

H.R. 1289 would expand the John Muir National Historic Site by approximately 44 acres. This expansion may only occur by donation of the land.

Located in the San Francisco Bay Area, in Martinez, California, this site preserves the 14-room Italianate Victorian mansion where John Muir lived, as well as a 325-acre tract of native oak woodlands and grasslands owned by the Muir family.

The additional proposed acreage in this bill is directly adjacent to the current site and will allow for better public access to trails in the area. This acreage has been donated to the National Park Service and will not be acquired with any Federal dollars.

This bill passed out of committee by unanimous consent, and a previous version passed the House during the 113th Congress. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1289 will authorize the National Park Service to expand the boundary of the John Muir National Historic Site and acquire, by donation, 44 acres of land from the Muir Heritage Land Trust. The donation will expand the site and help carry on Muir's important legacy of conservation and environmental stewardship.

John Muir is one of our Nation's most respected and revered ecologists. His writings have inspired millions, and his activism and advocacy led to the establishment of some of our first and most iconic national parks.

From the moment he set foot in Yosemite Valley, John Muir was consumed with its natural wonder and beauty. He became Yosemite's most vocal champion, but he didn't spend his whole life there.

From 1890 until his death in 1914, Muir lived on a farm not far from San Francisco. It was from this corner of the Bay Area that Muir cofounded the Sierra Club and helped lay the groundwork for a century of conservation.

Muir's tireless advocacy led to the creation of the Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, and his spirit and enduring legacy led to the protection of much more.

Since he is known by some as the father of our national parks, I know he would be proud of all of our national parks today, especially as we are approaching the 100th anniversary of the National Park System.

My home State of Michigan has several beautiful national parks, including the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Isle Royale, and the River Raisin National Battlefield.

The passage of H.R. 1289 will contribute to John Muir's legacy, and it will help to protect and conserve the place where he found solace and inspiration in his later years.

I want to thank the bill's sponsor, my good friend Representative MARK DESAULNIER from California, for his leadership.

I urge the swift passage of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER).

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her kind comments.

What a pleasure it is to be here on the House floor to continue to honor and respect a great American and a great Californian, his adopted State.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 1289, the John Muir National Historic Site Expansion Act.

This bipartisan legislation will expand the Martinez, California, historic site in my district as it celebrates the life and legacy of John Muir.

Muir was a lifelong conservationist and leading advocate of the National Park Service and a cofounder of the Sierra Club. He worked to establish and protect national parks, including Yosemite, Sequoia, the Grand Canyon, and Mt. Rainier.

The John Muir National Historic Site, which includes the home where he lived, covers 330 acres in Contra Costa County, where Muir championed the revolutionary idea that wild spaces should be set aside for all Americans to enjoy.

This bill would add 44 acres of donated land from a nonprofit trust, improving access to the park and its scenic trails, including those on Mount Wanda, named after Muir's eldest daughter.

The trail systems are accessible for hikers and bikers, including critical connections to the 550-mile Bay Area Ridge Trail.

As Muir once said:

Every American needs beauty as well as bread, places to live in . . . where nature may heal and cheer and give enough strength to body and soul alike.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my predecessor, Congressman George Miller, who has been a champion of this bill and who introduced it in an earlier session.

I would also like to thank Natural Resources Committee Chairman BISHOP, Ranking Member GRIJALVA, as well as Subcommittee Chairman MCCLINTOCK and Ranking Member TSONGAS, for their leadership in bringing H.R. 1289 to the floor today.

I am also grateful for the support of 31 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle who cosponsored the bill as well as Senators BOXER and FEINSTEIN for sponsoring this legislation in the Senate.

I would also like to thank the John Muir Land Trust for its hard work and dedication to preserving and protecting this valuable parkland and shoreline in the Bay Area for future generations.

As our Nation prepares to celebrate the centennial of the National Park Service, this legislation will help pre-

serve the trails and lands that surround the long-time home of the man known as the father of the National Park Service.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bipartisan legislation, the John Muir National Historic Site Expansion Act.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge all Members to support the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, my district comprises the Sierra Nevada, and we are daily reminded of the foresight of pioneers like John Muir who worked to set aside these natural assets for, in the words of the original Yosemite Charter, "the public's use, resort, and recreation for all time."

Keeping their memory fresh is an important objective, and I urge the adoption of the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1289, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELKHORN RANCH AND WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST CONVEYANCE ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1554) to require a land conveyance involving the Elkhorn Ranch and the White River National Forest in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1554

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Elkhorn Ranch and White River National Forest Conveyance Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. LAND CONVEYANCE, ELKHORN RANCH AND WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST, COLORADO.

(a) LAND CONVEYANCE REQUIRED.—Consistent with the purpose of the Act of March 3, 1909 (43 U.S.C. 772), all right, title, and interest of the United States (subject to subsection (b)) in and to a parcel of land consisting of approximately 148 acres as generally depicted on the map entitled "Elkhorn Ranch Land Parcel—White River National Forest" and dated March 2015 shall be conveyed by patent to the Gordman-Leverich Partnership, a Colorado Limited Liability Partnership (in this section referred to as "GLP").

