

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

As the assembled body can hear, this bipartisan bill has great importance, and especially throughout the West. I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) for their hard work on behalf of this bill.

I have areas, Mr. Speaker, in my district which typically get around 16 inches of rainfall a year. In the last several years, we have gotten less than 6 inches in many of those areas; in some areas, as little as 2 inches in the last 12 months.

Mr. Speaker, our entire agricultural production system is at risk. We need to support our farming and ranching. We need to understand that one of the most critical things we can provide for ourselves and our Nation is a secure supply of food.

Mr. Speaker, this bill should begin to deliver more water to the agriculture community of America.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, my district has 200 inches of rainwater a year, and I would be more than glad to share some of my water with my colleagues. Unfortunately, they would have to go many miles to get these 200 inches of water that we would be more than glad to share with our friends here in the continental United States.

Mr. Speaker, I think the spirit of bipartisanship has been demonstrated this afternoon as we debate and discuss this issue; and, again, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I accept the gentleman's offer of the rain that he has and shares so willingly, and we will address that in the next bill.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, as Utah copes with its most severe drought in recent times, protecting our native species from invasive plants is vital to both agriculture and the environment. It is important to those of us in the West to take those steps necessary to stop non-native species from consuming our precious water resources.

Throughout the development of the West, we have maintained a healthy and vibrant balance between our economic and residential needs and the needs of our native plants and animals. The tamarisk threatens that balance.

For this reason, I support H.R. 2707—The Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act. This bill has particular meaning to me and to my constituents, because of the efforts it promotes to eradicate tamarisk.

Overall, experts estimate the economic impact of invasive species in the U.S. to be over \$100 billion annually. Scientists have calculated that tamarisk plants soak up an estimated 2–4 million acre-feet of water per year in the West. A single plant can absorb up to 300 gallons of water a day through a taproot that can reach down 50 feet into the water

table. Tamarisk, originally introduced by settlers trying to control stream bank erosion, is inedible to most animals and is notoriously difficult to kill. Even when it's burned, it generates new shoots.

This plant's effects are particularly devastating in our state and in our neighboring states, and so I have worked on the Science Committee to create new opportunities to combat tamarisk. This bill is an important step towards eradicating the threat that tamarisk poses in Utah and other Western states, and I will continue to support it and other legislation which furthers our battle to remove this threat.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 2707, the Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act, introduced by my colleague from New Mexico STEVE PEARCE.

The Russian Olive and Salt Cedar are invasive species that are soaking up our water. Water is the lifeblood of the American West and foundation of our economy. The Salt Cedar can consume up to 200 gallons of water per day during growing season. This is more than the average Albuquerque household consumes in a day.

Additionally, these invasive species are highly flammable and put our communities at risk. In 2003 two major fires, fueled by these invasive species, broke out in the heart of Albuquerque. These fires left 16,000 people temporarily without electrical power, threatened 600 homes and led to the evacuation of about 1,000 people.

This legislation begins an important Federal initiative to reduce the negative effect of these invasive species.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LEACH). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2707, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SOUTHWEST FOREST HEALTH AND WILDFIRE PREVENTION ACT OF 2004

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2696) to establish Institutes to demonstrate and promote the use of adaptive ecosystem management to reduce the risk of wildfires, and restore the health of fire-adapted forest and woodland ecosystems of the interior West, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2696

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 "Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act of 2004".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) there is an increasing threat of wildfire to millions of acres of forest land and rangeland throughout the United States;

(2) forest land and rangeland are degraded as a direct consequence of land management practices, including practices to control and prevent wildfires and the failure to harvest subdominant trees from overstocked stands that disrupt the occurrence of frequent low-intensity fires that have periodically removed flammable undergrowth;

(3) at least 39,000,000 acres of land of the National Forest System in the interior West are at high risk of wildfire;

(4) an average of 95 percent of the expenditures by the Forest Service for wildfire suppression during fiscal years 1990 through 1994 were made to suppress wildfires in the interior West;

(5) the number, size, and severity of wildfires in the interior West are increasing;

(6) of the timberland in National Forests in the States of Arizona and New Mexico, 59 percent of such land in Arizona, and 56 percent of such land in New Mexico, has an average diameter of 9 to 12 inches diameter at breast height;

(7) the population of the interior West grew twice as fast as the national average during the 1990s;

(8) catastrophic wildfires—

(A) endanger homes and communities;

