and they turned it down. It is not a secret, it was proposed by a United States Senator that this is what he wanted to propose for his State.

We are talking about a program that started in the early 70's, and if we look at the Biosphere Reserve sites, they were approved in 1976 in Alaska, in 1987 in Arizona, in 1976 in Texas, 1981 in Texas, 1983 in California in the redwood range, in the Carolina areas in 1986, in 1976 in the Cascades, the Central Gulf in 1983, the Central Plains in 1976, the Channel Islands in 1986, in 1976 in Montana, in 1976 in Alaska, in 1976 in Colorado, in 1976 in Montana, in 1986 in Alaska, in 1988 in the Golden Gate region of the San Francisco Bay area, in 1976 in Oregon, in 1980 in Hawaii, in 1976 in New Hampshire, in 1976 in Kansas, in Tennessee in 1991, my God, we have got to one in this decade, in 1976 in Puerto Rico, in 1990 in Kentucky, in 1984 in the Mojave in California, in the New Jersey pine lands in 1983, 1979 in Colorado. This is some conspiracy to take over the lands of the United States? This conspiracy has been going on and these places have been designated for 20 years, and the Members have just discovered it?

No, I think what has happened is a very extreme element has been elected to Congress, and somehow now they think they want to make this a problem. They want to make a problem out of the fact that the State of Florida wants to nominate the Everglades as a World Heritage area. That puts it on a par with the Sphinx, the Taj Mahal, the Grand Canyon.

Why do they want to do that? Because they are proud of the Everglades. They put together a committee. They nominated it to the United Nations. They also know that if it is on this list, it is really good for tourism, that their economy will do well. That is why people are trying to get on this list from all over the world, because tourists like to go to areas that have these designations, because they are special, they are worldwide environmental assets.

Now we want to tell them they cannot do that unless they get the approval from the Federal Government. These people have lost their minds. Think about it. This is like telling a person who spends their whole life working to go to the Olympics, but because the medal is given to them by an international body, they have to come to Congress to get approval.

Gee, I think that would be hard. Imagine, you spend your whole life ice skating, weight lifting, you are running world class speeds, but it is an international body, and it is about the sovereignty.

This is not about sovereignty, this is about extremism run amuck. This is about some of the areas that are the pride of our States, the pride of local communities. They are the areas we enjoy with our families, and if they are so fortunate to be a World Heritage area, the whole area wins and the Nation wins, in terms of tourism.

If they are a Biosphere area, we try to do some coordination of research. We do not do any land use planning. What we have learned over the last 20 years is about ecosystems, that if you preserve just a little corner and you do not think about the watersheds or you do not think about the other landscape areas, maybe preserving that area means nothing, because other things go to deteriorate.

We know now that if we clear-cut the areas way up-river, the silt fills the river, kills the fish, destroys the tourism industry, destroys the fishing industry, and maybe even the water quality downstream. So now we like to look in large landscapes and see, can we preserve this?

Now we have been doing this for 25 years, but now somebody says this is a U.N. plot to take over the sovereignty of the United States. It cannot be, folks, it cannot be that we just discovered this 25 years later. This is the U.N. that we owe $1 billion to. Maybe they are coming to repossess us or something.

I do not get what is going on here, but this is craziness. This is craziness, that we would tell these local communities that somehow they now have to come to the Federal Government to get our approval because their citizens and their local governments and businesses want to participate.

No, something is very wrong here. There is some other agenda. Because it cannot be about the Mammoth Cave area in Kentucky that was established in 1990. It cannot be about the Olympic National Park in Washington that was established in 1976. No, I do not think that is what it is about. It is not about the Golden Gate, the redwoods, the Golden Gate Park, the Presidio; these areas that millions of people come to visit and participate to bring millions of tourism dollars to the San Francisco Bay Area.

I do not think that is what it is about. There is some craziness in the air. Have these guys been swimming in the Potomac? Do they have this pfiesteria? What is going on here? No, this bill is not on the level, Mr. Chairman. This bill ought to be rejected overwhelmingly for simply understanding that this is simply not on the level.

We are talking about a program that has been through Republican and Democratic administrations, with the designations in some cases 25 years old. Now we discover a problem that demands that we make these areas go through a Federal procedure and rigmarole so they can have their nomination?

They just cannot be voting for this on that theory, because that is contrary to what many of the supporters of this bill say about the involvement of the Federal Government. Apparently it is not about the involvement of the Federal Government, because they are willing to involve the Federal Government when they want to involve the Federal Government to stymie local initiative, to stymie tourism opportunities, business opportunities.

They now want to give the Congress a check over all of that. These are local areas that have been nominated and participated in a process because they think it will be good for them. Now somehow we are in a war with the United Nations. We should be honored as a Nation that of all of the assets of the world, the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, that they also think that these assets in the country are worth this kind of designation. This is an honor. This is like, you know, we took care of these places, we preserved them. We took care of and preserved the Grand Canyon. We are trying to preserve and protect and are spending hundreds of millions and billions of dollars on the Everglades and the redwood forests and Olympic Peninsula of the Northwest, and the great boundary waters. We took care of that and now we get recognized.

This, again, is like the scientist who works real hard and he gets a Nobel Prize, but it comes from an international body, so we want Congress to decide whether or not he should be able to accept it. This is an honor for our Nation. This is international recognition because we led the world in environmental protection and the protection of these kinds of assets. Now we want to strip our Nation of that honor? I hope they do not.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. Members are reminded that profanity is not accepted on the floor of the House.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to remind the people that it is not the government, it is this Congress, the House of the people, not the government. Number two, they say, why have we not done it before? We have not because we have some people that believed in one world that were chairmen of the committee and subcommittee chairmen who never allowed us to have this on the floor of the House.

Now I am the chairman of this committee. This is the right thing to do for America, for the people of America. It is our responsibility under the Constitution. They may not believe in the Constitution, but I do. They may believe in one world, but I do not. I believe in the sovereignty of the United States of America.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri [Mrs. EMERSON].

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to join my colleagues to urge the House's support of H.R. 901, the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act. I really do commend my colleague, the gentleman from Alaska, Chairman YOUNG, for his dedication to protecting the rights that were granted to us in the Constitution.

Mr. Chairman, when the Framers of the Constitution wrote it, they set up a process of checks and balances. One of the duties designated to Congress in the Constitution is the duty to keep international commitments in check, and to ensure congressional oversight in matters affecting both domestic and foreign policy.

The American Land Sovereignty Protection Act is designed to bring the integrity of the Constitution back to government. In the last few months I have spent a great deal of time talking to the folks in my district, and attending hearings and meetings in order to defend the private property owners in decisions that may affect them.

From the U.S. Man in the Biosphere Program, which has been a hot topic of discussion in southern Missouri as well as surrounding States, such as Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, to the so-called American Heritage Rivers Initiative that is attempting to set up a whole new bureaucracy to regulate our waterways, whole new programs and initiatives are being proposed through the use of Executive orders without any congressional approval or oversight.

Moreover, most citizens are often kept in the dark and left completely out of the process. Before they know it, their lands are nominated and designated by the United Nations or some other steering committee before any public input can be given. This is a direct infringement on their constitutional rights. The protection of those rights is essential for the protection of freedom and ultimately the protection for our country.

Actions such as the designation or a nomination without notice or input from the citizens and locally elected officials is wrong. Furthermore, the U.S. Government has no right to make agreements with international organizations without first making those actions known to its citizens.

If anyone doubts that land use restrictions can occur or that local communities have been deliberately left out of the loop, do not take my word for it. Let us take a look at a feasibility report to the once-proposed Ozark Highlands Man in the Biosphere Program in my congressional district. I will quote directly from that report:

> Normally, there is no need for change in landholding or regulation following a designation of a Biosphere Reserve, except where changes are required to ensure the strict protection of the core area or specific research site.

And the steering committee of this program admitted in their report that they ''* * * decided that public meetings would not be part of the interview process because such meetings tend to polarize views of the public and may capture negative attention from the press.''

Make no mistake about it, the potential for land use restrictions and proposed new regulations are the consequences when we create these types of designations. I believe it is a dangerous and harmful precedent to set to allow the President to designate our lands as Biosphere Reserves without the input of the very citizens that are directly affected. This is simply unacceptable. This practice strips away their right to participate in the democratic process, and erodes the confidence that the general public does place in its government.

Mr. Chairman, it is time to restore this confidence and to require the President to seek congressional approval for actions which spend taxpayer dollars and establish Federal policies with the stroke of a pen. Anything less would be a diminishment of the individual rights guaranteed to each and every one of us in the Constitution.

I urge my colleagues to join my colleague from Alaska and all supporters of property ownership by voting in favor of the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN].

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make two points about this legislation. Mr. Chairman, as a member of the Committee on Science and a former chairman, I have had the opportunity to conduct what relatively little oversight has been conducted of this program.

I will indicate, to begin with, that to some extent I agree with the proponents of this legislation, that there has been inadequate congressional review of the program and that there is a need for oversight. To those who have indicated that they object to the program because it is not an authorized program, I agree with them. Any program, no matter how insignificant it is in monetary terms, and this is a relatively insignificant program in monetary terms, when it reaches the point where it becomes of major policy interest to the citizens of this country, it deserves a congressional review and deserves to be implemented on the basis of a congressional authorization.

For that reason, I have introduced legislation to authorize this program, although from a legal standpoint it has not been construed as being necessary in view of the fact that the programs have been funded now, as has been indicated, for a quarter of a century.

