

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 428

To survey the gradient boundary along the Red River in the States of
Oklahoma and Texas, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 10, 2017

Mr. THORNBERRY (for himself and Mr. COLE) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To survey the gradient boundary along the Red River in
the States of Oklahoma and Texas, 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 “Red River Gradient
5 Boundary Survey Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) **AFFECTED AREA.**—

9 (A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “affected
10 area” means land along the approximately 116-

1 mile stretch of the Red River, from its con-
2 fluence with the north fork of the Red River on
3 the West to the 98th meridian on the east.

4 (B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “affected
5 area” does not include the portion of the Red
6 River within the boundary depicted on the sur-
7 vey prepared by the Bureau of Land Manage-
8 ment entitled “Township 5 South, Range 14
9 West, of the Indian Meridian, Oklahoma, De-
10 pendent Resurvey and Survey” and dated Feb-
11 ruary 28, 2006.

12 (2) GRADIENT BOUNDARY SURVEY METHOD.—
13 The term “gradient boundary survey method”
14 means the measurement technique used to locate the
15 South Bank boundary line in accordance with the
16 methodology established in *Oklahoma v. Texas*, 261
17 U.S. 340 (1923) (recognizing that the boundary line
18 along the Red River is subject to change due to ero-
19 sion and accretion).

20 (3) LANDOWNER.—The term “landowner”
21 means any individual, group, association, corpora-
22 tion, federally recognized Indian tribe or member of
23 such an Indian tribe, or other private or govern-
24 mental legal entity that owns an interest in land in
25 the affected area.

1 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
3 rector of the Bureau of Land Management.

4 (5) SOUTH BANK.—The term “South Bank”
5 means the water-washed and relatively permanent
6 elevation or acclivity (commonly known as a “cut
7 bank”) along the southerly or right side of the Red
8 River that—

9 (A) separates the bed of that river from
10 the adjacent upland, whether valley or hill; and

11 (B) usually serves, as specified in the fifth
12 paragraph of *Oklahoma v. Texas*, 261 U.S. 340
13 (1923)—

14 (i) to confine the waters within the
15 bed; and

16 (ii) to preserve the course of the river.

17 (6) SOUTH BANK BOUNDARY LINE.—The term
18 “South Bank boundary line” means the boundary,
19 with respect to title and ownership, between the
20 States of Oklahoma and Texas identified through
21 the gradient boundary survey method that does not
22 impact or alter the permanent political boundary line
23 between the States along the Red River, as outlined
24 under article II, section B of the Red River Bound-
25 ary Compact enacted by the States and consented to

1 by Congress pursuant to Public Law 106–288 (114
2 Stat. 919).

3 **SEC. 3. SURVEY OF SOUTH BANK BOUNDARY LINE.**

4 (a) SURVEY REQUIRED.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall commis-
6 sion a survey to identify the South Bank boundary
7 line in the affected area.

8 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The survey shall—

9 (A) adhere to the gradient boundary sur-
10 vey method;

11 (B) span the length of the affected area;

12 (C) be conducted by surveyors that are—

13 (i) licensed and qualified to conduct
14 official gradient boundary surveys; and

15 (ii) selected jointly by and operating
16 under the direction of—

17 (I) the Texas General Land Of-
18 fice, in consultation with each affected
19 federally recognized Indian tribe; and

20 (II) the Oklahoma Commis-
21 sioners of the Land Office, in con-
22 sultation with the attorney general of
23 the State of Oklahoma and each af-
24 fected federally recognized Indian
25 tribe; and

1 (D) be completed not later than 2 years
2 after the date of enactment of this Act.

3 (b) APPROVAL.—

4 (1) STATE APPROVAL.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days
6 after the date on which the survey under sub-
7 section (a)(1) is completed, the Secretary shall
8 submit the survey for approval to—

9 (i) the Texas General Land Office, in
10 consultation with each affected federally
11 recognized Indian tribe; and

12 (ii) the Oklahoma Commissioners of
13 the Land Office, in consultation with the
14 attorney general of the State of Oklahoma
15 and each affected federally recognized In-
16 dian tribe.

17 (B) TIMING OF APPROVAL.—Not later
18 than 60 days after the date of receipt of the
19 survey under subparagraph (A), the Texas Gen-
20 eral Land Office, in consultation with each af-
21 fected federally recognized Indian tribe, and the
22 Oklahoma Commissioners of the Land Office, in
23 consultation with the attorney general of the
24 State of Oklahoma and each affected federally

1 recognized Indian tribe, shall determine wheth-
2 er to approve the survey.

3 (C) SURVEYS OF INDIVIDUAL PARCELS.—

4 (i) IN GENERAL.—Surveys of indi-
5 vidual parcels in the affected area shall be
6 conducted in accordance with this section.

7 (ii) APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.—A
8 survey of an individual parcel conducted
9 under clause (i) shall be approved or dis-
10 approved, on an individual basis, by the
11 Texas General Land Office, in consultation
12 with each affected federally recognized In-
13 dian tribe, and the Oklahoma Commis-
14 sioners of the Land Office, in consultation
15 with the attorney general of the State of
16 Oklahoma and each affected federally rec-
17 ognized Indian tribe, by not later than 60
18 days after the date of receipt of the survey.

19 (2) NO FEDERAL APPROVAL REQUIRED.—The
20 survey conducted under subsection (a)(1), and any
21 survey of an individual parcel described in para-
22 graph (1)(C), shall not be submitted to the Sec-
23 retary for approval.

24 (c) NOTICES.—

1 (1) SECRETARY.—Not later than 60 days after
2 the date on which a survey for an individual parcel
3 is approved by the Texas General Land Office and
4 the Oklahoma Commissioners of the Land Office, in
5 consultation with the attorney general of the State
6 of Oklahoma, under subsection (b)(1)(C), the heads
7 of those offices shall submit to the Secretary—

8 (A) a notice of the approval of the survey;
9 and

10 (B) a copy of—

11 (i) the survey; and

12 (ii) any field notes relating to the in-
13 dividual parcel.

14 (2) ADJACENT LANDOWNERS.—Not later than
15 30 days after the date on which the Secretary re-
16 ceives a notice relating to an individual parcel under
17 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide to each
18 landowner of land adjacent to the individual par-
19 cel—

20 (A) a notice of the approval of the survey;
21 and

22 (B) a copy of—

23 (i) the survey; and

24 (ii) any field notes relating to the in-
25 dividual parcel.

1 **SEC. 4. EFFECT OF ACT.**

2 Nothing in this Act—

3 (1) modifies any interest of the State of Okla-
4 homa or Texas, or the sovereignty, property, or trust
5 rights of any federally recognized Indian tribe, relat-
6 ing to land located north of the South Bank bound-
7 ary line, as established by the survey;

8 (2) modifies any land patented under the Act of
9 December 22, 1928 (45 Stat. 1069, chapter 47; 43
10 U.S.C. 1068) (commonly known as the “Color of
11 Title Act”), before the date of enactment of this Act;

12 (3) modifies or supersedes the Red River
13 Boundary Compact enacted by the States of Okla-
14 homa and Texas and consented to by Congress pur-
15 suant to Public Law 106–288 (114 Stat. 919);

16 (4) creates or reinstates any Indian reservation
17 or any portion of such a reservation; or

18 (5) alters any valid right of the State of Okla-
19 homa or the Kiowa, Comanche, or Apache Indian
20 tribes to the mineral interest trust fund established
21 under the Act of June 12, 1926 (44 Stat. 740, chap-
22 ter 572).

23 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

24 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
25 retary to carry out this Act \$1,000,000.