(B) damage and destroy watersheds and soils; and

(C) pose a serious threat to the habitat of threatened and endangered species;

(9) a 1994 assessment of forest health in the interior West estimated that only a 15- to 30-year window of opportunity exists for effective management intervention before damage from uncontrollable wildfire becomes widespread, with 8 years having already elapsed since the assessment;

(10) healthy forest and woodland ecosystems—

(A) reduce the risk of wildfire to forests and communities;

(B) improve wildlife habitat and biodiversity;

(C) increase tree, grass, forb, and shrub productivity;

(D) enhance watershed values;

(E) improve the environment; and

(F) provide a basis in some areas for economically and environmentally sustainable uses;

(11) sustaining the long-term ecological and economic health of interior West forests and woodland, and their associated human communities requires preventing severe wildfires before the wildfires occur and permitting natural, low-intensity ground fires;

(12) more natural fire regimes cannot be accomplished without the reduction of excess fuels and thinning of subdominant trees (which fuels and trees may be of commercial value);

(13) ecologically based forest and woodland ecosystem restoration on a landscape scale will—

(A) improve long-term community protection;

(B) minimize the need for wildfire suppression;

(C) improve resource values;

(D) improve the ecological integrity and resilience of these systems;

(E) reduce rehabilitation costs;

(F) reduce loss of critical habitat; and

(G) protect forests for future generations;

(14) although landscape scale restoration is needed to effectively reverse degradation,

scientific understanding of landscape scale treatments is limited;

(15) rigorous, objective, understandable, and applied scientific information is needed for—

(A) the design, implementation, monitoring, and adaptation of landscape scale restoration treatments and improvement of wildfire management;

(B) the environmental review process; and

(C) affected entities that collaborate in the development and implementation of wildfire treatment.

SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to enhance the capacity to develop, transfer, apply, monitor, and regularly update practical science-based forest restoration treatments that will reduce the risk of severe wildfires, and improve the health of dry forest and woodland ecosystems in the interior West;

(2) to synthesize and adapt scientific findings from conventional research programs to the implementation of forest and woodland restoration on a landscape scale;

(3) to facilitate the transfer of interdisciplinary knowledge required to understand the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of wildfire on ecosystems and landscapes;

(4) to require the Institutes established under this Act to collaborate with Federal agencies—

(A) to use ecological restoration treatments to reverse declining forest health and reduce the risk of severe wildfires across the forest landscape; and

(B) to design, implement, monitor, and regularly revise representative wildfire treatments based on the use of adaptive ecosystem management;

(5) to assist land managers in—

(A) treating acres with restoration-based applications; and

(B) using new management technologies (including the transfer of understandable information, assistance with environmental review, and field and classroom training and collaboration) to accomplish the goals identified in—

(i) the National Fire Plan;

(ii) the report entitled "Protecting People and Sustaining Resources in Fire-Adapted Ecosystems-A Cohesive Strategy" (65 Fed. Reg. 67480); and

(iii) the report entitled "10-Year Comprehensive Strategy: A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment" of the Western Governors' Association;

(6) to provide technical assistance to collaborative efforts by affected entities to develop, implement, and monitor adaptive ecosystem management restoration treatments that are ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially responsible; and

(7) to assist Federal and non-Federal land managers in providing information to the public on the role of fire and fire management in dry forest and woodland ecosystems in the interior West.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADAPTIVE ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT.—

(A) DEFINITION.—The term "adaptive ecosystem management" means a natural resource management process under which planning, implementation, monitoring, research, evaluation, and incorporation of new knowledge are combined into a management approach that—

(i) is based on scientific findings and the needs of society;

(ii) treats management actions as experiments;

(iii) acknowledges the complexity of these systems and scientific uncertainty; and

(iv) uses the resulting new knowledge to modify future management methods and policy.

(B) CLARIFICATION.—This paragraph shall not define the term "adaptive ecosystem management" for the purposes of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.).

(2) AFFECTED ENTITIES.—The term "affected entities" includes—

(A) land managers;

(B) stakeholders;

(C) concerned citizens; and

(D) the States of the interior West, including political subdivisions of the States.

(3) DRY FOREST AND WOODLAND ECOSYSTEM.—The term "dry forest and woodland ecosystem" means an ecosystem that is dominated by ponderosa pines and associated dry forest and woodland types.

(4) INSTITUTE.—The term "Institute" means an Institute established under section 5(a).

(5) INTERIOR WEST.—The term "interior West" means the States of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah.