□ 1830

The Biosphere designation, per se, I cannot agree with the supporters of this bill as to its deleterious effect on the people of this country or the sovereignty of this Nation. I do not think that is in fact true, although I do not belittle the fact that there are many people who seem to feel that it is.

The more important purpose of this program is to allow for the conduct of research in similar areas of the world or different areas of the world by scientists in order that there can be some comparison of the impact upon increasing industrialization and increasing urbanization on particular ecosystems around the world. And this research is being conducted by many, many different institutions. In fact, two of the most important research programs are being conducted by the University of Alaska at Anchorage, for example, in one case, and at Fairbanks in another case.

Mr. Chairman, these are very legitimate research programs which are immensely assisted by the fact that they are able to be conducted in designated Biosphere areas. One of these involves a subject I am sure dear to the heart of the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG], the ecological role of hunting in herd dynamics of wild caribou. Since he is an avid hunter, I would think he would want to know more about this important subject. The other similar program in Alaska is likewise devoted to improving the strategies for managing the wild caribou in that area.

These are legitimate. And I did not pick on the gentleman from Alaska for any particular reason. There are similar programs in Russia, for example, where we have research programs conducted by American institutions aimed at quantifying and statistically analyzing the conditions of various reserves in Russia. We are gaining, I would suspect, fairly important information about the effect of the Russian policies on the management of their natural resources.

There is one here, the only one of the group that I have listed that is being conducted by the Center for Scientific Investigations in Merida, Mexico, which I have had an opportunity to visit. This is a very poor area, now a part of the former Mayan empire. They are looking for ways to improve their economy and are doing research on the utilization of native palms there in order to supplant the coconut palm, which no longer grows in that area.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot possibly see any way in which this research cannot be considered extremely valuable to the United States and all the people of the world.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. PETERSON].

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the privilege of being a part of this debate and commend the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] for bringing this legislation forward.

Mr. Chairman, it seems strange to me that when we try to make sure that the voters, the citizens of this country, have a chance to understand world agreements, international commitments, they have a right to know. They have a right to understand.

Yesterday in this very same body, we had a similar debate that the President should continue to have the right to set aside a 1.7 million, 22 million, any other amount, and the people should

have no say through their legislative body, the Congress.

Now today, we are having a similar argument, same participants, saying that the people should have no say, they should not have the right to understand what these designations mean; they should not be notified and allowed to participate in the process.

We heard that most of these were brought about by local community requests. That is not true. We heard it was crazy, trivial, nonsensical, and would have no impact. So then it should not concern anybody, should it? But just before that, we had a speaker who said we are overreaching and this will be so damaging to world policy and world commitment to change. They cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Chairman, I do not believe either side of the aisle goes wrong when we involve the voters, and we involve the voters through local government, State government, and through the Congress, Mr. Chairman, not through national dictators, not through Cabinet officials, who sometimes are just as radical one way or the other, who will move policies forward that take this country and the world in the wrong direction.

We are the body that should oversee to make sure that farming policies are local, State, and Federal Government oriented, not foreign countries or the United Nations; wetland policies are local, State, and Federal Government, not foreign country; timber policies are local, State, and Federal, not the United Nations; mining policies, and on.

The people in America that I represent from the Fifth District want us to make the rules, want us to keep them informed, want us to understand these programs and give them the right to understand these programs.

Mr. Chairman, it seems so simple and so right that when we give the people, the voters that send us here, every chance we can to understand and react to what we do and what our leaders do in world agreements, is that too much to ask? There is a lot of fear out there today that there is a push for a world government, and the American voters are against it.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of this bipartisan legislation. I would also like to thank the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] for his leadership and hard work on this issue.

When a similar bill came to the House floor last year, it received 246 votes. This bill has supporters from both parties, and 174 Members have signed on as cosponsors.

This is a very modest proposal, Mr. Chairman, which will ensure that American citizens have at least some control over policy decisions made concerning public lands in the United States. Most Americans today are deeply concerned about foreign influence over our Government and over land management policies, especially policies made with no real public notice.

The United Nations Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites programs are relics from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, UNESCO. The United States withdrew from that organization in 1984 because it was so mismanaged and politicized. However, there are currently 47 Biosphere Reserves and 20 World Heritage Sites in the United States. These areas were nominated and approved with almost no public discussion or congressional approval.

I believe that before we continue to participate in this program, we should give the American people, through their elected representatives, the opportunity to decide if this is doing what it was designed to do or even if it was needed.

Certainly there is nothing radical and certainly nothing dangerous about this legislation. All it does is attempt to make sure that the American people have the final say about decisions affecting land in the United States.

During the last Congress, the House Committee on Resources held a hearing on a similar bill. At that hearing Dr. Jeremy Rabkin from Cornell University testified that the bill was, quote, a modest but useful statement that global enthusiasm should not be allowed to run roughshod over our traditional constitutional principles.

He went on to state, quote: What is the American interest in these programs? The United States had established programs of conservation long before the United Nations was established. We do not need the permission of other countries to do what we think is necessary to preserve our natural or cultural treasures.

I agree completely. This country has been a leader, not a follower, in protecting natural resources. I do not believe we need a committee made up of primarily Third World countries to tell us how to manage our public lands. As I stated earlier, this bill merely gives the American public the opportunity to decide if they want to participate in these programs.

If my colleagues think Washington bureaucrats and U.N. officials should make land management decisions without effective public input, then vote against this bill. But if they think the American public should have some limited but effective control over how public land is managed, instead of just a meaningless comment period which really has no effect at all, then they should vote for this bill.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I think it is a sad day in this House when the other side has to resort to profanity, childish sarcasm, and scurrilous personal abuse to make its case.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 901.

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR]

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, I do not think people really read this bill very well, from what I have heard. First of all, we had the gentlewoman from Missouri [Mrs. EMERSON] get up and talk about the fact that we need this bill because the local process does not work, and then she pointed out that because there was controversy, Missouri never has had a Biosphere nor ever wants one. And the process is working. They do not get one. It seems to me that that is exactly what this process is about.

The State of Kansas was mentioned. There are no biospheres in Kansas. Another gentleman from Pennsylvania got up. There are no biospheres there in this program. It seems that nothing has injured the States where the Members are from who are getting up and speaking and saying this is something we ought to be afraid of.

Mr. Chairman, 85 countries in the world are in the Biosphere. What we are doing is pulling out of it. The United States is pulling out of the Biosphere program, unless, and this is where I think they have not read the bill because they are talking here about Federal lands. But there are private lands in the Biosphere. There are local water districts.

What proponents of this bill are saying is that Marin County Water District, they are out and they do not get back in because the new bill says it has to be owned by the United States, this is land owned by the United States, and that all designations here before are wiped out.

Well, go tell that to the California State Parks Commission and the Redwoods State Park. Go tell that to the University of California and the Landels-Hill Big Creek Reserve. Go tell that to the Jackson Demonstration State Forest in California. Go tell it to the Audubon Society, which happens to have a ranch where the public can visit. Those have all Biosphere programs. They got into it. There has been no controversy. But they are wiped out, and they can never get back in.

Then the author of the bill talks about, well, this program is going to cost the public money; it has $1 million somewhere involved in Federal commitments. Well, if we are going to go through the process that is going to require any Federal lands and those private and State and local lands are out, they never can get in, we are going to spend hundreds of millions of dollars if we look at the procedures that are requiring an economic impact report within a 10-mile radius.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS].

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Chairman, I brought here a little poster which talks about and shows article IV, section 3, of the U.S. Constitution, and I need this here to remind all my colleagues

of the importance of the Constitution. It gives Congress the power to develop all needful rules and regulations governing land belonging to the United States. But, frankly, over the last 25 years international land programs have been designating an increasing number of pieces of U.S. land without the approval of Congress, without the approval of congressional oversight.

At present, over 68 percent of U.S. national parks, preserves, and national monuments are designated as a U.N. World Heritage Site, Biosphere, or both. Although they were created for environmental protection of public land, Federal management of these programs threatens to expand, expand into private property. The values of nearby private property and local economies could be negatively impacted.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would remind my colleagues to look at this when they vote and remember, Congress should insist that no U.S. land be designated for inclusion in the U.N. Biosphere Reserve or World Heritage Sites without congressional approval. Additionally, local residents and public officials should be allowed to participate, participate in the nominating process.

So, Mr. Chairman, according to the Constitution, which I have here, decisions regarding the use of American lands should remain with the American people. For these reasons, I support H.R. 901, the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act.

Mr. Chairman, the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act is necessary to maintain Congress' role in U.S. land management and to preserve U.S. sovereignty over these lands. Additionally, the act preserves State sovereignty and private property rights in adjacent Federal lands.

Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution gives Congress the power to develop all needful rules and regulations governing lands belonging to the United States. However, over the past 25 years, international land programs have designated an increasing expanse of U.S. lands—without the approval of Congress and virtually no congressional oversight.

At present, over 68 percent of U.S. national parks, preserves, and monuments are designated as a U.N. World Heritage Site, Biosphere Reserve, or both. Although these land designations were created for environmental protection of public land, Federal management of these programs threatens to expand to private property.

The values of nearby private property and local economies could be negatively affected.

The American public is rarely informed of such designations. Federal agencies are not required to include public involvement when nominating an area for a U.N. Biosphere Reserve or World Heritage Site.

