

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3452

To provide for the sale of approximately 30 acres of Federal land in Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Salt Lake County, Utah, to permit the establishment of a minimally invasive transportation alternative for skiers, called “SkiLink”, to connect two ski resorts in the Wasatch Mountains, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 17, 2011

Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself and Mr. CHAFFETZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To provide for the sale of approximately 30 acres of Federal land in Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Salt Lake County, Utah, to permit the establishment of a minimally invasive transportation alternative for skiers, called “SkiLink”, to connect two ski resorts in the Wasatch Mountains, and for other purposes.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Wasatch Range Recre-
5 ation Access Enhancement Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) There is interest in providing direct public
4 access between the Wasatch Range front and back
5 in the State of Utah by linking ski resorts in the
6 area by means of a skier transport, lift, or tramway.

7 (2) The primary ski resorts in the Wasatch
8 Range in Utah are situated within a 5 mile radius,
9 but currently there is no convenient transportation
10 link between the resorts.

11 (3) The Canyons Ski Resort and Solitude
12 Mountain Resort have proposed a public-access
13 transportation connection through construction of a
14 minimally invasive transportation alternative for ski-
15 ers, called “SkiLink”, which would cross approxi-
16 mately 30 acres of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache Na-
17 tional Forest from private land at The Canyons Ski
18 Resort in Summit County, Utah, to private land at
19 Solitude Mountain Resort in Big Cottonwood Can-
20 yon, Utah.

21 (4) The land and resource management plan for
22 Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest prohibits new
23 alpine ski lifts on National Forest System land.

24 (5) Despite efforts by Utah Department of
25 Transportation, the Wasatch Front Regional Coun-
26 cil, and the Utah Transit Authority to increase tran-

1 sit and carpool access in Big Cottonwood Canyon,
2 daily traffic on winter weekends ranges between
3 8,000 and 9,000 vehicles per day.

4 (6) Studies show that the establishment of the
5 SkiLink would reduce ski-season vehicle traffic be-
6 tween The Canyons Ski Resort and Solitude Moun-
7 tain Resort by as much as 18,000 cars per year or
8 1 million fewer miles driven per year, and the
9 amount of the reduction is expected to increase over
10 time.

11 (7) SkiLink would produce immediate traffic
12 benefits, including a reduction in PM 2.5 and other
13 emissions in Parley's and Big Cottonwood Canyons.

14 (8) A preliminary environmental review of the
15 proposed SkiLink corridor assessed the potential im-
16 pact to special-status species, water quality and wa-
17 tershed resources, and visual resources and found
18 that no federally listed species or critical habitat
19 would be affected and that any water, plant, and
20 wildlife issues could be addressed through mitiga-
21 tion.

22 (9) Minimally invasive, environmentally sound
23 construction techniques would be used to construct
24 SkiLink, including the use of helicopters for concrete
25 placement and tower installations.

1 (10) The winter sport industry in Utah is a sig-
2 nificant contributor to the economy of Utah, with
3 the ski/snowboarding industry bringing \$1.26 billion
4 to Utah during the 2009/2010 ski season and result-
5 ing in 20,000 jobs.

6 (11) Economic analysis of SkiLink shows it
7 would infuse another \$50,000,000 a year into
8 Utah’s economy and create 500 new jobs in the
9 tourism and hospitality industries by creating the
10 largest interconnected ski network in the United
11 States and providing access to more than 6,000
12 acres of existing ski terrain.

13 **SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE OF NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND,**
14 **UINTA-WASATCH-CACHE NATIONAL FOREST,**
15 **SALT LAKE COUNTY, UTAH.**

16 (a) CONVEYANCE REQUIRED; PURPOSE.—Subject to
17 subsection (e), the Secretary of Agriculture shall convey,
18 by sale, to Canyons-SkiLink, LLC, all right, title, and in-
19 terest of the United States in and to a parcel of National
20 Forest System land in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National
21 Forest in Salt Lake County, Utah, consisting of approxi-
22 mately 30 acres, as identified on the map entitled
23 “SkiLink Parcels, November 2011”, for the purpose of
24 permitting Canyons-SkiLink, LLC, to construct a ski-lift,
25 gondola, or tramway to serve as a public-access transpor-

1 tation interconnection of the Wasatch Front and the
2 Wasatch Back Mountains.

3 (b) CONSIDERATION.—As consideration for the con-
4 veyance of the National Forest System land under sub-
5 section (a), Canyons-SkiLink, LLC, shall pay to the Sec-
6 retary an amount equal to at least the fair market value
7 of the land as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

8 (c) DETERMINATION OF FAIR MARKET VALUE.—The
9 fair market value of the National Forest System land to
10 be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be based on an ap-
11 praisal acceptable to the Secretary. The appraisal shall be
12 completed no later than 6 months after the date of the
13 enactment of this Act.

14 (d) REVERSIONARY INTEREST.—If the Secretary de-
15 termines at any time that the National Forest System
16 land conveyed under subsection (a) has not been used for
17 a period of 10 years or longer in accordance with the pur-
18 pose of the conveyance, all right, title, and interest in and
19 to the conveyed land, including any improvements thereto,
20 shall, at the option of the Secretary, revert to and become
21 the property of the United States, and the United States
22 shall have the right of immediate entry onto the land. A
23 determination by the Secretary under this subsection shall
24 be made on the record after an opportunity for a hearing.

1 (e) ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.—The Secretary
2 shall complete all actions that may be required under the
3 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.
4 4321 et seq.), the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16
5 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), and all other applicable laws in mak-
6 ing the conveyance under this section.

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