

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

study will also identify necessary changes to improve and increase wildfire mitigation efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3922, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, May 26, 2026.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 3922, the "Cross-Boundary Wildfire Solutions Act." Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forgo any further consideration of this bill. However, by forgoing 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. 3922 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, May 26, 2026.

Hon. GLENN THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I write regarding H.R. 3922, the "Cross-Boundary Wildfire Solutions Act," which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on February 11, 2026.

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. 3922 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. 3922. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Cross-Boundary Wildfire Solutions Act, sponsored by Mr. JOE NEGUSE, would direct the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, to study the existing Federal programs, rules, and authorities that either enable or inhibit cross-boundary wildfire mitigation.

As we all know, wildfires do not respect property lines or jurisdictional boundaries. Yet, our mitigation efforts

are too often hindered by the complex borders between Federal, State, local, and Tribal lands. This bill takes direct aim at this problem by answering recommendation 24 from the bipartisan Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission report.

We need to know what is working and what is standing in the way. By identifying these gaps, we can improve collaboration, ensure all levels of government have better access to mitigation and funding, and build far more effective wildfire strategies.

Ultimately, this legislation will enhance our capacity to manage these crises, reduce the frequency and severity of devastating wildfires, and protect our most vulnerable communities.

I wish to take a moment to congratulate the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE), my colleague, for his exceptional leadership, not just on this bill, but on wildfires in general, and for his work in advancing critical legislation to protect our public lands.

Through his dedicated work leading the Bipartisan Wildfire Caucus and serving as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Federal Lands, Representative NEGUSE has been a relentless champion for our communities. This is exactly the kind of bipartisan leadership and legislation needed to ensure we are doing everything possible to keep our communities safe.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE).

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, first, I thank my colleague from New Mexico for her steadfast leadership, for the work that she has done as a champion for the Southwest, the great State of New Mexico, and, of course, her leadership on all matters connected to science. I am grateful to her for her steadfast leadership and commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN), the chairman of the full Committee on Natural Resources, for giving me the opportunity to present this important legislation. I certainly echo his remarks, the remarks from Representative STANSBURY, and, of course, the remarks of Ranking Member HUFFMAN, as well.

It has been said, but I think it bears repeating: Wildfires do not care if lands are Federal, State, or local. They don't respect manmade boundaries or political jurisdictions.

To give you a sense of what that means on the ground level, I am privileged to represent the great State of Colorado here in the U.S. Congress. I represent a Congressional District that spans 12,000 square miles. It is larger than eight States, most of which are on the Eastern Seaboard.

Over half of my Congressional District is Federal public lands. I represent three national forests, some of the most beautiful parts of our country. When you represent a district as large and as rural as mine, you see up close the damage and the devastation that comes from wildfires.

Colorado is no stranger to wildfires, but in the last several years, we have had some of the most devastating in the history of our State. The Cameron Peak wildfire, the East Troublesome wildfire, these are wildfires that raged across hundreds of thousands of acres of land, Federal land, State land, and local land.

What we have learned during the course of those fires and in the wake of that devastation is the critical need for partnership and for wildfire mitigation that ultimately stretches across these political boundaries.

It is the reason why, in the wake of the Cameron Peak fire in particular, we created the Bipartisan Wildfire Caucus, bringing together folks from across the political spectrum here in Washington, D.C., to try to arrive at solutions like this bill, which I think could make a real difference in saving lives in the Rocky Mountain West, in my Congressional District, across the great State of Colorado, and indeed across the country.

The Cross-Boundary Wildfire Solutions Act is simple. It is straightforward. It will help us identify and resolve the challenges that may exist with respect to gaps in wildfire mitigation across land ownership types. It is a simple, straightforward, bipartisan solution, and I am just delighted that we are able to come together on this important bill that I have introduced.

Again, I thank you for your consideration. I hope we can all join in passing this and getting it across the finish line.

□ 1630

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, to address the enormity of the wildfire crisis, it is critical that we find ways to improve forest management across manmade jurisdictional boundaries. H.R. 3922 is a good bipartisan bill that will do just that by identifying existing Federal policies that can be changed to streamline proactive forest management.

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. 3922, 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.

NORTHWEST STRAITS MARINE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2025

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2860) to reauthorize the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act to promote the protection of the resources of the Northwest Straits, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2860

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 “Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF NORTHWEST STRAITS MARINE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE ACT.

The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act (title IV of Public Law 105-384; 112 Stat. 3458) is amended—

(1) in section 402, by striking “Commission (in this title referred to as the ‘Commission’)” and inserting “Commission.”;

(2) by striking sections 403, 404, and 405; and

(3) by inserting after section 402 the following:

“SEC. 403. DEFINITIONS.

“In this title:

“(1) COMMISSION.—The term ‘Commission’ means the Northwest Straits Advisory Commission established by section 402.

“(2) MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE.—The term ‘marine resources committee’ means a county government committee that assists in assessing marine resource and conservation needs.