Congress should insist that no U.S. land be designated for inclusion in U.N. Biosphere Reserves or World Heritage Sites without congressional approval. Additionally, local residents and public officials should be allowed to participate in the nominating process.

In accordance with the Constitution, decisions regarding the use of American land should remain with the American people. For these reasons, I support H.R. 901, the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act.

□ 1845

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 2½ minutes.

I think my colleague, the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR] makes a very important point. It is just not a question of the Federal lands we are taking out here, but there are arrangements and agreements that local governments, universities, foundations have entered into for the preservation of these biospheres, not because anybody twisted their arm but because they think it important and they are involved in them for educational opportunities, for research opportunities so that we better understand these areas, like the University of California, Clemson University, Little St. Simons Island Foundation, the University of South Carolina, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Vermont Natural Resource agency. It goes on and on and on.

The point being this: These areas were selected and were nominated and are involved in these and have been now for 25 years because local citizens, educational institutions, foundations and local governments felt that this was important. My colleagues on the other side insist upon saying that this is about the management of the land. This has nothing to do with the management of the land. There is no authority, no responsibility and no power to manage the land.

I think that this act, this legislation, has been badly represented by the proponents of it because clearly for 25 years that is not what this legislation has been doing. The proponents ought to make that clear but they refuse to. They want to continue that this is somehow a one world government takeover of local governments, that somehow the University of South Carolina or Clemson University could not figure out that they were doing this at their own volition, or the University of California or Stanford University or the California Parks Department, they could not figure out how to do this on their own, or the Nature Conservancy or the Audubon Society, they could not somehow figure out how to do it on their own. This is that kind of operation.

I would just hope that the Members would take a very clear look at this. This is not as it is represented and this is a bill, a solution that is in search of a problem because the problem simply does not exist. These areas have existed for 25 years. They have been accepted by local communities. They are promoted by local communities. In the case of the World Heritage areas, they are an honor for this Nation.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. CALVERT].

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 901, the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act. For too many years a war has been waged on western lands with private property rights, States' rights and western values being trampled on in the process. Even though Congress is constitutionally entrusted with the power of the management and use of lands belonging to the United States, the United Nations' land designations currently take place without the approval of Congress.

I have heard from many of my constituents in California's 43d Congressional District who are angry because they believe the United Nations has been given the rights to Federal land. They are upset about this issue and wonder how the United States could have let this happen. I am sure many of my colleagues have received similar calls. We in Congress who have been elected to represent them have only one way to help them: Pass this legislation.

H.R. 901 would correct this injustice and require that the Congress approve international land designations in the United States. I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO].

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

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time. I rise in opposition to this bill and point out again that this bill negates two treaties, two treaty agreements that we have, the World Heritage Convention Treaty, the Ramsar Treaty, and the one agreement protocol with Man and Biosphere. Much of the discussion has gone on about Man and Biosphere tonight. This negates these three agreements.

The fact is there are 82 sites in the United States which have been recognized under the World Heritage and the Ramsar and under the Man and Biosphere. I asked for one example where there was a land use limitation placed on any of these by virtue of these three agreements which are negated. The answer that came back was a resounding silence from the other side.

We had allegations, innuendoes, suggestions of proposals.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentlewoman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH] for that example right now.

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Chairman, the best example is the Crown Butte Mine that was a patent and mine site. We are preparing to pay $65 million for that particular taking. That is a taking of private property.

Mr. VENTO. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, that is just an allegation suggesting that somehow the Man and Biosphere Program limited that. That was a decision in terms of other factors that are involved. It was not

the specific Man and Biosphere Program that limited it.

I want to point out that the opening paragraph in the Man and Biosphere Program points out, biosphere reserves, each of which remains under the sole sovereignty of the State where it is situated and thereby submitted to State legislation only, form a world network in which participation of States is voluntary.

The Man and Biosphere Program, incidentally, is a scientific research program. The World Heritage recognizes sites, and it says, article 6 of the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage expressly provides for full respect of the sovereignty of the Nation in whose territory the heritage site is located and further states, ''without prejudice to property rights provided by national legislation.''

Finally, in article 2 of the Ramsar Treaty, the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Ramsar specifically states, ''The inclusion of a wetland on the list does not prejudice the exclusive sovereign rights of the contracting party in whose territory the wetland is situated.''

My question is, what are my colleagues afraid of? It is a sad day to me when the Members of this House have given in to the misconceptions and misinformation that are being used to advance this bill. Loosely associated with the United Nations, but this voluntary conservation recognition has been led by the United States.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH].

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Chairman, I just want to state for the record that there are numerous examples of private property takings and the biggest is, the biggest burden to the American taxpayers is the Crown Butte Mine. That is a $65 million tax bill to the U.S. taxpayers to pay off the private property rights holders, the patent mine holders and the leasing company for the taking of that mine site. Ask people in the Adirondacks in New York. There are people that are furious about this from all over the Nation because of the takings of the use of their private property.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Let me close by saying that many people today feel that we have a government of, by and for the bureaucrats instead of one that is of, by and for the people. They feel powerless to control or affect the decisions even of our own government, but they have much less power in influencing the decisions of the United Nations. Surely we do not want to turn more power over to unelected U.N. bureaucrats. I urge the passage of this very modest, very fair legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, in recent years, an alarmingly large amount of our nation's land has been made subject to various international land use restrictions through United Nations Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site designations. Under the Constitution, Congress has the power to make all meaningful rules and regulations governing lands belonging to the United States. However, these international land designations have been created with virtually no congressional oversight. Equally important, the general public and local governments are rarely consulted in this process.

By consenting to international land use designations, the United States agrees to regulate surrounding lands which, in most cases, include a substantial amount of private property. Honoring these agreements could force the Federal Government to prohibit, or limit, some uses of private lands outside the internationally designated area unless our country wants to break a pledge to other nations. Furthermore, by agreeing to U.N. land designations, the United States may be indirectly agreeing to the terms of international treaties to which the United States is not a party, and which the Senate has not ratified.

The bill amends the National Historic Preservation Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to secure congressional consent to nominate any lands for World Heritage Site or Site in Danger status. Furthermore, the Secretary may not nominate any lands for World Heritage Site status without a finding that no existing commercially viable businesses will be harmed by the land use restrictions associated with a U.N. designation.

H.R. 901 also terminates existing Biosphere Reserves by December 31, 2000 and prohibits future designations unless: the Biosphere reserve is specifically authorized by Congress; the designated lands are entirely owned by the United States; and a management plan exists which specifically provides for the protection of private and non-Federal Government property rights. The Secretary of State is also required to submit an annual report on all Biosphere Reserves in the United States.

Finally, H.R. 901 amends the National Historic Preservation Act to prevent land use restrictions and designations under any international agreements unless that designation is authorized by law, and only allows private property to be included in such a designation with the written consent of the property owner.

H.R. 901 protects private property owners by giving them, as well as their elected representatives, greater input into this process. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation which protects United States sovereignty and the private property rights of American citizens.

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 901, the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act. This legislation is unnecessary and unwise. I share the views of the State Department in the belief that this bill would add a level of political and bureaucratic regulation that is unnecessary and runs counter to the United States role in both local and global environmental cooperation. I also fully share the Clinton administration's view in opposing H.R. 901 because the "bill could significantly reduce U.S. leadership and influence in global conservation and is counter to the U.S. role in global environmental cooperations."

If enacted, H.R. 901 would cancel the Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site programs, including the 67 existing sites in the United States, if Congress did not authorize them. One of these Biosphere Reserves is the Virgin Islands Biosphere Reserve in my district. I initially intended to offer an amendment to remove the Virgin Islands Biosphere Reserve from coverage of this bill but because of an agreement reached by the leadership of the Resources Committee, the ranking minority member, Mr. MILLER will offer my amendment and other similar amendments in-block, instead.

Mr. Chairman the Virgin Islands Biosphere reserve was designated in 1976. During the last 10 years, there have been various efforts to implement the Biosphere Reserve concept on St. John and to develop linkages with the small-island territories and nations in the Lesser Antilles and the Caribbean basin. Because the efforts of the VI Biosphere Reserve have relied heavily on National Park Service, [NPS] resources and participation, the NPS has been a dominant influence in the early efforts to develop a Biosphere Program.

In 1986, the National Park Service constructed the Virgin Islands Biosphere Reserve Center to support the VI Biosphere Reserve goals. The Center provides space for offices for research scientists and resource managers, laboratories, research collections, conferences, training facilities, public education programs, community development activities, and lodging for researchers working in the park. The Center's activities have fostered recognition of the biosphere reserve in the Virgin Islands and the Caribbean basin.

We are proud, Mr. Chairman, of the work that the VI Biosphere Reserve will be doing in developing and implementing conservation and economic programs in the Virgin Islands and Caribbean region. Additionally, because we recognize economic value of being designated a World Heritage Site to our tourism based economy, my constituents and I have been seeking, for some time now, to have the Salt River National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve, in my native St. Croix, received this prestigious designation.

While I respect the property rights concerns of the proponents of this legislation, there simply isn't a need for their fears. Designation as either a Biosphere Reserve of a World Heritage site does not constitute either a loss of United States sovereignty or present a threat to the enjoyment of individual property rights.