(6) LAND MANAGER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term "land manager" means a person or entity that practices or guides natural resource management.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term "land manager" includes a Federal, State, local, or tribal land management agency.

(7) RESTORATION.—The term "restoration" means a process undertaken to move an ecosystem or habitat toward—

(A) a sustainable structure of the ecosystem or habitat; or

(B) a condition that supports a natural complement of species, natural function, or ecological process (such as a low-intensity fire).

(8) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

(9) SECRETARIES.—The term "Secretaries" means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior.

(10) STAKEHOLDER.—The term "stakeholder" means any person interested in or affected by management of forest or woodland ecosystems.

(11) SUBDOMINANT TREES.—Are trees that occur underneath the canopy or extend into the canopy but are smaller and less vigorous than dominant trees.

(12) OVERSTOCKED STANDS.—Where the number of trees per acre exceeds the natural carrying capacity of the site.

(13) RESILIENCE.—The ability of a system to absorb disturbance without being pushed into a different, possibly less desirable stable state.

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF INSTITUTES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, establish Institutes to promote the use of adaptive ecosystem management to reduce the risk of wildfires, and restore the health of forest and woodland ecosystems, in the interior West; and

(2) provide assistance to the Institutes to promote the use of collaborative processes and adaptive ecosystem management in accordance with paragraph (1).

(b) LOCATION.—

(1) EXISTING INSTITUTES.—The Secretary may designate an institute in existence on the date of enactment of this Act to serve as an Institute established under this Act.

(2) STATES.—Of the Institutes established under this Act, the Secretary shall establish 1 Institute in each of—

(A) the State of Arizona, to be located at Northern Arizona University;

(B) the State of New Mexico, to be located at New Mexico Highlands University, while engaging the full resources of the consortium of universities represented in the Institute of Natural Resource Analysis and Management (INRAM); and

(C) the State of Colorado.

(c) DUTIES.—Each Institute shall—

(1) develop, conduct research on, transfer, promote, and monitor restoration-based hazardous fuel reduction treatments to reduce the risk of severe wildfires and improve the health of dry forest and woodland ecosystems in the interior West;

(2) synthesize and adapt scientific findings from conventional research to implement restoration-based hazardous fuel reduction treatments on a landscape scale using an adaptive ecosystem management framework;

(3) translate for and transfer to affected entities any scientific and interdisciplinary knowledge about restoration-based hazardous fuel reduction treatments;

(4) assist affected entities with the design of adaptive management approaches (including monitoring) for the implementation of restoration-based hazardous fuel reduction treatments; and

(5) provide peer-reviewed annual reports.

(d) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each Institute shall—

(1) develop and demonstrate capabilities in the natural, physical, social, and policy sciences; and

(2) explicitly integrate those disciplines in the performance of the duties listed in subsection (c).

(e) COOPERATION.—Each Institute may cooperate with—

(1) researchers and cooperative extension programs at colleges, community colleges, and universities in the States of Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado that have a demonstrated capability to conduct research described in subsection (c); and

(2) other organizations and entities in the interior West (such as the Western Governors' Association).

(f) ANNUAL WORK PLANS.—As a condition of the receipt of funds made available under this Act, for each fiscal year, each Institute shall develop in consultation with the Secretary, for review by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, an annual work plan that includes assurances, satisfactory to the Secretaries, that the proposed work of the Institute will serve the informational needs of affected entities.

(g) ESTABLISHMENT OF ADDITIONAL INSTITUTES.—If after 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary finds that the Institute model established at the locations named in subsection (b)(2) would be constructive for other interior West States, the Secretary may establish 1 institute in each of those States.

SEC. 6. COOPERATION BETWEEN INSTITUTES AND FEDERAL AGENCIES.

In carrying out this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior—

(1) to the extent that funds are appropriated for the purpose, shall provide financial and technical assistance to the Institutes to carry out the duties of the Institutes under section 5;

(2) shall encourage Federal agencies to use, on a cooperative basis, information and expertise provided by the Institutes;

(3) shall encourage cooperation and coordination between Federal programs relating to—

(A) ecological restoration;

(B) wildfire risk reduction; and

(C) wildfire management technologies;

(4) notwithstanding chapter 63 of title 31, United States Code, may—

(A) enter into contracts, cooperative agreements, and interagency personal agreements to carry out this Act; and

(B) carry out other transactions under this Act;

(5) may accept funds from other Federal agencies to supplement or fully fund grants made, and contracts entered into, by the Secretaries;

(6) may support a program of internships for qualified individuals at the undergraduate and graduate levels to carry out the educational and training objectives of this Act;

(7) shall encourage professional education and public information activities relating to the purposes of this Act; and

(8) may promulgate such regulations as the Secretaries determine are necessary to carry out this Act.

