

THE STEENS MOUNTAIN COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION ACT OF 2000

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 17, 2000

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with my colleagues two letters I received concerning the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (H.R. 4828) that was debated on the House Floor on October 4, 2000.

House Resolution 4828 was supported by the entire Oregon congressional delegation and is the product of a long and hard-fought battle to ensure that there was an Oregon solution to an Oregon issue. I submit the following letters into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY'S
WILDERNESS SUPPORT CENTER

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WALDEN: Although this bill does not contain everything we wanted, we believe that this is a responsible resolution of a very important issue. This bill will grant lasting protection for the wildlands, wildlife, and waters of the magnificent Steens Mountain region. We support its passage today.

BART KOEHLER,
Director.

Recreation Service Providers on Steens Mountain—

The outfitting and guiding industry has been in existence on a small scale and in a variety of ways on Steens Mountain since the early days of trappers and military scouts. From the early 1900's until the early 1960's outfitters, particularly homesteader Chester Nye and partner Paul Howard, primarily offered hunting and fishing trips to the very wealthy into the inaccessible backcountry of the Steens. The completion of the Steens Mountain Loop Road opened up all of the hunting areas that Nye and Howard depended upon for their enterprise and consequently put them out of business. Shortly after during the mid-1970's, the homestead known as the Nye Place consisting of several guest cabins and a cookhouse on the rim of the Little Blitzen Gorge and which Nye and Howard had used was taken over by Velty Pruitt and his summer camp for girls.

From that time until now, outfitters and guides, otherwise known as recreational service providers, have continually modified the services they offer based on the needs and demands of the outfitted public using Steens Mountain. Currently, Steens Mountain has eight permitted outfitters operating on both public and private lands providing a wide range of recreational services. These current and historical uses include: cross-country high-altitude running training, big game hunting, upland bird hunting, fishing and heli-fishing, multiple day horse packing, trail riding, multiple day llama packing, backpacking, day hiking, mountain biking, ATV touring, van/pickup tours, snowmobiling, cross-country and backcountry skiing with and without motorized support (snow machine or helicopter), snow shoeing, and snowcat touring. With all of these activities, many service providers include interpretive and educational information to their programs, and/or use these various modes of transportation or travel to provide interpretive and educational services. Additionally, a number of the permitted recreation service providers have historically con-

ducted activities on private lands that may be transferred into public ownership through this legislation. All of these uses are considered current and historical uses and fall under the purpose of promoting viable recreation operations on Steens Mountain.

It should be noted that while there are thousands of places to go in the United States to engage in outdoor recreation, Steens Mountain is a unique natural attraction and is the chosen vacation destination for nearly 100 percent of the 56,000 people currently coming to the region. In fact beginning in 1975, the Bureau of Land Management began tracking visitor numbers of those using the Steens Mountain Loop Road. These visitor numbers have increased over 278 percent since 1975, and with a new designation will likely continue to increase. There will no doubt be a corresponding growth in the numbers of the outfitted public seeking experiences with the permitted recreation service providers on the Steens. As part of ensuring the viability of the recreation operations on Steens Mountain which is a purpose of this legislation, these permitted recreation service providers should be allowed to meet the growth and additional needs of the outfitted public within the current and historic activities they provide.

Further most outfitters, pre-legislation, have invested a great deal into their recreation service operations and public land permits to provide services to the public. Some of the investments are recent and substantial. Because of this the operators may not have had time to realize a return on these investments. One example of this, and there are many, is Steens Mountain Packers helicopter supported activities particularly the backcountry ski heli-supported program. A great deal of time and money went into the exploration of the Steens to provide a compatible and safe service to the public. The legislation, designation and future management thereof may terminate the operators opportunity to recoup investments with the possible termination of the activity within a given area, such as wilderness. In staying in conformance with the purpose of the Act, the operator should be appropriately compensated for the loss of revenue from the activity, or exchanged for a reasonable like permit. Because of the uniqueness of the area, a like opportunity may be difficult to provide. It should be noted that an opportunity or permit entirely outside of the area may well not be considered a reasonable option (e.g.—a permit in Catlow Valley would not necessarily be a reasonable alternative to an existing permit within the Blitzen Gorge, nor a permit in Idaho as an alternative to a permit on Steens Mountain.).

JOHN AND CINDY WITZEL
Frenchglen, Oregon.

CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY OF
NANCY LONG

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 17, 2000

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I honor my constituent, Nancy Long, on the occasion of her seventy-second birthday. Nancy Long has been continuously dedicated to community and civic service for, perhaps, longer than anyone in Glen Echo and Montgomery County, Maryland. Ms. Long was first elected to the Glen Echo Town Council in 1969, and re-elected every four years thereafter.

Early on, she was appointed as Town liaison to the National Park Service for the C&O

Canal National Historical Park, Glen Echo Park, Clara Barton Historic Site, and the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Her efforts have been and continue to be tireless in the pursuit of preservation of the Park, conservation of the Canal, and protection of the Town's environs.

Ms. Long has been a volunteer at Glen Echo Park since 1970 and, in 1986, became one of three original founders of the Glen Echo Park Foundation. She has been re-elected to that Board each term since its inception. She organized and directed a successful fund raising campaign to save the Park's beloved Dentzel Carousel, which today is enjoyed by children and adults. This historic artifact is admired by preservationists for its spectacular and painstaking restoration work. The attention to preserving the Park and the existence of the Carousel today, is in no small measure to Nancy's tireless efforts. Her work continues on the Montgomery County Glen Echo Park Working Group, which has been studying the future of the Park and its cultural and arts programs.

In 1975, Ms. Long was selected by then Congressman Gilbert Gude as one of 25 individuals to travel the entire length of the C&O Canal to call attention to the Canal's importance and need for the preservation and conservation of its resources. She is currently one of two Montgomery County representatives to the C&O Canal National Historical Park Advisory Commission. Nancy Long has walked the 184 mile length of the Canal four times, the latest trek occurring in the spring of 2000.

Ms. Long has also served extensively on other boards and commissions. Just a few additional ports on which she served, are: Potomac Valley League, the Montgomery County Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust, and the Potomac River Basin Consortium.

Ms. Long's 72nd birthday will be celebrated by her friends and Glen Echo neighbors today, October 17, 2000. I am proud that she expects to continue her work on behalf of community, conservation, and preservation.

TRIBUTE TO ERNEST T. DIERKING,
U.S. FOREST SERVICE DIRECTOR
OF LANDS AND MINERALS

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 17, 2000

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, when the millions of people who live in Southern California want to escape our perpetual summer for a little winter fun or cool mountain breezes, we head to a refuge thousands of feet above and a world away from the beaches that are our trademark. Just an hour from those beaches lies the San Bernardino National Forest, which today provides thousands of acres of recreational splendor thanks largely to the efforts of one dedicated public servant: Ernest T. Dierking.

Ernest Dierking began his career with the U.S. Forest Service in June 1958, and has dedicated the last 22 years to expanding the San Bernardino National Forest and making sure the pines and mountain vistas are preserved for an appreciative public. He has served as the District Ranger in San Bernardino, and most recently he was Director