My colleague, we should oppose this bill because it's unnecessary and would impair the ability of Federal agencies to work with States and territories, like my district of the Virgin Islands, to achieve the benefits of international recognition for U.S. conservation and research sites.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered as having been read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 901

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 ''American Land Sovereignty Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations governing lands belonging to the United States is vested in the Congress under article IV, section 3, of the Constitution.

(2) Some Federal land designations made pursuant to international agreements concern land use policies and regulations for lands belonging to the United States which under article IV, section 3, of the Constitution can only be implemented through laws enacted by the Congress.

(3) Some international land designations, such as those under the United States Biosphere Reserve Program and the Man and Biosphere Program of the United Nations Scientific, Educational, and Cultural Organization, operate under independent national committees, such as the United States National Man and Biosphere Committee, which have no legislative directives or authorization from the Congress.

(4) Actions by the United States in making such designations may affect the use and value of nearby or intermixed non-Federal lands.

(5) The sovereignty of the States is a critical component of our Federal system of government and a bulwark against the unwise concentration of power.

(6) Private property rights are essential for the protection of freedom.

(7) Actions by the United States to designate lands belonging to the United States pursuant to international agreements in some cases conflict with congressional constitutional responsibilities and State sovereign capabilities.

(8) Actions by the President in applying certain international agreements to lands owned by the United States diminishes the authority of the Congress to make rules and regulations respecting these lands.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purposes of this Act are the following:

(1) To reaffirm the power of the Congress under article IV, section 3, of the Constitution over international agreements which concern disposal, management, and use of lands belonging to the United States.

(2) To protect State powers not reserved to the Federal Government under the Constitution from Federal actions designating lands pursuant to international agreements.

(3) To ensure that no United States citizen suffers any diminishment or loss of individual rights as a result of Federal actions designating lands pursuant to international agreements for purposes of imposing restrictions on use of those lands.

(4) To protect private interests in real property from diminishment as a result of Federal actions designating lands pursuant to international agreements.

(5) To provide a process under which the United States may, when desirable, designate lands pursuant to international agreements.

SEC. 3. CLARIFICATION OF CONGRESSIONAL ROLE IN WORLD HERITAGE SITE LISTING.

Section 401 of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 (Public Law 96–515; 94 Stat. 2987) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) in the first sentence, by—

(A) striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting ''Subject to subsections (b), (c), (d), and (e), the Secretary''; and

(B) inserting ''(in this section referred to as the 'Convention')'' after ''1973''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

''(d)(1) The Secretary of the Interior may not nominate any lands owned by the United States for inclusion on the World Heritage List pursuant to the Convention, unless—

''(A) the Secretary finds with reasonable basis that commercially viable uses of the nominated lands, and commercially viable uses of other lands located within 10 miles of the nominated lands, in existence on the date of the nomination will not be adversely affected by inclusion of the lands on the World Heritage List, and publishes that finding;

''(B) the Secretary has submitted to the Congress a report describing—

''(i) natural resources associated with the lands referred to in subparagraph (A); and

''(ii) the impacts that inclusion of the nominated lands on the World Heritage List would have on existing and future uses of the nominated lands or other lands located within 10 miles of the nominated lands; and

''(C) the nomination is specifically authorized by a law enacted after the date of enactment of the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act and after the date of publication of a finding under subparagraph (A) for the nomination.

''(2) The President may submit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate a proposal for legislation authorizing such a nomination after publication of a finding under paragraph (1)(A) for the nomination.

''(e) The Secretary of the Interior shall object to the inclusion of any property in the United States on the list of World Heritage in Danger established under Article 11.4 of the Convention, unless—

''(1) the Secretary has submitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate a report describing—

''(A) the necessity for including that property on the list;

''(B) the natural resources associated with the property; and

''(C) the impacts that inclusion of the property on the list would have on existing and future uses of the property and other property located within 10 miles of the property proposed for inclusion; and

''(2) the Secretary is specifically authorized to assent to the inclusion of the property on the list, by a joint resolution of the Congress after the date of submittal of the report required by paragraph (1).''.

''(f) The Secretary of the Interior shall submit an annual report on each World Heritage Site within the United States to the Chairman and Ranking Minority member of the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, that contains for the year covered by the report the following information for the site:

''(1) An accounting of all money expended to manage the site.

''(2) A summary of Federal full time equivalent hours related to management of the site.

''(3) A list and explanation of all nongovernmental organizations that contributed to the management of the site.

''(4) A summary and account of the disposition of complaints received by the Secretary related to management of the site.''.

SEC. 4. PROHIBITION AND TERMINATION OF UNAUTHORIZED UNITED NATIONS BIOSPHERE RESERVES.

Title IV of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 (16 U.S.C. 470a–1 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 403. (a) No Federal official may nominate any lands in the United States for designation as a Biosphere Reserve under the Man and Biosphere Program of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

''(b) Any designation on or before the date of enactment of the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act of an area in the United States as a Biosphere Reserve under the Man and Biosphere Program of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization shall not have, and shall not be given, any force or effect, unless the Biosphere Reserve—

''(1) is specifically authorized by a law enacted after that date of enactment and before December 31, 2000;

''(2) consists solely of lands that on that date of enactment are owned by the United States; and

''(3) is subject to a management plan that specifically ensures that the use of intermixed or adjacent non-Federal property is not limited or restricted as a result of that designation.

''(c) The Secretary of State shall submit an annual report on each Biosphere Reserve within the United States to the Chairman and Ranking Minority member of the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, that contains for the year covered by the report the following information for the reserve:

''(1) An accounting of all money expended to manage the reserve.

''(2) A summary of Federal full time equivalent hours related to management of the reserve.

''(3) A list and explanation of all nongovernmental organizations that contributed to the management of the reserve.

''(4) A summary and account of the disposition of the complaints received by the Secretary related to management of the reserve.''.

SEC. 5. INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS IN GENERAL.

Title IV of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 (16 U.S.C. 470a–1 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 404. (a) No Federal official may nominate, classify, or designate any lands owned by the United States and located within the United States for a special or restricted use under any international agreement unless such nomination, classification, or designation is specifically authorized by law. The President may from time to time submit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate proposals for legislation authorizing such a nomination, classification, or designation.

''(b) A nomination, classification, or designation, under any international agreement, of lands owned by a State or local government shall have no force or effect unless the nomination, classification, or designation is specifically authorized by a law enacted by the State or local government, respectively.

''(c) A nomination, classification, or designation, under any international agreement, of privately owned lands shall have no force or effect without the written consent of the owner of the lands.

''(d) This section shall not apply to—

''(1) agreements established under section 16(a) of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4413); and

''(2) conventions referred to in section 3(h)(3) of the Fish and Wildlife Improvement Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 712(2)).

''(e) In this section, the term 'international agreement' means any treaty, compact, executive agreement, convention, bilateral agreement, or multilateral agreement between the United States or any agency of the United States and any foreign entity or agency of any foreign entity, having a primary purpose of conserving, preserving, or protecting the terrestrial or marine environment, flora, or fauna.''.

SEC. 6. CLERICAL AMENDMENT.

Section 401(b) of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 (16 U.S.C. 470a–1(b)) is amended by striking ''Committee on Natural Resources'' and inserting ''Committee on Resources''.

The CHAIRMAN. No amendment shall be in order except amendments 2, 27, 5 and 51 as printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD; one amendment by the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] or his designee at the desk striking section 4(b), and one amendment by the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] or his designee at the desk regarding specific biosphere reserves.

Each amendment may be offered only in the order specified, may be offered only by the Members who caused them

to be printed in the RECORD or their designees or a Member otherwise designated in the previous order of the House.

Each amendment shall be considered as read, debatable for 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question.

The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone a request for a recorded vote on any amendment and may reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the time for voting on any postponed question that immediately follows another vote, provided that the time for voting on the first question shall be a minimum of 15 minutes.

Pursuant to the previous order of the House, it is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. BROWN OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 2 offered by Mr. BROWN of California:

Strike page 8, line 21 through page 9, line 16, and insert the following:

''SEC. 403 (a) No Federal official may nominate any lands in the United States for redesignation as a United States Biosphere Reserve under the Man and the Biosphere Program of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, except in accordance with this section.

''(b) Any designation on or before the date of enactment of the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act of lands in the United States as a United States Biosphere Reserve under the Man and the Biosphere Program of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization shall not have, and shall not be given, any force or effect, unless the proposed United States Biosphere Reserve is determined by the Secretary of State—

''(1) to include—

''(A) little-disturbed areas of natural habitat that are reasonably expected to remain so because of protection or management under any law or regulation in effect before the date of that designation; and

''(B) managed use areas;

''(2) to be suitable to serve as a model of outstanding stewardship fostering a harmonious relationship between human activities and the conservation of natural resources; and

''(3) to have been nominated for designation by each person that holds title to the lands, or in the case of public lands, by the governmental authority administering the lands, after local public comment has been obtained and considered.

''(c) The Secretary of State, or governmental authority administering the nominated lands, shall use appropriate means to publicize nationally the nomination of lands for designation as a United States Biosphere Reserve.

''(d) Designation of lands as a United States Biosphere Reserve shall not convey any additional protections or use restrictions to included lands, or impose any obligations on third parties, including private parties, nor shall it impose any restrictions or requirements on private rights or private property land uses within the lands or adjacent to the lands. Recognition as a United States Biosphere Reserve shall in no way affect United States sovereignty over lands.

