

Union Calendar No. 467

107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4844

[Report No. 107-747]

To enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 23, 2002

Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself, Mr. DICKS, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. INSLER, and Mr. BAIRD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

OCTOBER 11, 2002

Additional sponsor: Ms. DUNN

OCTOBER 11, 2002

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on May 23, 2002]

A BILL

To enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, 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 the “Wild Sky Wilderness*
5 *Act of 2002”.*

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

7 *(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:*

8 *(1) Americans cherish the continued existence of*
9 *diverse wilderness ecosystems and wildlife found on*
10 *their Federal lands and share a strong sense of moral*
11 *responsibility to protect their wilderness heritage as*
12 *an enduring resource to cherish, protect, and bequeath*
13 *undisturbed to future generations of Americans.*

14 *(2) The values an area of wilderness offer to this*
15 *and future generations of Americans are greatly en-*
16 *hanced to the degree that the area is diverse in topog-*
17 *raphy, elevation, life zones and ecosystems, and to the*
18 *extent that it offers a wide range of outdoor rec-*
19 *reational and educational opportunities accessible in*
20 *all seasons of the year.*

21 *(3) Large blocks of wildlands embracing a wide*
22 *range of ecosystems and topography, including low-*
23 *elevation forests, have seldom remained undisturbed*
24 *due to many decades of development.*

1 (4) *Certain wildlands on the western slope of the*
2 *Cascade Range in the Skykomish River valley of the*
3 *State of Washington offer an outstanding representa-*
4 *tion of the original character of the forested land-*
5 *scape, ranging from high alpine meadows and ex-*
6 *tremely rugged peaks to low-elevation mature and*
7 *old-growth forests, including groves with some of the*
8 *largest and most spectacular trees in Washington,*
9 *with diameters of eight feet and larger.*

10 (5) *These diverse, thickly forested mountain*
11 *slopes and valleys of mature and old-growth trees in*
12 *the Skykomish River valley harbor nearly the full*
13 *complement of the original wildlife and fish species*
14 *found by settlers of the 19th century, including moun-*
15 *tain goats, bald eagles, black bear, pine marten,*
16 *black-tailed deer, as well as rare and endangered*
17 *wildlife such as northern spotted owls and goshawks,*
18 *Chinook and Coho salmon, and steelhead and bull*
19 *trout.*

20 (6) *An ecologically and topographical diverse*
21 *wilderness area in the Skykomish River valley acces-*
22 *sible in all seasons of the year will be enjoyable to*
23 *users of various kinds, such as hikers, horse riders,*
24 *hunters, anglers, and educational groups, but also to*
25 *the many who cherish clean water and clean air, fish*

1 *and wildlife (including endangered species such as*
2 *wild salmon), and pristine mountain and riverside*
3 *scenery.*

4 *(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress hereby declares*
5 *that it is the policy of the United States:*

6 *(1) to better serve the diverse wilderness and en-*
7 *vironmental education needs of the people of the State*
8 *of Washington and its burgeoning metropolitan re-*
9 *gions by granting wilderness protection to certain*
10 *lower elevation wildlands in the Skykomish River val-*
11 *ley of the State of Washington; and*

12 *(2) to protect additional lands adjacent to the*
13 *Henry M. Jackson Wilderness designated by the*
14 *Washington Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law 98–*
15 *339), in further tribute to the ecologically enlightened*
16 *vision of the distinguished Senator from the State of*
17 *Washington and former Chairman of the Senate Com-*
18 *mittee on Energy and Natural Resources (formerly*
19 *the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee).*

20 **SEC. 3. ADDITIONS TO THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRES-**
21 **ERVATION SYSTEM.**

22 *(a) ADDITIONS.—The following Federal lands in the*
23 *State of Washington are hereby designated as wilderness*
24 *and, therefore, as components of the National Wilderness*
25 *Preservation System:*

1 (1) *Certain lands which comprise approximately*
2 *106,000 acres, as generally depicted on a map enti-*
3 *tled “Wild Sky Wilderness Proposal”, dated August*
4 *2002, which shall be known as the Wild Sky Wilder-*
5 *ness.*

6 (b) *MAPS AND LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—As soon as*
7 *practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-*
8 *retary of Agriculture shall file a map and a legal descrip-*
9 *tion for the wilderness area designated under this Act with*
10 *the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the*
11 *United States Senate and the Committee on Resources of*
12 *the United States House of Representatives. The map and*
13 *description shall have the same force and effect as if in-*
14 *cluded in this Act, except that the Secretary of Agriculture*
15 *may correct clerical and typographical errors in the legal*
16 *description and map. The map and legal description shall*
17 *be on file and available for public inspection in the office*
18 *of the Chief of the Forest Service, Department of Agri-*
19 *culture.*

