

Calendar No. 646107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION**S. 2565**

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 SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2002

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

OCTOBER 8, 2002

Reported by Mr. BINGAMAN, without amendment

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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Wild Sky Wilderness
3 Act of 2002”.

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

5 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

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

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

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

24 (4) Certain wildlands on the western slope of
25 the Cascade Range in the Skykomish River valley of
26 the State of Washington offer an outstanding rep-

1 resentation of the original character of the forested
2 landscape, ranging from high alpine meadows and
3 extremely rugged peaks to low-elevation mature and
4 old-growth forests, including groves with some of the
5 largest and most spectacular trees in Washington,
6 with diameters of eight feet and larger.

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

17 (6) An ecologically and topographically diverse
18 wilderness area in the Skykomish River valley acces-
19 sible in all seasons of the year will be enjoyable to
20 users of various kinds, such as hikers, horse riders,
21 hunters, anglers, and educational groups, but also to
22 the many who cherish clean water and clean air, fish
23 and wildlife (including endangered species such as
24 wild salmon), and pristine mountain and riverside
25 scenery.

1 (b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress hereby de-
2 clares that it is the policy of the United States—

3 (1) to better serve the diverse wilderness and
4 environmental education needs of the people of the
5 State of Washington and its burgeoning metropoli-
6 tan regions by granting wilderness protection to cer-
7 tain lower elevation wildlands in the Skykomish
8 River valley of the State of Washington; and

9 (2) to protect additional lands adjacent to the
10 Henry M. Jackson Wilderness designated by the
11 Washington Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law
12 98–339), in further tribute to the ecologically en-
13 lightened vision of the distinguished Senator from
14 the State of Washington and former Chairman of
15 the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Re-
16 sources (formerly the Senate Interior and Insular
17 Affairs Committee).

18 **SEC. 3. ADDITIONS TO THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRES-**

19 **ERVATION SYSTEM.**

20 (a) ADDITIONS.—The following Federal lands in the
21 State of Washington are hereby designated as wilderness
22 and, therefore, as components of the National Wilderness
23 Preservation System: Certain lands which comprise ap-
24 proximately 106,000 acres, as generally depicted on a map

1 entitled “Wild Sky Wilderness Proposal”, dated May
2 2002, which shall be known as the Wild Sky Wilderness.

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

17 **SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights,
19 lands designated as wilderness by this Act shall be man-
20 aged by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with
21 the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this Act,
22 except that, with respect to any wilderness areas des-
23 igned by this Act, any reference in the Wilderness Act
24 to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed
25 to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act.

1 (b) NEW TRAILS.—

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

9 (2) Within two years after the date of enact-
10 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall
11 complete a report on the implementation of the hik-
12 ing trail plan required under this Act. This report
13 shall include the identification of priority hiking
14 trails for development.

15 (c) REPEATER SITE.—Within the Wild Sky Wilder-
16 ness, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to use heli-
17 copter access to construct and maintain, in a manner com-
18 patible with the preservation of the wilderness environ-
19 ment, a Forest Service communication repeater site to
20 provide improved communication for safety and health
21 purposes.

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

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture is
24 authorized to acquire lands and interests therein, by pur-
25 chase, donation, or exchange, identified as “Priority Ac-

1 acquisition Lands” on the map entitled “Wild Sky Wilder-
2 ness Proposal”, dated May 2002. The boundaries of the
3 Snoqualmie National Forest and the Wild Sky Wilderness
4 shall be adjusted to encompass any land acquired pursu-
5 ant to this section.

6 (b) ACCESS.—Consistent with section 5(a) of the Wil-
7 derness Act (Public Law 88–577; 16 U.S.C. 1134(a)), the
8 Secretary of Agriculture shall assure adequate access to
9 private inholdings within the Wild Sky Wilderness.

10 (c) APPRAISAL.—Valuation of private lands shall be
11 determined without reference to any restrictions on access
12 or use which arise out of designation as a wilderness area
13 as a result of this Act.

14 **SEC. 6. LAND EXCHANGES.**

15 The Secretary of Agriculture shall exchange lands
16 and interests in lands, as generally depicted on a map enti-
17 tled Chelan County Public Utility District Exchange and
18 dated May 22, 2002, with the Chelan County Public Util-
19 ity District in accordance with the following provisions:

20 (1) If the Chelan County Public Utility District,
21 within ninety days after the date of enactment of
22 this Act, offers to the Secretary of Agriculture ap-
23 proximately 371.8 acres within the Snoqualmie Na-
24 tional Forest in the State of Washington, the Sec-
25 retary shall accept such lands.

1 (2) Upon acceptance of title by the Secretary of
2 Agriculture to such lands and interests therein, the
3 Secretary of Agriculture shall convey to the Chelan
4 County Public Utility District a permanent ease-
5 ment, including helicopter access, consistent with
6 such levels as used as of date of enactment, to main-
7 tain an existing snowtel site on 1.82 acres on the
8 Wenatchee National Forest in the State of Wash-
9 ington.

10 (3) The exchange directed by this Act shall be
11 consummated if Chelan County Public Utility Dis-
12 trict conveys title acceptable to the Secretary and
13 provided there is no hazardous material on the site,
14 which is objectionable to the Secretary.

15 (4) In the event Chelan County Public Utility
16 District determines there is no longer a need to
17 maintain a snowtel site to monitor the snow pack for
18 calculating expected runoff into the Lake Chelan hy-
19 droelectric project and the hydroelectric projects in
20 the Columbia River Basin, the secretary shall be no-
21 tified in writing and the easement shall be extin-
22 guished and all rights conveyed by this exchange
23 shall revert to the United States.

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