''(e)(1) For all designations on or before the date of enactment of the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act of lands in the United States as a United States Biosphere Reserve, the Secretary of State shall transmit to the Congress determinations made under subsection (b) of this section within 90 days after the date of enactment of the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act.

''(2) Upon receiving any new nomination for designation of lands as a United States Biosphere Reserve after the date of enactment of the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act, the Secretary of State, after determining that the requirements of subsection (b) (1) through (4) have been met, shall transmit to the Congress the information received with respect to the nomination. No lands shall be designated as a United States Biosphere Reserve until at least 90 days have passed after the transmittal of information with respect to those lands under this paragraph.

Page 9, line 17, redesignate subsection (c) as subsection (F).

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN] and a Member opposed, each will control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN].

(Mr. BROWN of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to offer an amendment that would place the congressional oversight role for the Man and Biosphere program in a more practical and workable context. As I indicated in my earlier discussion, I feel that the proponents of this bill are correct in asserting that this program deserves congressional authorization and congressional oversight. My amendment would provide for such oversight.

We have debated the pros and cons of the Man and Biosphere program on a number of occasions during this session of Congress, but there remain a number of elusive arguments against the program for which virtually no evidence has been presented. I am not in any way dismissing the seriousness of these arguments regarding private property rights and national sovereignty. Indeed, the legislation in bill form which I have previously introduced would guarantee a continuing active oversight mechanism to ensure that there would be no disregard to private property rights and no loss of national sovereignty.

I pledged to the House on this occasion to exert my very best efforts in bringing this bill to the floor as quickly as possible.

Now, some of the provisions in my bill are likewise included in the amendment which I am offering here today. We are faced today with a bill, H.R. 901, that would have the practical effect of eliminating all biosphere designations and seriously hindering the ongoing research at these sites before we have had an opportunity to examine in any serious way the actual benefits and potential shortcomings of this program.

Again, as I indicated earlier, my previous concern over the last several years has been with the research programs which flow from this designation of Man and Biosphere program. By rescinding all existing biosphere designations and requiring that Congress must pass specific statutory legislation for each designation in the future, we are virtually guaranteeing that no designations will be made.

I want to make a clear distinction between the biosphere designations that we are discussing today and actually setting aside Federal land for legal protection. Obviously this latter point, setting aside Federal lands for legal protection, is an extremely serious decision that is appropriate for specific congressional legislation. The biosphere designations, however, have absolutely no effect on the legal status of any lands. I want to repeat that.

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It may be useless to repeat it, because it has been repeated about a dozen times already, but biosphere designations have absolutely no effect on the legal status of any lands. They serve only to facilitate the research that goes on there. Specifically, they enable a vigorous data exchange program with comparable biospheres elsewhere in the world, some of which I have previously referred to in my earlier discussion.

Thus, it is appropriate that the discussion to identify and nominate biospheres should be a part of the overall responsibilities of the executive branch. Congress should exercise oversight by reviewing those designations during the reporting period specified in my amendment. This is similar to the oversight role that we would exercise over the research itself which is being conducted there.

It is simply unreasonable to burden Congress with a micromanagement role in actually legislating each such decision. Since no designation changes any aspect of the legal status of such lands, these designations do not arise to the level of significance that they should compete with other more substantive legislation that Congress must deal with.

I would point out that my amendment, taken from the bill which I earlier introduced, H.R. 1801, ensures that all nominations and designations remain in local control. To subject, for example, a designation in Texas to a vote of the full House in effect removes this local control aspect. Many biospheres are, in fact, related to State and even privately owned lands when the local owners support such designation. A congressional statute would serve only to override such local actions.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to just briefly quote from the language of my

amendment, in case anyone doubts what I have just indicated. My amendment would require that any lands that are to be designated should have been designated by each person that holds title to the lands. Each person has to participate in the designation. Or in the case of public lands, the governmental authority administering the lands, after local public comment has been obtained and considered, can nominate a land for consideration.

Furthermore, the Secretary of State or governmental authority administering the nominated lands shall use appropriate means to publicize nationally the nomination of lands for designation as a United States Biosphere Reserve. The designation of lands as a reserve shall not convey any additional protection or use restrictions to included lands, or impose any obligation on third parties, including private parties, nor shall it impose any restrictions or requirements on private rights or private property land uses within the land or adjacent to the land.

Now, this is exactly what the proposers of this bill have been asserting that they want. And I have included it in my amendment so that it would be absolutely clear that that is the situation.

In closing, I want to point out that my amendment ensures a proper and appropriate level of congressional oversight while preserving a workable biosphere program because of the overriding importance of the international research conducted within the framework of this biosphere program.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the support of my colleagues for this amendment.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment, and I reluctantly do so because I have great respect for the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN].

But my committee has held three hearings on the biosphere designations. Biosphere Reserves are unpopular because they were created without consulting, working with the public. In my State, no one was notified, including the governor. Nearby property owners, who are not even consulted about the nomination, have legitimate concerns about the program. No hearings have been held on this amendment and there has been no chance for public comment.

Very frankly, I think the amendment is, although well thought out, is not the amendment that should be adopted. For designation of Biosphere Reserves, this amendment delegates the constitutional power of the Congress to the Secretary of State. In all due respect to our new Secretary of State, I do not want this Congress to give her that much power. It only gives us a cursory role to make these decisions.

Frankly, why have more roadblocks? Nearly every month the Congress passes bills naming post offices, park visitor centers, and federal courthouses, and it is all an honorary function. If someone would like to have their area as a biosphere area now, if they want to come back, there is no reason why that Congressman in that district, the person of the people, cannot recommend it.

Again I want to stress that I think it is the role of this Congress to make these definitions, so I do oppose this amendment and urge the defeat of the amendment.

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

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO].

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman yielding me this time, and I want to speak in favor of his amendment.

I think, as the gentleman from California has stated under general debate, that, in fact, these programs, the major program we have been talking about, the Man and the Biosphere Program, in which 120 some nations actually participate, we have actually, as a Nation, led in the development of this program to provide research, global research.

Now, because I am for global research does not mean I am for one world government as some might assume. The fact is, of course, that I think we need the 650 research sites we have around the globe. Forty-seven Biosphere Reserves, we know, are in this country, the United States of America, and many of them serve as a focus of that scientific research.

Mr. Chairman, my job, as a Member of Congress, I think, is translating new knowledge, new information into public policy. One source of that information, of course, in terms of landscape and land use questions and the health of these types of ecosystems comes from this primary on-the-ground type of research.

Almost every one of our land management agencies, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Park Service, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and others, have as one of their functions their mission, scientific endeavor. In fact, we have some of the most renowned scientists in the world in terms of our forests and landscapes in the Forest Service and in the Fish and Wildlife Service and in the Park Service.

The fact is that in designating these M.B.P. we can build and do build as much knowledge as we might have within the continental United States or the various States that are not within it, Puerto Rico, American Samoa. Each one of these has been a focus in terms of research activities. But as far as we go, we still end up with an incomplete picture if that is the only information that we obtain.

So in terms of working cooperatively under this voluntary program that has been set up, the Man and the Biosphere Program, we obtain that type of information so that we can make better public policy decisions. And whether we agree or not with questions like global warming or the pollution that is occurring, perhaps, in the oceans, the conditions and problems with the atmosphere and ozone, all of this type of information can be gathered cooperatively.

And that events occurring on these special landscapes. The information that comes from the Caribbean National Forest in Puerto Rico, or the Andrews Experimental National Forest in the State of Washington, all is very important. A couple of these happen to be biosphere sites. We can pull that information together, from more important data so that we can make better decisions.

What has been stated here is that this program, one of the major objections was that it was not authorized. Well, here we have a chance in an authorizing bill to authorize the Man and the Biosphere Program. I think it is constituted appropriately. It has been operating for 25 years. Various agencies, the Federal Government, have accomplished this. It is part of a major agreement that we have entered into, as I said, with 125 other nations participating; 651 scientific sites.

With the action of this bill, and the absence of legislation or modifications such as the gentlemen from California [Mr. BROWN] and [Mr. MILLER] will propose, we would be unilaterally withdrawing from the MBP, from the universities that have made the agreements, from the corporations that have made the agreements, all on a voluntary basis, from the State governments and the agencies of the State governments that have made the agreements. This Congress, in buying into the ideas and the fears, I very much regret that, that in fact we would be reneging and yielding our leadership in terms of conservation and science in terms of the environment on a global basis.

So I strongly rise in support of the gentleman's amendment to reauthorize this. As he stated, he has put in the provisions that deal with some of the property concerns that have been raised.

No one has brought a single example up of the 82 sites, including the 47 Biosphere Reserves, in fact, where these agreements, these treaties, have had any impact on any land use decision. They may bring information, they may bring information that is used in decision-making by those that have the authority to make decisions, but there has been no instance.

And I think if they are guilty of being loosely associated with the United Nations, so be it. But I think we need this information as individuals because we live in an environment in which the global condition and the global science is something of an information network that we have to create.

I urge Members to adopt this sensible amendment that the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN] has offered.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BRADY].

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Chairman, I rise to respectfully oppose this amendment.

The Secretary of State is simply no substitute for the American people. Texas now has two Biosphere Reserves totaling over three-quarters of a million acres in our State affecting a lot of counties and a lot of people.

The Secretary of State is simply not qualified to determine, as this amendment asks him to do, to determine natural habitat areas, land stewardship, the conservation of natural resources or a number of other environmental issues. The Secretary of State, whose job it is to help direct our relationships with foreign countries, is no more closer to this mission than the IRS or the Federal Election Commission. They are all equally unqualified to determine property rights in States across our country.

