

We've got to ask ourselves who really needs to be protected here?

Is it our planet, our future? Or is it the right of some developer to build a strip mall?

I urge my colleagues to vote against this cynical attempt to gut the endangered species act.

A PROCLAMATION THANKING
MATT SMITH FOR HIS SERVICE
TO OUR COUNTRY

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Matt Smith served in Iraq and is the recipient of numerous awards including the Meritorious Service Award, the Purple Heart, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal; and

Whereas, Matt Smith is to be commended for the honor and bravery that he displayed while serving our Nation in this time of war; and

Whereas, Matt Smith has demonstrated a commitment to meet challenges with enthusiasm, confidence, and outstanding service;

Therefore, I join with the family, friends, and residents of the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in thanking Matt Smith for his service to our country and wishing him the best of luck in all his future endeavors. Your service has made us proud.

17TH ANNUAL DENTON COUNTY
FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL SERVICE

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the fallen men and women firefighters who selflessly dedicated their lives to our communities.

Each October, a grateful Nation honors its fallen fire heroes during the National Fire Prevention Week. Fire Prevention Week is a great opportunity to educate all citizens about the dangers of fire and the steps they can take to protect themselves. Each year, more than 4,200 Americans lose their lives to fire. That's more deaths by fire each year than all other natural disasters combined. National Fire Prevention Week has been observed since 1922 the week of October 9th. This marks the date of the Great Chicago Fire in 1871. In that tragic conflagration, more than 250 people were killed. 100,000 were left homeless, 17,400 structures were destroyed, and more than 2000 acres burned.

I want to thank Denton's First United Methodist Church for hosting a special service in honor of those who gave their lives for those of us residing in Denton County. The service and the procession to the Denton County Firefighters Memorial Park that concluded the memorial service truly honors these heroic men and women. This year marks the 17th Annual Memorial Service in Denton County.

I extend my condolences and appreciation to the families and the communities of these

fallen firefighters. This memorial service acts as a tribute to the brave men and women of America's fire service.

TRIBUTE TO THE VILLAGE OF
NELSONVILLE, NEW YORK

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the village of Nelsonville, New York, which this month celebrates its sesquicentennial. I extend my sincere congratulations to town officials, residents and supporters on this occasion, which symbolizes an accumulation of 150 years of hard work and diligence by a community.

On an early autumn day in October 1855, the village of Nelsonville was born and with it a quaint community founded on good will and hard work. Some say the essence of the village can be seen in the elaborate picture painted by the landscape of historical buildings on the village's timeless Main Street. This can be seen in the current Village Hall which, prior to 1955, housed the local the Fish and Fur Club for over half a century.

Nelsonville commemorates their 150th Anniversary this month with a parade which surely will prove memorable as local leaders, organizations and community members come together to remember an impressive history that has provided the building blocks for an promising future.

Undoubtedly, the success of Nelsonville could not have been realized without the support and kinship of the surrounding town of Philipstown and Putnam County. For years to come, Nelsonville will remain a great place to live following the lessons of the past and by continuing participation in camaraderie with surrounding communities.

There have been over 30 mayors since the village's inception. From Mayor Purdy in 1855 to Mayor Mitch Dul in 2005, the village has seen many challenges, but has always stayed on steady course. The village retains a timeless quality easily identifiable by those taking a walk down its streets. On behalf of the people of the 19th Congressional District of New York, I wish Nelsonville continued success and another 150 exceptional and prosperous years.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED
SPECIES RECOVERY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill. (H.R. 3824) to amend and reauthorize the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to provide greater results conserving and recovering listed species, and for other purposes:

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to the so-called "Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act," (TESRA).

The sponsors of TESRA claim that they want to "reform" the ESA because it's not helping enough threatened and endangered species recover. In reality, it is aimed at weakening, dismantling, and rendering unenforceable the Endangered Species Act, ESA.

The original Endangered Species Act was a bipartisan effort to protect our natural heritage. Yet today, as we consider how to update and modernize that legislation, we are presented not with a truly bipartisan bill, but a massive special interest giveaway that guts ESA despite a thirty year track record of success. A vote for the passage of TESRA is a vote to abdicate responsible environmental policy and to create a new form of corporate welfare.

Since the enactment of the Endangered Species Act in 1973, tens of millions of acres of land in the United States have been managed for conservation purposes. As a result, of the 1800 species protected under ESA, we have lost only 9 to extinction. That's a 99 percent success rate on extinction prevention.

TESRA's most fundamental change abandons the basic priority of the Endangered Species Act: the commitment to species recovery. The overarching goal of ESA is to bring species back from the brink of extinction to the point where they no longer need to be given special protection. TESRA alters that mission by effectively negating the goal of species recovery. TESRA specifically eliminates the requirement that the Federal Government attempt to restore species to healthy population levels.

Furthermore, under TESRA any species recovery plan the government might conceive would be non-binding. Had ESA had these guidelines in place since 1973, the recovery of many species, including the peregrine falcon and the American alligator, would have been almost inconceivable. In the case of the alligator, recovery was so successful that we are now even able to implement controlled farming of the restored population.

There are two areas of the bill which I found particularly problematic and sought to address through amendments. My first amendment would strike language from TESRA that would turn back the clock on the scientific determination of an endangered species. My second amendment would strike language from TESRA that creates a very dangerous precedent: setting up a system where the government pays people for obeying the law.

Rather than offer these separately on the floor, I am pleased to see their substance included in the bipartisan Miller-Boehlert substitute that we will be considering today.

The use of science is of special importance in the implementation of the species protection program. Rather than using the best available science for species protection, TESRA explicitly prohibits the government from using advanced, modern scientific tools like statistical modeling that we have at our disposal today and that assist us in the implementation of ESA.

By taking away these cutting edge tools, TESRA would make it exceedingly difficult to make determinations on the status of any species whose populations are small, isolated, and scattered. The result will be a weakened and limited scientific process in decisions made under the act, more obstacles and less protection. The substitute bill restores ESA's original approach to science, which is to use the best science available to help save and recover endangered species.