“(3) NORTHWEST STRAITS REGION.—The term ‘Northwest Straits region’ means the marine waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and of Puget Sound from the Canadian border to the south end of Snohomish County.

“(4) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘Tribal government’ means the recognized governing body of any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, community, component band, or component reservation individually identified (including parenthetically) in the list published most recently as of the date of enactment of the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act of 2025 pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

“(5) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term ‘Under Secretary’ means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

“SEC. 404. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION.

“(a) COMPOSITION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be composed of 14 members, except as provided in paragraph (2), who shall be appointed as follows:

“(A) One member appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee for San Juan County, Washington.

“(B) One member appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee for Island County, Washington.

“(C) One member appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee for Skagit County, Washington.

“(D) One member appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee for Whatcom County, Washington.

“(E) One member appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee for Snohomish County, Washington.

“(F) One member appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee for Clallam County, Washington.

“(G) One member appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee for Jefferson County, Washington.

“(H) Two members appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and in consultation with the Tribal governments affected by this title, to represent the interests of such Tribal governments.

“(I) One member appointed by the Governor of the State of Washington to represent the interests of the Puget Sound Partnership.

“(J) Four members appointed by the Governor of the State of Washington who—

“(i) are residents of the State of Washington; and

“(ii) are not employed by a Federal, State, or local government, excluding an institution of higher education.

“(2) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The Commission may, as determined necessary to improve the ability of the Commission to perform the duties of the Commission under section 405(b), appoint members in addition to those appointed under paragraph (1). Any such additional member shall be appointed by a consensus of the members of a marine resources committee that is not described in such paragraph.

“(b) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

“(c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Commission shall select a Chairperson from among its members.

“(d) MEETING.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chairperson, but not less frequently than quarterly.

“(e) LIAISON.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in consultation with the Commission, shall appoint an employee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—

“(A) to serve as a liaison between the Commission and the Department of Commerce;

“(B) to coordinate programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with activities related to the goal of the Commission described in section 405(a); and

“(C) to perform additional liaison functions benefitting the Commission and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which may include, as agreed to by the Commission and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, attending meetings and other events of the Commission as a nonvoting participant.

“(2) LIMITATION.—Service as a member of the Commission by the employee appointed under paragraph (1)—

“(A) is limited to the employee’s service as a liaison; and

“(B) does not obligate the employee to perform any duty of the Commission under section 405(b).

“(f) ADMINISTRATION.—The Commission may enter into cooperative agreements with the State of Washington for staffing and administrative services for the purposes of supporting the duties of the Commission under section 405(b).

“SEC. 405. GOAL AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.

“(a) GOAL.—The goal of the Commission is to protect and restore the marine waters, habitats, and species of the Northwest Straits region to achieve ecosystem health and sustainable resource use by—

“(1) designing and recommending projects that are driven by the best available science, local priorities, community-based decisions, and the ability to measure results;

“(2) building awareness and stewardship and making recommendations to improve the health of the marine resources of the Northwest Straits region;

“(3) maintaining and expanding diverse membership and collaboration with partner organizations, such as the Puget Sound Partnership;

“(4) expanding partnerships with Tribal governments and continuing to support Tribal treaties, cultures, and subsistence and Tribal treaty rights; and

“(5) recognizing the importance of economic and social benefits that are dependent on marine environments and sustainable marine resources.

“(b) DUTIES.—The duties of the Commission are the following:

“(1) To provide resources and technical support for marine resources committees.

“(2) To work with such marine resources committees and appropriate entities of Federal, State, and local governments and Tribal governments to provide advice in developing regional programs to monitor the overall health of the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits region.

“(3) To collect marine resources data and identify factors adversely affecting or preventing the restoration of the health of the marine ecosystem and coastal economies of the Northwest Straits region to inform decisionmakers.

“(4) To develop scientifically sound restoration and protection recommendations, informed by local priorities, that address such factors.

“(5) To serve as a public forum for the informal discussion of policies and actions, with respect to the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits region, of Federal, State, or local governments, Tribal governments, or the Government of Canada.

“(6) To inform appropriate authorities and local communities about the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits region and about issues relating to the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits region.

“(7) To consult with all affected Tribal governments in the Northwest Straits region to ensure that the work of the Commission does not violate Tribal treaty rights.

“(c) COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—The Commission—

“(1) shall carry out the duties described in subsection (b) in coordination and collaboration, as appropriate, with Federal, State, and local governments and Tribal governments, including by—

“(A) providing technical support and assistance to any Tribal government seeking representation and participation on the Commission; and

“(B) supporting the work and duties of the liaison to the Commission under section 404(e); and

“(2) may enter into cooperative agreements with nonprofit entities, such as the Northwest Straits Foundation, to provide assistance, including financial assistance, in carrying out the duties described in subsection (b).

“(d) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this title provides the Commission with authority to issue regulations or implement any Federal law or regulation.

“(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each year, the Commission shall prepare, submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Under Secretary, and make available to the public a report describing—

“(A) the activities carried out by the Commission during the preceding year; and