SEC. 7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall complete and submit to the Committee on Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a detailed evaluation of the programs and activities of each Institute—

(1) to ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the research, communication tools, and information transfer activities of each Institute are sufficient to achieve the purposes of this Act, including—

(A) implementing active adaptive ecosystem management practices at the landscape level;

(B) reducing unnecessary planning costs;

(C) avoiding duplicative and conflicting efforts;

(D) increasing public acceptance of active adaptive ecosystem management practices; and

(E) achieving general satisfaction on the part of affected entities;

(2) to determine the extent to which each Institute has implemented its duties under section 5(c); and

(3) to determine whether continued provision of Federal assistance to each Institute is warranted.

(b) TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE.—If, as a result of an evaluation under subsection (a), the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, determines that an Institute does not qualify for further Federal assistance under this Act, the Institute shall receive no further Federal assistance under this Act until such time as the qualifications of the Institute are reestablished to the satisfaction of the Secretaries.

SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act \$15,000,000 for each fiscal year.

(b) LIMITATION.—No funds made available under subsection (a) shall be used to pay the costs of constructing any facilities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2696, the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 2696 establishes institutes to demonstrate and promote the use of adaptive ecosystem management to reduce the risk of wildfires and restore the health of fire-adaptive forest and woodland ecosystems of the interior West.

This legislation directs the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the Secretary of Interior, to establish the Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University, under the leadership of Dr. Wally Covington, and similar institutes in New Mexico and Colorado, with the purpose of supporting groups to assist in the design and implementation of large-scale forest restoration treatments.

Research has shown that large forest fires will continue unless large scale action is taken. The treatment of our forests must begin with solid, sound science to restore the balance of our unhealthy forests. H.R. 2696 will facilitate this important research.

I urge adoption of the bill.

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

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

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my commendation to the gentleman from Arizona for his sponsorship of this proposed bill; and, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2696 directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish three university-based institutes to conduct and promote research to assist Federal land managers in the complicated process of reducing risks of wildfires and improving forest health in the interior West.

The bill specifically designates two universities to house institutes, Northern Arizona University in Arizona and Highlands University in New Mexico. The Secretary shall also designate a third institute to be located in the State of Colorado. The bill authorizes \$15 million annually for these institutes, subject to appropriations.

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Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the bill's sponsor, again the gentleman from Arizona. I also want to recognize the contributions of the Members on this side of the aisle, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL). I thank them for their help, their sponsorship and their support of this bill.

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2696, the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act of 2003. This is extremely important legislation, and I applaud the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) for his work on this issue. I also thank the gentleman from American Samoa for his leadership on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, in my home State of New Mexico, we are experiencing a very serious and prolonged drought. Not only does this further exacerbate our water shortage as well as the difficulties faced by agriculture and livestock communities, but it also makes for very dangerous fire conditions as we approach spring and summer.

Unfortunately, the issue of fire prevention and suppression is extremely controversial. That is why I believe it is important that our country establish a science-based common-sense fire policy. This bipartisan legislation before us today lays the groundwork for a science-based strategy to combat wildfire in the West.

H.R. 2696 directs the Forest Service, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, to establish institutes to promote the use of adaptive ecosystem management to reduce the risk of wildfires and restore the health of fire-adapted woodland in the West. The Agency would be required to provide the institutes with financial and technical assistance. Creating these institutions will create a solid foundation for scientific knowledge and the ability to rapidly convert new insights into technology and tools.

These institutes will also create common ground for environmental, recreational, commercial, and governmental interests to work together and end the gridlock that has often paralyzed forest management initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, I am also extremely pleased the Forest Management Institute in New Mexico will be centered at New Mexico Highlands University, located in my congressional district. While being centered at Highlands, however, the institute will engage the full resources of the consortium of universities represented in the Institute of Natural Resource Analysis and Management, INRAM. This includes the other New Mexico education institutions of higher learning, such as New Mexico State University, University of New Mexico, New Mexico Tech, New Mexico Highlands, Eastern New Mexico University, and Western New Mexico University.

