

Public Law 106-370
106th Congress

An Act

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey to certain water rights to Duchesne City, Utah.

Oct. 27, 2000
[H.R. 3468]

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

Duchesne City
Water Rights
Conveyance Act.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Duchesne City Water Rights Conveyance Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) In 1861, President Lincoln established the Uintah Valley Reservation by Executive order. The Congress confirmed the Executive order in 1864 (13 Stat. 63), and additional lands were added to form the Uintah Indian Reservation (now known as the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation).

(2) Pursuant to subsequent Acts of Congress, lands were allotted to the Indians of the reservation, and unallotted lands were restored to the public domain to be disposed of under homestead and townsite laws.

(3) In July 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt reserved lands for the townsite for Duchesne, Utah, by Presidential proclamation and pursuant to the applicable townsite laws.

(4) In July 1905, the United States, through the Acting United States Indian Agent in Behalf of the Indians of the Uintah Indian Reservation, Utah, filed two applications, 43-180 and 43-203, under the laws of the State of Utah to appropriate certain waters.

(5) The stated purposes of the water appropriation applications were, respectively, “for irrigation and domestic supply for townsite purposes in the lands herein described”, and “for the purpose of irrigating Indian allotments on the Uintah Indian Reservation, Utah, * * * and for an irrigating and domestic water supply for townsite purposes in the lands herein described”.

(6) The United States subsequently filed change applications which provided that the entire appropriation would be used for municipal and domestic purposes in the town of Duchesne, Utah.

(7) The State Engineer of Utah approved the change applications, and the State of Utah issued water right certificates, identified as Certificate Numbers 1034 and 1056, in the name of the United States Indian Service in 1921, pursuant

to the applications filed, for domestic and municipal uses in the town of Duchesne.

(8) Non-Indians settled the town of Duchesne, and the inhabitants have utilized the waters appropriated by the United States for townsite purposes.

(9) Pursuant to title V of Public Law 102-575, Congress ratified the quantification of the reserved waters rights of the Ute Indian Tribe, subject to ratification of the water compact by the State of Utah and the Tribe.

(10) The Ute Indian Tribe does not oppose legislation that will convey the water rights appropriated by the United States in 1905 to the city of Duchesne because the appropriations do not serve the purposes, rights, or interests of the Tribe or its members, because the full amount of the reserved water rights of the Tribe will be quantified in other proceedings, and because the Tribe and its members will receive substantial benefits through such legislation.

(11) The Secretary of the Interior requires additional authority in order to convey title to those appropriations made by the United States in 1905 in order for the city of Duchesne to continue to enjoy the use of those water rights and to provide additional benefits to the Ute Indian Tribe and its members as originally envisioned by the 1905 appropriations.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE OF WATER RIGHTS TO DUCHESNE CITY, UTAH.

(a) CONVEYANCE.—The Secretary of the Interior, as soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, and in accordance with all applicable law, shall convey to Duchesne City, Utah, or a water district created by Duchesne City, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to those water rights appropriated under the laws of the State of Utah by the Department of the Interior's United States Indian Service and identified as Water Rights Nos. 43-180 (Certificate No. 1034) and 43-203 (Certificate No. 1056) in the records of the State Engineer of Utah.

(b) REQUIRED TERMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As terms of any conveyance under subsection (a), the Secretary shall require that Duchesne City—

(A) shall allow the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, its members, and any person leasing or utilizing land that is held in trust for the Tribe by the United States and is located within the Duchesne City water service area (as such area may be adjusted from time to time), to connect to the Duchesne City municipal water system;

(B) shall not require such tribe, members, or person to pay any water impact, connection, or similar fee for such connection; and

(C) shall not require such tribe, members, or person to deliver or transfer any water or water rights for such connection.

(2) LIMITATION.—Paragraph (1) shall not be construed to prohibit Duchesne City from charging any person that connects to the Duchesne City municipal water system pursuant to paragraph (1) reasonable, customary, and nondiscriminatory fees to recover costs of the operation and maintenance of the water system to treat, transport, and deliver water to the person.

SEC. 4. WATER RIGHTS.

(a) **NO RELINQUISHMENT OR REDUCTION.**—Except as provided in section 3, nothing in this Act may be construed as a relinquishment or reduction of any water rights reserved, appropriated, or otherwise secured by the United States in the State of Utah on or before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **NO PRECEDENT.**—Nothing in this Act may be construed as establishing a precedent for conveying or otherwise transferring water rights held by the United States.

SEC. 5. TRIBAL RIGHTS.

Nothing in this Act may be construed to affect or modify any treaty or other right of the Ute Indian Tribe or any other Indian tribe.

Approved October 27, 2000.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 3468 (S. 2350):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 106-737 (Comm. on Resources).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 106-478 accompanying S. 2350 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 146 (2000):

July 25, considered and passed House.

Oct. 13, considered and passed Senate.