20 **SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.**

21 (a) *IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights,*
22 *lands designated as wilderness by this Act shall be managed*
23 *by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with the Wil-*
24 *derness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this Act, except*
25 *that, with respect to any wilderness areas designated by this*

1 *Act, any reference in the Wilderness Act to the effective date*
2 *of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to*
3 *the date of enactment of this Act.*

4 *(b) NEW TRAILS.—*

5 *(1) The Secretary of Agriculture shall consult*
6 *with interested parties and shall establish a hiking*
7 *trail plan designed to develop a system of hiking*
8 *trails within or adjacent to or to provide access to the*
9 *wilderness designated by this Act in a manner con-*
10 *sistent with the Wilderness Act, Public Law 88–577*
11 *(16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).*

12 *(2) Within two years after the date of enactment*
13 *of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall complete*
14 *a report on the implementation of the hiking trail*
15 *plan required under this Act. This report shall in-*
16 *clude the identification of priority hiking trails for*
17 *development.*

18 *(c) REPEATER SITE.—Within the Wild Sky Wilderness*
19 *designated under this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture may*
20 *use helicopter access to construct and maintain a joint For-*
21 *est Service and Snohomish County repeater site, in compli-*
22 *ance with a Forest Service approved communications site*
23 *plan, for the purposes of improving communication for safe-*
24 *ty, health, and emergency services.*

1 (d) *FLOAT PLANE ACCESS.*—As provided by section
2 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(1)), the
3 use of floatplanes on Lake Isabel, where such use has al-
4 ready become established, shall be permitted to continue
5 subject to such reasonable restrictions as the Secretary of
6 Agriculture determines desirable.

7 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION FOR LAND ACQUISITION.**

8 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—The Secretary of Agriculture may
9 acquire lands and interests therein, by purchase, donation,
10 or exchange, and shall give priority consideration to those
11 lands identified as “Priority Acquisition Lands” on the
12 map described in section 3(a)(1). The boundaries of the
13 Snoqualmie National Forest and the Wild Sky Wilderness
14 shall be adjusted to encompass any lands acquired pursuant
15 to this section.

16 (b) *ACCESS.*—Consistent with section 5(a) of the Wil-
17 derness Act (Public Law 88–577; 16 U.S.C. 1134(a)), the
18 Secretary of Agriculture shall assure adequate access to pri-
19 vate inholdings within the Wild Sky Wilderness.

20 (c) *APPRAISAL.*—Valuation of private lands shall be
21 determined without reference to any restrictions on access
22 or use which arise out of designation as a wilderness area
23 as a result of this Act.

1 **SEC. 6. LAND EXCHANGES.**

2 *The Secretary of Agriculture shall exchange lands and*
3 *interests in lands, as generally depicted on a map entitled*
4 *Chelan County Public Utility District Exchange and dated*
5 *May 22, 2002, with the Chelan County Public Utility Dis-*
6 *trict in accordance with the following provisions:*

7 *(1) If the Chelan County Public Utility District,*
8 *within ninety days after the date of enactment of this*
9 *Act, offers to the Secretary of Agriculture approxi-*
10 *mately 371.8 acres within the Snoqualmie National*
11 *Forest in the State of Washington, the Secretary shall*
12 *accept such lands.*

13 *(2) Upon acceptance of title by the Secretary of*
14 *Agriculture to such lands and interests therein, the*
15 *Secretary of Agriculture shall convey to the Chelan*
16 *County Public Utility District a permanent easement,*
17 *including helicopter access, consistent with such levels*
18 *as used as of date of enactment, to maintain an exist-*
19 *ing snowtel site on 1.82 acres on the Wenatchee Na-*
20 *tional Forest in the State of Washington.*

21 *(3) The exchange directed by this Act shall be*
22 *consummated if Chelan County Public Utility Dis-*
23 *trict conveys title acceptable to the Secretary and pro-*
24 *vided there is no hazardous material on the site,*
25 *which is objectionable to the Secretary.*

1 (4) *In the event Chelan County Public Utility*
2 *District determines there is no longer a need to main-*
3 *tain a snowtel site to monitor the snow pack for cal-*
4 *culating expected runoff into the Lake Chelan hydro-*
5 *electric project and the hydroelectric projects in the*
6 *Columbia River Basin, the Secretary shall be notified*
7 *in writing and the easement shall be extinguished and*
8 *all rights conveyed by this exchange shall revert to the*
9 *United States.*

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