I would also like to thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) as well as the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) for their work on this provision in the bill. It truly was a bipartisan effort.

Mr. Speaker, by passing this legislation and creating these institutions we will provide much-needed assistance to land managers in their ongoing efforts to decrease the severity of fires in our

forests and restore woodland ecosystems. I urge my colleagues to support passage of this important legislation.

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to again urge my colleagues to support this proposed bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the gentleman from American Samoa for his leadership, and to add that the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) truly played a major role in the input and construction of this language, and I am grateful to him for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LEACH). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2696, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DOUGLAS COUNTY, OREGON LAND CONVEYANCE

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 714) to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of Bureau of Land Management land in Douglas County, Oregon, to the county to improve management of and recreational access to the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 714

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LAND IN DOUGLAS COUNTY, OREGON.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) CONVEYANCE.—The Secretary of the Interior shall convey, without consideration and subject to valid existing rights, to Douglas County, Oregon (referred to in this section as the “County”), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the parcel described in paragraph (2) for use by the County for recreational purposes.

(2) PARCEL.—The parcel referred to in paragraph (1) is the parcel of land consisting of approximately 68.8 acres under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, as generally depicted on the map entitled “S. 714, Douglas County, Oregon Land Conveyance”, dated May 21, 2003.

(b) PURPOSES OF CONVEYANCE.—The purposes of the conveyance under subsection (a) are to improve management of and recreational access to the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area by—

(1) improving public safety and reducing traffic congestion along Salmon Harbor Drive (County Road No. 251) in the County;

(2) providing a staging area for off-highway vehicles; and

(3) facilitating policing of unlawful camping and parking along Salmon Harbor Drive and adjacent areas.

(c) SURVEY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey—

(1) that is satisfactory to the Secretary; and

(2) the cost of which shall be paid by the County.

(d) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 714, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, S. 714, introduced by Senator RON WYDEN of Oregon, and amended by the Senate, would provide for the conveyance of 69 acres of BLM land in Douglas County, Oregon, to improve management of and recreational access to the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area.

Mr. Speaker, the intended effect of transferring this tract of BLM land would be to move recreational traffic off of Salmon Harbor Drive and out of the nearby communities. Currently, OHV users illegally park on Salmon River Drive, creating a public nuisance and safety hazard. The legislation would allow for a staging area for off-highway vehicles and provide improved access to the Oregon Dunes for other visitors, such as hikers and backpackers.

Mr. Speaker, S. 714, as amended, is supported by the administration, has broad bipartisan support from the Oregon delegation, and I urge adoption of the bill.

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

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

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my strongest support for this proposed bill, Senate bill 714,

as it was originally introduced by the good Senator from the State of Oregon, Mr. WYDEN.

Mr. Speaker, the transferring of a small parcel of land to Douglas County will resolve a difficult safety issue that has arisen regarding the Oregon Dunes National Recreational Area. The land in question has been identified by the BLM for disposal. The Committee on Resources approved similar legislation during the previous Congress, and now Senate bill 714 passed the Senate by unanimous consent.

I also want to commend the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for his sponsorship of this bill, which is a companion bill that was introduced as well, and I certainly commend him for his tireless efforts on behalf of this legislation and his commitment to resolving this problem not only for his constituents, but others who want to visit his beautiful area.

I urge my colleagues to support this Senate bill.

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I thank my colleagues for considering this legislation today and certainly hope that it is successfully passed by the House later this evening.

Mr. Speaker, this is an issue upon which I and other members of the Oregon delegation have been working for a number of years. The issue of Winchester Bay, Salmon Harbor, and the Dunes access, which is an extremely popular OHV area, has been a growing problem because of the growing popularity. This is sort of a bright light on the coast of Oregon where the economy has been lagging and so many other industries are in a depressed state. The tourism and the support this provides for local community and small businesses is very welcome.

What has been happening is that, because of a county campground nearer to the harbor and other camping, a number of people have been driving their OHVs actually on the road to access the nearest point into the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area. That causes obviously congestion, conflicts with other vehicles on the road, and in some cases has been very problematic in the community and been a law enforcement problem on some of the big holiday weekends. This could be easily rectified, and hopefully will be today, by transferring this parcel of land.

I visited the parcel in question. It is extraordinarily underutilized at the moment. It is virtually unpoliced because of the cutbacks in BLM law enforcement and Forest Service law enforcement because of the Federal budget. There have been problems there with illegal camping, with the use of