The bottom line is that those who work hard, save enough money to buy a house and make a mortgage understand how difficult it is, how extremely hard one has to work to buy land, to own a family farm, to keep it running, to buy a ranch and operate it, to work all their lives and buy a home in the country to retire upon. And while some people would call them extremists, I say they have earned the right to have a say in how their land is used and how the land adjacent to them is used.

That is why this bill, in its concept, in its principle, says that we ought to, as Congress and the American people, have a say, a real say in what happens to our lands in our States.

Local government leaders have testified before the Committee on Resources that they were never consulted, had no idea about the creation of biospheres in their local areas. Several States have passed resolutions opposing the biospheres that have already been created. That alone raises a real doubt about the validity and the value of the properties that have already been designated, and it underscores the need for us to have a say.

America's lands ultimately belong to America and not to the world. Private lands belong to private property owners and not to the United Nations and not without our consent. It is time to protect our lands and our rights by giving us a voice through Congress on how these lands are used.

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining on each side?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN] has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and let me close, really, by trotting out the heavy artillery here.

I note in the list of research projects that are being supported under the Man and the Biosphere Program that one of these is from my own State of California, where they are developing the integrated monitoring data and information system, which allows us to keep constant control over all the research that is going on around the world, and it comes right back to California where we can watch it and take advantage of it.

But even more impressive is the fact that out of this list of 15, two of them are in the State of Alaska. And perhaps I am reading this figure wrong, but I think one says $50 million and the other $35 million, or $15 million, and these will automatically go down the drain if this bill passes.

I know my good friend from Alaska, who has been so assiduous in pursuing the welfare of Alaskans and the receipt of research grants for all good things that help the world, would be devastated to lose this inflow of Federal cash.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington [Mrs. LINDA SMITH].

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I stand tonight as a strong supporter of this bill, and I stand against the amendment, not because of the intender, I think that his intentions are good, but I can find nowhere in the Constitution that we would give the power to the Secretary of State over our lands.

As my colleagues can see, article IV, section 3, of the Constitution says, ''The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.''

International designations, such as World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves, and others occur without congressional input or approval and are in direct conflict with article IV, section 3.

Unfortunately, these designations usually occur without the input of local citizens, and quite often they are not even aware that they happen until something happens to them, like they lose their local property rights or the use of their property.

Everyone here should be concerned about these designations and should support the bill, H.R. 901, because what it does, it stands up for local property owners, but it also says the Congress is responsible to the people. We are elected. And the reason I stand against this amendment is, the Secretary of State is not; the Secretary of State is appointed. It is not unreasonable to ask that these nominations be made in the light of day, they be confirmed by the people's body, and that we protect the sovereignty of America.

I would ask that my colleagues consider very strongly voting against this amendment but also for the final bill. It passed strong before with a 246 to 178 vote, and I think it will again tonight if we know our Constitution.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, how much time do we have remaining?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to report that the U.S. Man and Biosphere program is funding a meeting of those concerned with the restoration of the Florida Everglades through a grant. The meeting is at a resort in Maine. Why is it not being held in Florida near the Everglades, the subject of the meeting?

Local participation would be encouraged, and the meeting would cost the taxpayers less. But I really think this shows how badly this program is being managed. It is not being managed, it has not been managed, it is a boondoggle, it has been a boondoggle, and it circumvents the role of Congress.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR].

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, the question I have to ask is this: If it just supports ecological research cooperation, why would his bill want to remove the private sector from being able to do that on their own lands, or local districts to do it, or even State parks from doing this ecological research? Why would his bill say they cannot do it?

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Reclaiming my time, I believe most of these areas were set aside without public input. There is no reason why, if it is such a great idea and a good operation, if there is one in his district, I would certainly support the gentleman if he represents that district, as I have said otherwise. But it should still be this Congress and not some other agency.

Mr. FARR of California. But my amendment would exempt it.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from California [Mr. FARR] has yielded the balance of his time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN].

The amendment was rejected.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the previous order of the House, it is now in order to consider amendment No. 27 printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

AMENDMENT NO. 27 OFFERED BY MR. VENTO

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 27 offered by Mr. VENTO:

On page 11 of the bill—

(1) on line 10, strike ''and'';

(2) on line 13, strike the period and insert instead ''; and''; and

(3) after line 13, insert the following:

' ''(3) sites nominated under the Convention on Wetlands of International, Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (popularly known as the Ramsar Convention).' ''

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] and a Member opposed each will control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO].

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 minutes.

I rise, of course, in support of the amendment that I have submitted. During the markup of this bill in the full Committee on Resources, an amendment was offered that will effectively end the U.S. participation in the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as waterfowl habitat.

This amendment is one that the ducks and geese and sportsmen should be in favor of adopting, Mr. Chairman, the convention on wetlands, especially waterfowl, generally known as the Ramsar Convention.

My amendment would reaffirm the U.S. participation in this 25-year-old international agreement that celebrates 775 wetland sites around the world, only 15 of which are within the United States, only 15. This is an entirely voluntary program, and it is named after a meeting that was held in Ramsar, Iran.

I am still rather baffled why anyone would want to end our involvement in this voluntary agreement, this Ramsar Treaty. It imposes no land use restrictions or regulations on American landowners. All it does, and it is the only international agreement to do so, is encourage worldwide protection of wetlands.

Currently, 92 nations have joined in adopting the Ramsar objective to stem the loss of wetlands and ensure their conservation. Again, the agreement makes no mandates and sets no rules. Statements to the contrary are simply incorrect. Congress writes the laws, and Congress sets the rules.

As I have said, I would join the supporters of this bill in opposing any international agreement that did restrict our powers to do so. This, however, is not the case. This debate ought to be about wetlands, which are important for a number of reasons. They serve as a valuable natural resource for wildlife and people, a vast array of wildlife, including, of course, many important species of migratory waterfowl. They provide food and shelter and, of course, rich vegetation.

The wetlands soak up water, reducing flooding, and they also help break down pollutants and protect clean water supplies, which, of course, feed into the various aquifers very often or into our surface streams and rivers. Development that destroys wetlands, thus, has important consequences. It reduces our ability to cope with difficult flood situations and reduces wildlife habitat, the major cause, of course, of the decline of many wetland species.

Indeed, I often wonder if we could have prevented the horrible floods that occurred in my home State earlier this year if we had protected more of our precious wetlands.

Ramsar seeks to temper this development by promoting international cooperation in responsible use and management of wetlands. Participating nations consider wetlands conservation in natural resource planning and seek to maintain the ecological character of wetlands. Most importantly, the 15 U.S. Ramsar sites are part of an international network of protected areas necessary for the conservation of wetland-dependent migratory species.

This Congress should not end U.S. participation in the Ramsar Convention. Wetlands are among the most productive environments in the world and provide amazing examples of our planet's biological diversity. The Ramsar Convention celebrates the importance of these remarkable habitats worldwide and ensures their protection for future generations.

The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that this treaty, this agreement, provides us the opportunity to lead and to encourage other nations to preserve wetlands. We do a pretty good job here in terms of many of the wetlands we have.

Obviously, we debate it and it is a matter of great concern, I think, to most of the Members of this body. But the fact is, how can we project beyond what we do in this country? Because we know that many of these species migrate to the other hemisphere in some cases and out of the country, in Mexico, and many other places.

We have many volunteer programs that do this, such as Ducks Unlimited. But the fact is, on a global basis, if we want to deal with wetlands, this is one form of voluntary organization, a voluntary treaty, which has no effect in terms of anyone's property rights, which is entered into. We have 15 such sites which are celebrated. As I said, there are many more sites on a global basis.

I would encourage the Members to restore this amendment to the bill, so this is an exception, so this treaty remains in force and effect and it is not knocked out by this measure before us.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I would like to remind my colleagues that H.R. 901 will not end participation by the United States in the Ramsar Convention. It does not do that. It has no effect on existing Ramsar sites, does not affect them at all. All it does is simply require any new Ramsar sites to be recognized and approved by its adoption.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH].

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] for yielding me the time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 901 and in strong opposition to the Vento amendment. The Vento amendment would allow international officials to nominate sites under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, commonly known as the Ramsar Convention, without having to abide by the controls on such designations listed in H.R. 901.

In essence, Mr. Chairman, the Vento amendment would allow international bureaucrats to designate U.S. lands as wetlands. Such classifications would not require the approval of Congress nor the consent of the owner of the land.

Mr. Chairman, that is significant, so let me repeat that. Under the Vento amendment, a wetlands designation under the Ramsar Convention would not require the approval of Congress nor the consent of the owner of the land. That is not only wrong, it would surrender common sense and constitutional rights.

The goal of H.R. 901 is to ensure that international agreements do not infringe upon our sovereignty. For this reason, the Committee on Resources passed an amendment by voice vote that said sites selected under the Ramsar Convention must be authorized in the same way other international designations are, by passing a law.

Mr. Chairman, protecting waterfowl habitat is a laudable goal we all should support. However, too many times the Ramsar Convention has been used, actually abused, by special interest groups looking to usurp private property rights. Let me provide just one example of the far-reaching effects of the Ramsar Convention.