(b) EXISTING RIGHTS.—The conveyance under subsection (a)—

(1) is subject to the valid existing rights of the lessee of Federal oil and gas lease COC-75070 and any other valid existing rights; and

(2) shall reserve to the United States the right to collect rent and royalty payments on the lease referred to in paragraph (1) for the duration of the lease.

(c) EXISTING BOUNDARIES.—The conveyance under subsection (a) does not modify the exterior boundary of the White River National Forest or the boundaries of Sections 18 and 19 of Township 7 South, Range 93 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, as such boundaries are in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) TIME FOR CONVEYANCE; PAYMENT OF COSTS.—The conveyance directed under subsection (a) shall be completed not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. The conveyance shall be without consideration, except that all costs incurred by the Secretary of the Interior relating to any survey, platting, legal description, or other activities carried out to prepare and issue the patent shall be paid by GLP to the Secretary prior to the land conveyance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1554, introduced by my friend Congressman SCOTT TIPTON of Colorado, would require the U.S. Forest Service to convey by patent a small area of land near Rifle, Colorado, to its rightful owner.

Conflicting surveys between Federal agencies resulted in the inclusion of this land in the White River National Forest even though it was originally patented in the early 20th century and was legally owned by private landowners for decades. These landowners have paid property taxes on the acreage and have used it for a variety of purposes, including agriculture and grazing.

Earlier this year, the Forest Service testified that the bill would “resolve a longstanding title issue associated with the property” and has recommended that the area be “confirmed in the successors in interest to the original patentees.”

The bill is supported by Garfield County, Colorado, the city of Rifle, Colorado, and many others.

Congressman TIPTON has worked hard to correct this survey discrepancy and return this land to its rightful owner. I encourage my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 1554.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1554 will convey 148 acres of land to the Gordman-Leverich Partnership,

a Colorado Limited Liability Partnership, and remedy a land dispute between a private landowner and the Forest Service.

In 1947, an administrative error occurred that shifted the boundary between the Elkhorn Ranch and the White River National Forest. This survey placed 148 acres of private land inside the forest boundary without providing consideration to the landholders.

Since then, the title to the ranch has changed hands several times, but the administrative error has not been corrected. This bill will correct the error and acknowledge the correct boundary of the Elkhorn Ranch, providing the current owner with a free and clear title.

I want to thank my colleagues, Congressman POLIS and Congressman TIPTON, for their good work on this legislation. The Forest Service testified in support of this bill, and I urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), my friend who has worked tirelessly to correct this administrative error.

Mr. TIPTON. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their support on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1554 is a straightforward bill, which Congressman POLIS and I introduced, to reconfirm the private ownership of 140 acres of land in my congressional district.

The lands concerned were patented into two private ownerships via the United States land patents issued in 1914 and 1917 and 1957, but their ownership has come into question by virtue of the 1949 government survey, which showed them to be national forest land rather than private land.

Long-held U.S. law specifically states that a government resurvey cannot take away private property or private property rights.

Mr. Speaker, the Forest Service and the private landowners of the Elkhorn Ranch only became aware of the potential title issue in the early 2000s. Thereafter, the Forest Service conducted a lengthy and thorough review of the matter.

Upon the completion of the review, both the supervisor and surveyor of the White River National Forest concluded that the ownership of the 140 acres should be confirmed in the successors in interest to the original patentees, namely the Elkhorn Ranch.

In reaching this conclusion, the Forest Service noted that the land has never been managed by the national forestland and, indeed, has been fenced and occupied with stock ponds to develop springs, roads, and other private improvements, and it has been used as private land for ranching and agriculture for the better part of the past 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a simple matter of fairness and equity to a pri-

vate landowner to honor government land patents that were granted to the landowner's predecessors 60 to 100 years ago.

The bill is supported by both the surveyor and the supervisor of the White River National Forest, the Garfield County Surveyor, the Garfield County Commissioners, the city of Rifle, Colorado Club 20, which represents 20 of Colorado's counties, and Piceance Energy, which has the lease on part of the area.

In addition, at our hearing on H.R. 1554 in mid-June, the administration testified that this bill is a practical and workable way to address the longstanding title issue.

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Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I join the gentlewoman in requesting the adoption of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1554.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL LIBERTY MEMORIAL CLARIFICATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1949) to provide for the consideration and submission of site and design proposals for the National Liberty Memorial approved for establishment in the District of Columbia, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1949

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “National Liberty Memorial Clarification Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN STANDARDS FOR COMMEMORATIVE WORKS IN ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL LIBERTY MEMORIAL.

Section 2860(c) of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (division B of Public Law 112-239; 40 U.S.C. 8903 note) is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: “, except that, under subsections (a)(2) and (b) of section 8905, the Secretary of Agriculture, rather than the Secretary of the Interior or the Administrator of General Services, shall be responsible for the consideration of site and design proposals and the submission of such proposals on behalf of the sponsor to the Commission of Fine Arts and National Capital Planning Commission.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the