

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1348

Recognizing the vision of John W. Weeks and his contribution to the conservation effort with the passage of the Weeks Act in 1911, a significant conservation achievement in the history of the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 11, 2010

Mr. MORAN of Virginia submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the vision of John W. Weeks and his contribution to the conservation effort with the passage of the Weeks Act in 1911, a significant conservation achievement in the history of the United States.

Whereas John W. Weeks, a Republican from Massachusetts, served in the House of Representatives from March 4, 1905, to March 4, 1913, and in the Senate from March 4, 1913, to March 3, 1919;

Whereas, while a Representative, John W. Weeks was instrumental in securing the passage of the Act of March 1, 1911, which authorized the creation of national forests in the eastern United States;

Whereas the Act of March 1, 1911, is known as the Weeks Act in recognition of the role John W. Weeks played in the passage of the law;

Whereas the Act addressed the consequences of increased flooding and soil erosion resulting from large scale logging and destructive forest fires in the northeast and southern United States;

Whereas the Act permitted the Federal Government to relieve State and local governments from the burden of managing former privately owned lands that were reverting to county or State ownership because of delinquent taxes;

Whereas the Act authorized the Federal purchase of cut-over and denuded forestlands in the headwaters of navigable streams for the purpose of conserving the flow of navigable streams and rivers or for timber production;

Whereas the Federal purchase of such land could not occur unless a State gave its explicit consent;

Whereas healthy forested watersheds regulate run-off and permit for a more regular water flow, decreasing fluctuation in high and low water level, and forests are crucial in mountainous regions in which runoff traversing down sloping grades increases erosion of the land and silts the streams;

Whereas a month after President Taft signed the Weeks Act into law, 11 land units were purchased in the White Mountains of New England and in the southern Appalachians;

Whereas the Act gave priority to, but did not restrict outside of, the White Mountains and Southern Appalachian region, which at that time required the greatest necessity for preventative and protective measures;

Whereas 26 eastern States are now home to 52 National Forests encompassing 24,878,687 acres;

Whereas, as a result of the Weeks Act, streams that were filled with silt now flow clean and clear, degraded habitats were restored and managed, and fish and game returned to many of the managed lands;

Whereas many municipal water supplies along the eastern coast depend on National Forest watersheds that provide clean drinking water to their communities and \$450 billion in food and fiber, manufactured goods, and tourism depends on clean water and healthy watersheds;

Whereas the timber resource, which was nearly nonexistent when the Federal Government purchased the land, has increased by more than two and a half times since 1952 and now totals an estimated 42 billion cubic feet of growing stock and about 210 billion board feet of saw timber;

Whereas both Republicans and Democrats recognized the importance of the Federal Government in conserving the forests and the water supply of the States for long-term environmental goals; and

Whereas 52 National Forests in 26 eastern States may never have existed if the Weeks Act had not been passed: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes former Representative and Sen-
3 ator John W. Weeks for his leading vision and active
4 conservation;

5 (2) encourages the Forest Service to celebrate
6 the centennial of the enactment of the Act of March

1 1, 1911, known as the Weeks Act, a law that helped
2 propel the conservation movement and the preserva-
3 tion of United States forests and watersheds; and

4 (3) encourages bipartisan efforts to preserve
5 precious natural resources of the United States and
6 promote conservation efforts across the country.

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