Steve Lindsey of Canelo, AZ, is a fifth-generation rancher in the southeastern part of my State. His family has ranched the same land since the late 1860's. On January 28 of this year, a radical special interest group petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to designate 60 acres of Mr. Lindsey's privately-owned land as a ''wetland of international importance especially as waterfowl habitat.'' The designated area, Mr. Chairman, can be seen in the picture next to me right here.

Let us take a look at this picture. I would especially ask opponents or proponents of this amendment to take a look at this picture. As they can see, water does not cover the 60 acres of land the extremists want designated under the Ramsar Convention. Rather, a small meandering stream known as Turkey Creek runs through the property only 4 months of the year.

Let me show my colleagues a picture of Turkey Creek, Mr. Chairman. It is scarcely discernible. Here is the supposed wetland. This picture illustrates that the creek is no more than a foot wide and a few inches deep.

Again, the goal of the Ramsar Convention is to protect waterfowl habitat. I would simply say to the Members of this body that this creek is no more a waterfowl habitat than the fountain across the street in front of the Library of Congress. The duck hunters, Mr. Chairman, do not care about this puddle. It is only suitable for rubber ducks.

There are no less than 10 such proposed designations in my home State of Arizona. Needless to say, unelected and unaccountable international officials should not have unchecked, unparalleled power to name sites in the United States under the Ramsar Convention, ruin the livelihood of our citizens, and deny them their right as citizens.

□ 1930

Mr. Chairman, the Ramsar Convention is another example of government gone haywire. It tramples on the sovereignty that we as a nation so cherish. H.R. 901 would help rectify this egregious violation of our international sovereignty.

As Mr. Lindsey stated in his testimony before the Committee on Resources earlier this year, ''It is absolutely necessary that this bill, H.R. 901, include the Ramsar Convention and that this bill is passed and implemented. As a sovereign nation, we cannot give any more power to those who desire to control our very existence.''

Therefore, I urge defeat of the Vento amendment.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1 minute.

I would just point out to my colleague from Arizona that most of the examples that have been brought up here in terms of all of it, these examples with regard to Ramsar, are areas that were proposed. None of us can prevent people from making recommendations as to protection of a wetland area, and the fact is that they had not been identified. There are no sites in Arizona that, in fact, are so designated.

The specific provisions of this bill would prevent any type of private or State land or other lands from even being considered, even if people wanted to do so, and they are permitted on a voluntary basis. So it simply denies the opportunity to even consider it. To those that voluntarily want to participate in this type of agreement, it simply denies it. That is what the legislation does.

So repeatedly we ask for specific examples of any type of instance where any property right, any type of denial or control was placed by virtue of any of these three, and we are simply given back examples of proposals or measures or other activities involved that do not really reflect; no one can answer that question.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR].

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, I would like to correct something that the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG], the chairman of the full committee, said. When he introduced this bill, of which the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH] was a cosponsor, it exempted the Ramsar sites, and on page 11 of the bill that was introduced it said, ''Sites to be exempted: Sites nominated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially waterfowl habitat, properly known as the Ramsar Convention.''

But the amendment that was offered by the gentlewoman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWITH] in the committee exempted that, so this amendment that the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] is bringing up is trying to put the bill back in its original order the way the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] introduced it, because it does protect the waterfowl that the gentleman is interested in protecting. What it is doing is, it is restoring the bill to what the gentleman thought was the proper exemption from the bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FARR of California. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, all we are doing is saying, any future Ramsar sites have to come before the Congress. It does not affect anything that is in place now. Nothing affects the Convention; it just says it has to come back here. We are protecting those wetlands.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, no, because what it says, and I disagree with my colleague, it is easily read on page 10, line 17. It says that it has to be specifically authorized by law. That is not an exception. One has to introduce a law in the future to recognize that. We are not exempting it, we are kicking it out. None of these things apply to Ramsar sites. The gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] is not exempting any of them, and for those that he wants, he has to take an act of Congress to get it back in.

I do not think that is what the gentleman intended, and that is why I think the Vento amendment is in order and it is a proper one and we ought to support it, because the bill does just the opposite of what the gentleman from Alaska got up and spoke about.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FARR of California. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, it says prospective, it does not say in the past. It is retroactive. It says prospective. That is what it says.

All I am saying is any future Ramsar Convention sites have to come back to the Congress.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, the gentleman has not exempted the existing sites.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. But we are talking about prospective.

Mr. FARR of California. No.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Yes.

Mr. FARR of California. Well, I can read also.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FARR of California. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I would just point out that prospectively this makes it impossible, frankly, to really put it in effect, because if we look at the prescriptions here, we can have no State lands, for instance, that would be involved and we could have no private lands in terms of corporations or those that voluntarily want to participate. And if there is anything I think that we know, even though there are vast Federal lands that are the domain of the public, the fact is that these lands end up being intermixed, especially these wetlands end up being intermixed.

I come down on the side of the gentleman from California with regard to his interpretation of what this is. It says, if we read on page 11, it says, a nomination, classification existing or designation under any international agreement. It does not say prospective agreements, it says any international agreement of privately owned land shall have no force or effect without the written consent of the owner of the lands. And then it goes on, this section shall not apply.

So that means since they knocked out Ramsar, that all of these particular provisions in section 5 which are not exempt come under section 5. So all of those requirements come under it.

So the fact is that we are overreaching here. This is an amendment which will not only vitiate the existing, but make it nearly impossible to set this in place.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, does not the gentleman's amendment restore this bill to the shape it was in when it was introduced by the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG]?

Mr. VENTO. Yes, it does.

Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1 additional minute, and I yield to the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR] if he has further comments.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I would hope that the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] would accept this amendment for the reasons that he got up and stated that he is interested in preserving these wetlands, particularly because they are the nursery for so many of our wild birds, wildlife, and in fact he is very interested in preserving those.

Those bird life know no boundaries. They do not respect as to where they land and feed, they do not respect whether it is Federal property or State property or local property, and this ought to be exempted for the protection of such waterfowl. I would think that he would easily adopt the gentleman's amendment to correct what has

been taken out of this bill in a fashion which he did not understand.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, there are 775 sites globally; 15 are in the United States. Most of the United States exist in issues where we have fish and wildlife and other existing types of wetlands.

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

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume to point out that we have a letter here from the World Wildlife Fund, and they are opposing a road that would be a very safe road between an airport up in Alaska and a village, and they are opposing it on the basis that, well, in fact they say the bill would violate the obligations of the United States under the Ramsar Convention to conserve the ecological character of wetlands of international importance.

Now, this is a reason why we cannot support the gentleman's amendment, and I also would like to simply state for the record that anyone who has tried to apply for a 404 permit under the Army Corps of Engineers' guidelines would just shudder at the thought of having to also deal with an international body in trying to get a 404 Army Corps of Engineers permit.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. POMBO].

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

I had not originally intended on speaking on this particular amendment, but the debate intrigued me so much that I decided to ask for time to speak.

All afternoon we have heard how these particular treaties are honorary and they do nothing, and now we have an amendment because it is so important, because these treaties do things that are so important. It seems somewhat contradictory that on the one hand they do nothing, but on the other hand they are important because of all that they are capable of doing in protecting wetlands.

In regards to what the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH] was speaking about a little earlier in the protection of a particular piece of land that resides in his congressional district, I found it interesting to note that in June 1993, the Southwest Center for Biological Diversity petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the Canelo Hills Lady's Tresses as an endangered species. That was listed as an endangered species in January of this year, and as a result of a lawsuit that was filed by that particular organization.

I have here a copy of a newspaper article that ran in February 1997, February of this year, that has a quote from someone that says, ''by protecting these Arizona wetlands through the Ramsar Convention, we get international oversight, and that is exactly what the developers do not want,'' said Kieran Suckling, who is the executive director of the Southwest Center for Biological Diversity.

Well, it seems like they did not get exactly what they wanted by finding an endangered species to list on that particular piece of property, so then they began to put their efforts into having an international treaty entered into to protect this as an important wetland.

So I think we can begin to understand why people out in the real world are concerned about these particular international agreements that are entered into without congressional oversight, without their representative having the opportunity to stand before Congress and make their argument to his colleagues or her colleagues.

I think we begin to understand why people are concerned about that. It is because these international agreements are used by groups, whether they are American environmental groups or whether they are groups outside of America, they use these international agreements to achieve their goals, and if they cannot get what they want through Congress, if they cannot get what they want through the bureaucracy, through the administration, they will go around them to an international organization to try to achieve that.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POMBO. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, first of all, since the gentleman has none of these biospheres in his district, is there any example of effect on property rights that the gentleman can mention?

Mr. POMBO. Yes. Reclaiming my time, I think that this amendment deals with Ramsar. The situation that was brought up by the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH] earlier, with the concerns of that particular gentleman on his particular ranch, are concerns that private property owners all across the country have.

I think that is exactly what is going on, and that is what scares people, that now they do not just deal with their local bureaucrat and through the entire Federal bureaucracy and fighting with Congress and everything else that unfortunately the American people have become used to and find as an important, everyday fact of being in the ranching business that they have to deal with Federal bureaucrats, but now all of a sudden they have an international convention that is coming down on them, an international agreement that is coming down on them that they cannot handle, that they do not want.

If these things, if they just have to be approved by Congress, it does not change the underlying agreement; it does not change the protection of anything. All it is saying is that Congress has to approve it.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POMBO. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman had some wetlands on his property and he wanted the University of California to do some research in conjunction with his ranching operations, does the gentleman think he should have to come to Congress to have that research done?

