

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2956

To provide for the establishment of the Western Riverside County Wildlife
Refuge.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 23, 2019

Mr. CALVERT (for himself, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mr. TAKANO) introduced the
following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To provide for the establishment of the Western Riverside
County Wildlife Refuge.

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. ESTABLISHMENT.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior (in
5 this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish as
6 a national wildlife refuge the lands, waters, and interests
7 therein acquired under section 4, at such time as the Sec-
8 retary determines that sufficient property has been ac-
9 quired by the United States to constitute an area that can
10 be effectively managed as a national wildlife refuge for the

1 purposes set forth in subsection (b) of this section. The
2 national wildlife refuge shall be known as the Western Riv-
3 erside County National Wildlife Refuge (in this Act re-
4 ferred to as the “Wildlife Refuge”).

5 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Wildlife Refuge
6 shall be—

7 (1) to conserve, manage, and restore wildlife
8 habitats for the benefit of present and future gen-
9 erations of Americans;

10 (2) to conserve wildlife listed as endangered
11 species or threatened species;

12 (3) to support the recovery and protection of
13 threatened and endangered species under the En-
14 dangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et
15 seq.); and

16 (4) to provide for wildlife habitat connectivity
17 and migratory corridors within the Western River-
18 side County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation
19 Plan Area.

20 (c) NOTIFICATION OF ESTABLISHMENT.—The Sec-
21 retary shall publish notice of the establishment of the
22 Wildlife Refuge in the Federal Register.

23 **SEC. 2. BOUNDARIES.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall include within
25 the boundaries of the Wildlife Refuge the lands and waters

1 within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species
2 Habitat Conservation Plan Area (as depicted on maps and
3 described in the Final Western Riverside County Multiple
4 Species Habitat Conservation Plan dated June 17, 2003)
5 that are owned by the Federal government, a State, or
6 a political subdivision of a State on the date on which the
7 Secretary establishes the Wildlife Refuge under section
8 1(a).

9 (b) BOUNDARY REVISIONS.—The Secretary may
10 from time to time make such revisions to the boundaries
11 of the Wildlife Refuge as may be appropriate to carry out
12 the purposes of the Wildlife Refuge as specified in section
13 1(b) if such revisions do not extend the boundaries of the
14 Wildlife Refuge beyond the boundaries of the Western Riv-
15 erside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
16 Area.

17 **SEC. 3. ADMINISTRATION.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Upon the establishment of the
19 Wildlife Refuge and thereafter, the Secretary, in consulta-
20 tion with the Western Riverside County Regional Con-
21 servation Authority which administers the Western River-
22 side County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
23 Area, shall administer all federally owned lands, waters,
24 and interests in the Wildlife Refuge in accordance with
25 the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act

1 of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.) and this Act. The Sec-
2 retary may use such additional statutory authority as may
3 be available to the Secretary for the conservation, manage-
4 ment, and restoration of fish and wildlife and natural re-
5 sources, the development of wildlife dependent outdoor
6 recreation opportunities, and the facilitation of fish and
7 wildlife interpretation and education as the Secretary con-
8 siders appropriate to carry out the purposes of this Act.

9 (b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS REGARDING NON-
10 FEDERAL LANDS.—The Secretary may enter into cooper-
11 ative agreements with the State of California, any political
12 subdivision thereof, or any other person—

13 (1) for the management, in a manner consistent
14 with this Act and the Western Riverside County
15 Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, of lands
16 that are owned by such State, subdivision, or other
17 person and located within the boundaries of the
18 Wildlife Refuge;

19 (2) to promote public awareness of the natural
20 resources of the Western Riverside County Multiple
21 Species Habitat Conservation Plan Area; or

22 (3) to encourage public participation in the con-
23 servation of those resources.

1 **SEC. 4. ACQUISITION AND TRANSFERS OF LANDS AND**
2 **WATERS FOR WILDLIFE REFUGE.**

3 (a) ACQUISITIONS.—The Secretary may acquire by
4 donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds,
5 or exchange the lands and water, or interest therein (in-
6 cluding conservation easements), within the boundaries of
7 the Wildlife Refuge, except that the lands, water, and in-
8 terests therein owned by the State of California and its
9 political subdivisions may be acquired only by donation.

10 (b) TRANSFERS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The head of any Federal de-
12 partment or agency other than the Department of
13 the Interior that has jurisdiction of any Federal
14 property located within the boundaries of the Wild-
15 life Refuge as described by this Act shall, not later
16 than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this
17 Act, submit to the Secretary an assessment of the
18 suitability of such property for inclusion in the Wild-
19 life Refuge.

20 (2) ASSESSMENT.—Any assessment under para-
21 graph (1) shall include—

22 (A) parcel descriptions and best existing
23 land surveys for such property;

24 (B) a list of existing special reservations,
25 designations, or purposes of the property;

1 (C) a list of all known or suspected haz-
2 arduous substance contamination of such prop-
3 erty, and any facilities, surface water, or
4 groundwater on such property;

5 (D) the status of withdrawal of such prop-
6 erty from—

7 (i) the Mineral Leasing Act; and

8 (ii) the General Mining Act of 1872;

9 and

10 (E) a recommendation as to whether such
11 property is or is not suitable for inclusion in the
12 Wildlife Refuge.

13 (3) INCLUSION IN WILDLIFE REFUGE.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall,
15 not later than 60 days after receiving an assess-
16 ment submitted pursuant to paragraph (1), de-
17 termine if the property described in such as-
18 sessment is suitable for inclusion in the Wildlife
19 Refuge.

20 (B) TRANSFER.—If the Secretary deter-
21 mines the property in an assessment submitted
22 under paragraph (1) is suitable for inclusion in
23 the Wildlife Refuge, the head of the Federal de-
24 partment or agency that has jurisdiction of
25 such property shall transfer such property to

1 the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary
2 for the purposes of this Act.

3 (4) PROPERTY UNSUITABLE FOR INCLUSION.—

4 Property determined by the Secretary to be unsuit-
5 able for inclusion in the Wildlife Refuge based on an
6 assessment submitted under paragraph (1) shall be
7 subsequently transferred to the Secretary for pur-
8 poses of this Act by the head of the department or
9 agency that has jurisdiction of such property if such
10 property becomes suitable for inclusion in the Wild-
11 life Refuge as determined by the Secretary in con-
12 sultation with the head of the department or agency
13 that has jurisdiction of such property.

14 (5) PUBLIC ACCESS.—If property transferred to
15 the Secretary under this subsection allows for public
16 access at the time of transfer, such access shall be
17 maintained unless such access—

18 (A) would be incompatible with the pur-
19 poses of the Wildlife Refuge;

20 (B) would jeopardize public health or safe-
21 ty; or

22 (C) must be limited due to emergency cir-
23 cumstances.

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