

Union Calendar No. 369

107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4620

[Report No. 107-613]

To accelerate the wilderness designation process by establishing a timetable for the completion of wilderness studies on Federal lands, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2002

Mr. OTTER (for himself, Mr. HANSEN, Mr. POMBO, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. STUMP, Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. HUNTER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

JULY 25, 2002

Additional sponsors: Mr. SKEEN, Mr. MCINNIS, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. REHBERG, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. HERGER, Mr. PAUL, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. AKIN, Mr. TAUZIN, Mr. PENCE, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. CANNON, Ms. HART, Mr. SCHAFFER, Mr. WATKINS, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, and Mr. GILCREST

JULY 25, 2002

Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

A BILL

To accelerate the wilderness designation process by estab-

lishing a timetable for the completion of wilderness studies on Federal lands, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as “America’s Wilderness Pro-
5 tection Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The designation of certain Federal lands as
9 wilderness is beneficial to the American people.

10 (2) The Wilderness Act and the Federal Land
11 Policy and Management Act of 1976 provided for
12 the study of certain lands for wilderness suitability.
13 Areas undergoing such a study have been generally
14 known as “Wilderness Study Areas”.

15 (3) Wilderness Study Areas were intended to
16 have interim management status pending completion
17 of wilderness suitability studies. Wilderness Study
18 Area status was not intended as a substitute for wil-
19 derness designation by Congress.

20 (4) It was not the intent of Congress that areas
21 continue under Wilderness Study Area status indefi-
22 nitely. Perpetuation of Wilderness Study Area status
23 is undesirable and hinders the wilderness designation
24 process. Lands that merit wilderness designation

1 should be granted the full protection that such a sta-
2 tus would afford and those lands that do not merit
3 such a designation should be released so that they
4 can be managed for the public good as accorded by
5 law.

6 (5) The establishment of a timetable for the
7 completion of wilderness studies would facilitate the
8 wilderness designation process by supplying a time-
9 frame within which Congress must act.

10 **SEC. 3. TIMETABLE FOR WILDERNESS STUDY COMPLETION.**

11 (a) EXISTING WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS.—All
12 areas with Wilderness Study Area status on the date of
13 the enactment of this Act shall be released from Wilder-
14 ness Study Area status on the earlier of the following:

15 (1) The date that the Secretary of the Interior
16 or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate, de-
17 termines that the area is not suitable for wilderness
18 designation.

19 (2) 10 years after the date of the enactment of
20 this Act.

21 (3) The date that the area is designated as wil-
22 derness by an Act of Congress.

23 (b) SUBSEQUENT WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS.—Any
24 area that is given Wilderness Study Area status after the

1 date of enactment of this Act shall be released from Wil-
2 derness Study Area status on the earlier of the following:

3 (1) The date that the Secretary of the Interior
4 or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate, de-
5 termines that the area is not suitable for wilderness
6 designation.

7 (2) 10 years after the date that the area was
8 given Wilderness Study Area status.

9 (3) The date that the area is designated as wil-
10 derness by an Act of Congress.

11 (c) RELEASE FROM WILDERNESS STUDY AREA STA-
12 TUS.—Any area that is released from Wilderness Study
13 Area status pursuant to paragraph (a)(1), (a)(2), (b)(1),
14 or (b)(2) shall revert to the land use status such area had
15 immediately before the area was given Wilderness Study
16 Area status and shall not be studied again regarding wil-
17 derness designation.

18 (d) WILDERNESS STUDY AREA.—For the purposes of
19 this section, the term “Wilderness Study Area” means any
20 Federal land officially referred to as a “wilderness study
21 area”, a “recommended wilderness”, a “proposed wilder-
22 ness”, or a “potential wilderness”, or any other Federal
23 land that is under study by, or on behalf of, the Federal
24 Government for possible designation as wilderness.

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