizations during which we heard about the importance of subsistence hunting for Alaska Native communities, cultures, and economies.

Enacting this bill will remove a long-standing barrier for the sale of Alaska Native handicrafts and artwork, and I am pleased that Congress is championing policies that are important to the Alaska Native way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of S. 254, 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, S. 254.

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. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1610

REAUTHORIZING THE FORT PECK RESERVATION RURAL WATER SYSTEM ACT OF 2000

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7250) to reauthorize the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System Act of 2000.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7250

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

SECTION 1. REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 9 of the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-382; 114 Stat. 1457; 123 Stat. 2856; 128 Stat. 164; 132 Stat. 2906) is amended, in each of subsections (a)(1) and (b), by striking "2026" and inserting "2028".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. 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. 7250, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7250, a bill to reauthorize the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, sponsored by Representative TROY DOWNING of Montana. The system consists of two interconnected water systems in northeastern Montana, which serve Tribal and non-Tribal communities.

Major features of the system have already been completed, and a substantial portion is operational. Some work remains to complete the project. This legislation would extend the Bureau of Reclamation's authority to carry out

work on the project through fiscal year 2028, which will provide enough time to complete the project using existing funds.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Representative DOWNING for his leadership on this important issue. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7250. This legislation would extend the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System completion date to December 2028. In 2000, Congress authorized the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System to address water quality and supply concerns in northeastern Montana.

This project consists of the Assiniboine and Sioux Rural Water System and the Dry Prairie Rural Water System. Together, they will provide safe, reliable water from the Missouri River to over 32,000 residents across the Fort Peck Indian Reservation and communities in northeastern Montana.

Over the years, Congress has provided extensions to account for delays in project construction due to insufficient appropriations and rising construction costs. H.R. 7250 would provide another simple 2-year extension to ensure that construction of the final components of the Assiniboine and Sioux and the Dry Prairie Rural Water Systems can be completed.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes," and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DOWNING), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Mr. DOWNING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 7250, my legislation to reauthorize the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System Act. Passage of this bill will ensure the completion of a vital piece of water infrastructure for my constituents living in one of the most rural areas of the country.

Northeast Montana faces a variety of significant water access challenges, including regular droughts and contaminated groundwater. Towns, farms, ranches, and Tribes in the region need reliable water treatment facilities and infrastructure in order to overcome these issues.

To address these challenges, the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System Act of 2000 authorized a major water infrastructure partnership between the Assiniboine and Sioux Rural Water Supply System of the Fort Peck Reservation and the Dry Prairie Rural Water System in northeast Montana. It also provided funding and technical support for the project through the Bureau of Reclamation.

In the ensuing two and a half decades, the two water systems have successfully worked together with Federal partners to build an extensive network

of over 3,000 miles of water pipeline, along with multiple pumping stations and a water treatment plant to service the region's 18,000 residents.

The project is nearly finished, with only 2 out of Dry Prairie's 23 pipeline phases in need of completion. However, its current Federal authorization is set to expire at the end of the year.

My legislation, H.R. 7250, extends the water system's authorization by 2 years to provide the necessary time for the completion of these final phases of the project. Without an authorization to build, the project's completion would be jeopardized.

Notably, this legislation does not appropriate any additional Federal funds. It solely reauthorizes work already on the verge of completion.

H.R. 7250 will continue a critical infrastructure project that directly benefits rural and Tribal communities in northeast Montana. Moreover, passage of this bill will allow this congressionally directed project to carry through to completion, ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent as they were initially intended.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important initiative for Montana.

□ 1620

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this bill will provide for the completion of a water system that is necessary for the long-term sustainability of rural communities in Montana.

I urge my colleagues to support the 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 Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7250.

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.

CROSS-BOUNDARY WILDFIRE SOLUTIONS ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3922) to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on existing programs, rules, and authorities that enable or inhibit wildfire mitigation across land ownership boundaries on Federal and non-Federal land, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3922

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 "Cross-Boundary Wildfire Solutions Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COVERED AGENCY.—The term "covered agency" means—

(A) each Federal land management agency (as defined in section 802 of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801));

(B) the Natural Resources Conservation Service;

(C) the Environmental Protection Agency;

(D) the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(E) the United States Fire Administration;

(F) States;

(G) Indian Tribes; and

(H) local governments.

(2) COVERED AUTHORITY.—The term "covered authority" means—

(A) the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.);

(B) the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.);

(C) the good neighbor authority under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a);

(D) the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.);

(E) the collaborative forest landscape restoration program under section 4003 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303); and

(F) any other statutory authority that facilitates cross-boundary wildfire mitigation or forest health improvement activities, as determined by the Comptroller General of the United States.

SEC. 3. STUDY ON WILDFIRE MITIGATION ACROSS LAND OWNERSHIP BOUNDARIES.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on—

(1) the existing Federal programs, rules, and authorities that enable or inhibit wildfire mitigation from being completed across land ownership boundaries on Federal and non-Federal land;

(2) whether changes to any program, rule, or authority (including changes to existing statutory definitions) identified pursuant to paragraph (1) would—

(A) allow a covered agency increased capacity or access to funding to mitigate wildfires or improve forest health; and

(B) enable better community protection and prevent the loss of structures due to wildfire; and

(3) the activities carried out pursuant to a covered authority, including—

(A) how to improve the efficacy of such activities with respect to mitigating wildfire; and

(B) whether the enactment of such covered authority has increased capacity or access to funding to mitigate wildfires for a covered agency.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that contains—

(1) the results of the study required under subsection (a); and

(2) recommendations to simplify cross-boundary wildfire mitigation between Federal land management agencies and State, local, and Tribal governments.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ar-

kansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3922, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3922, the Cross-Boundary Wildfire Solutions Act, a bipartisan bill led by Representatives NEGUSE and KIM. This important, straightforward legislation directs the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study analyzing barriers to cross-boundary forest management between the Federal Government and non-Federal partners.

Catastrophic wildfires do not respect manmade boundaries. They burn across a patchwork of Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private lands, wreaking havoc all along the way. Confronting our Nation's forest health and wildfire crisis requires an all-hands-on-deck approach with stronger coordination and collaboration across all jurisdictions.

Tools like Good Neighbor Authority and Shared Stewardship have successfully allowed non-Federal partners to work with Federal agencies to carry out cross-boundary treatments to restore forest health and mitigate wildfire threats.

Recently, the Trump administration signed a new Shared Stewardship agreement with Montana to treat up to 200,000 acres of fire-prone, overgrown forest.

Just last week, another Shared Stewardship agreement was signed between the Forest Service and South Dakota, which will allow more fuels reduction treatments on South Dakota's nearly 2 million acres of forest land.

This type of proactive collaboration is exactly what is needed, especially as we approach the height of what some are anticipating will be one of the worst wildfire years on record. However, more can be done to remove barriers that limit cross-boundary efforts, improve coordination, and reduce fragmentation and duplication across programs.

H.R. 3922 will help address these challenges by directing the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study of wildfire mitigation efforts across Federal and non-Federal lands.

This legislation requires an examination of Federal programs, rules, and authorities to determine which policies are supporting cross-boundary efforts and which are inhibiting them. The