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, no, I do not think they should have to come to Congress to have research done on a wetlands that happens to be in their district, but I am sure that a university would be fully capable of studying wetlands that occur on my ranch or anybody else's ranch without the United Nations or anyone else getting involved.

See, my colleagues on the other side make the mistake of thinking that unless we have a Federal bureaucracy and a State bureaucracy and a local bureaucracy, and now an international bureaucracy to study all of this stuff, we do not have quite enough bureaucracy.

The way things used to work is that if there was a problem, we studied it, we figured it out and we got it done. Now all we do is study it to death. All we have is, we have the local planners that have to have their bureaucracy that we have to fight through; and then we go to the county and then the State and then the Federal Government, and now international, and now my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are happy. We are trying to change that.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would like to point out that again the gentleman from California [Mr. POMBO], a member of the committee, talked about creating more bureaucracy. The fact is that these 651 agreements that exist with regards to the 775 sites, the actual work that goes on there, are voluntary agreements in terms of what takes place.

What we are doing is injecting ourselves into it and saying one has to come to Congress if one wants to be part of the Ramsar Convention. So we are injecting ourselves into it. It really is taking back from the Fish and Wildlife or the State Department, Natural Resources, or the university or private landowner that is into this particular agreement.

The reason we have this agreement is of course to try and encourage countries to preserve their wetlands. We obviously have led the world in many conservation areas in the preservation of wetlands, the application of that knowledge, the ultimate protection of the waterfowl that are in them.

What is happening here is that my colleague is suggesting in this bill to take the United States out of that particular role in terms of leadership. We have 15 of these sites in the United States, 760 of them around the world.

□ 1945

The gentleman points out that somebody made a proposal somewhere that suggested that this international agreement was going to stop development, or affect an endangered species. I agree with the gentleman, I think fear and these concerns should be realistic, but they should also be tangible. They should have meaning. If there is an action that the Ramsar Convention has in fact caused, then I think I would like to hear it, but so far I have not heard it.

Mr. Chairman, we have gone far afield. This bill had this exemption and somebody came into committee and gave some testimony with regard to fears that they had. I regret that. I think Members, though, ought to be motivated by facts. The issue is that for over 25 years this agreement, this treaty has been in agreement. We have ceded some power to our executives that represent us. This is a voluntary agreement. It has no effect in terms of the land use, other than the limitations that the Federal Government may put on some of its wetlands, or States, or private property owners and other individuals that own lands.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VENTO. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, I think people ought to take a very close look at this amendment. It restores the exemption that the chairman originally wanted when he introduced the bill, but the same cosponsors that have gotten up are now speaking against this amendment.

The Ramsar treaty allows countries which we need to have treaties with, particularly since our wildfowl fly over national boundaries. We have a lot of birds from Canada that come to the United States. Certainly we have to have some common research methodology, common denominators on habitat that are entered into voluntarily.

I would think that the chairman would want to reinstate this amendment to protect the very interests that he has spoken so passionately about in committee and on the floor.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his statement.

I think this is a good amendment. It does preserve the wetlands, the Ramsar treaty. It is an important treaty, a voluntary treaty. It has given us the opportunity to save wetlands around the world. I would hope that this body would stand up for that principle tonight.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Idaho, [Mrs. HELEN CHENOWETH].

Mrs. CHENOWETH. I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to say that the issue of regulation of wetlands has been one that has been very difficult for this Nation. While we understand the values of wetlands, it has been a source of grief for many, many Americans, just getting through the American rules and regulations for designated wetlands. There are many farmlands and areas out of production because of just our American designation of wetlands.

Anyone who really wants to understand the grief of wetlands and the wetlands saga needs to look back at the John Poszgai case. John Poszgai was a Hungarian freedom fighter who fought his way to America, and set up a small business, and ultimately ended up spending a number of years in a Federal penitentiary because he dumped some dirt on his land, with the permission of the local units of government. But all the Federal agencies apparently had not given him the permission. Being a foreigner, he did not totally understand the entire situation.

I just point this out to say there has been a lot of grief over wetlands in the United States of America. Why do we need an international body? Why do we need an agreement coming out of Ramsar, Iran? Let us take care of our own business right here in the United States of America.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to remind my colleagues that my bill, as it is being debated tonight, does not affect existing Ramsar sites. It does not affect those sites. We are still in the convention. All I am doing is try to restate again the constitutional role of this Congress to designate areas that have been picked by the Ramsar Convention in the future, prospective. That is all it does.

I would like to suggest one thing. It was mentioned about King Cove and the road that was supposed to go to Cold Bay in Alaska, and the so-called World Wildlife Fund says the bill would violate the obligation of the United States under the Ramsar Convention.

What does that mean? It means that the Ramsar Convention being defended by my good friend, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] is now willing to put the lives of my Alaskan constituents in jeopardy every day because they do not want 7 miles of road built through a so-called Eisenbeck refuge area that has 200 miles of roads in it, and every use in the world, but they use the Ramsar Convention as an excuse.

I want to suggest that we ought to do one thing, put this back into the control of the Congress in the future for Ramsar Convention sites. It does not hurt the existing sites.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. VENTO. I do not want to accept the allegation they make in it. I think this is a designated wilderness site. It has other restrictions on it. As far as I can see that is not the designated site under Ramsar.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. All I am saying is what they say.

Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting they are using this type of thing to impose a terrible hardship on my people in Alaska when it is incorrect. Let them come back to Congress and let us discuss the future Ramsar sites.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO].

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 195, noes 220, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 498]

AYES—195

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baldacci
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berman
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boucher
Boyd
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Castle
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cummings
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Ehlers
Engel
English
Eshoo
Evans
Ewing
Farr
Fattah
Fawell
Fazio
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Ford
Fox
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gilchrest
Gilman
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hooley
Horn
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kelly
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klug
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
LaTourette
Leach
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Mollohan
Morella
Nadler
Neal
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Pomeroy
Porter
Poshard
Price (NC)
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Shays
Sherman
Sisisky
Skaggs
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stokes
Strickland
Tauscher
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Velazquez
Vento
Walsh
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weldon (PA)
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn

NOES—220

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Berry
Bilbray
Bishop
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Bonilla
Bono
Boswell
Brady
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehrlich
Emerson
Ensign
Everett
Foley
Fowler
Franks (NJ)
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gillmor
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
Lazio
Lewis (CA)
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
Martinez
McCollum
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Murtha
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Parker
Paul
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Redmond
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shimkus
Shuster
Skeen
Skelton
Smith (MI)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stenholm
Stump
Stupak
Sununu
Talent
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Traficant
Turner
Upton
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—18

Bilirakis
Boehner
Burton
Cooksey
Etheridge
Foglietta
Gonzalez
Hilliard
Kennelly
Lewis (KY)
McDade
Moakley
Moran (VA)
Radanovich
Schiff
Stearns
Visclosky
Yates

□ 2012

Mr. QUINN and Ms. PRYCE of Ohio changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no''.

Mr. FILNER, Mr. SNYDER and Ms. HARMAN changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye''.

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Chairman, on the last amendment, the Vento amendment, I was unavoidably detained; and had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SOLOMON) having assumed the chair, Mr. SUNUNU, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that the Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 901), to preserve the sovereignty of the United States over public lands and acquired lands owned by the United States, and to preserve State sovereignty and private property rights in non-Federal lands surrounding those public lands and acquired lands, had come to no resolution thereon.

□ 2015

PERMISSION TO FILE CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2169, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the managers on the part of the House may have until midnight tonight, Tuesday, October 7, 1997, to file a conference report on the bill (H.R. 2169) making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year 1998, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SOLOMON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

AMERICAN LAND SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of today and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 901.

□ 2015

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill [H.R. 901] to preserve the sovereignty of the United States over public lands and acquired lands owned by the United States, and to preserve State sovereignty and private property rights in non-Federal lands surrounding those public lands and acquired lands, with Mr. SUNUNU in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole House rose earlier today, amendment No. 27 offered by the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] had been disposed of.

Pursuant to the previous order of the House, it is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. FARR OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 5 offered by Mr. FARR of California:

On page 10 of the bill, after line 8, insert the following:

''(d) Subsection (b) shall not apply to California Coastal Ranges Biosphere Reserve.''

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from California [Mr. FARR] and a Member opposed, each will control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR].

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FARR of California. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, is this the amendment that affects the Central Valley California district or is this the amendment that affects the Redwoods?

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, it affects the California coast ranges, only to central California.

Mr. Chairman, if I may continue, this amendment is very simple. What it says is that we want to be exempted from the bill of the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG]. And that is the California coast ranges. This includes State forests, the Jackson Demonstration State Forest, the Landels-Hill Big Creek Reserve, which is part of the university. This amendment exempts the California coast ranges and the biosphere reserve from the bill.

What it does is retain existing biosphere designations for the State forests, for the Channel Islands, the National Marine Sanctuary, for the Audubon Canyon, Bodega Marine Reserve, Cordell Banks National Marine Sanctuary, the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, and the Marin Municipal Water District.

The gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS], the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI], the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WOOLSEY], myself, and the gentleman from California [Mr. CAPPS] are affected by this amendment and to my knowledge we all support it. I will not speak for the gentleman from California Mr. RIGGS, but for Ms. PELOSI, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. FARR of California, and Mr. CAPPS, we think that the process for the designation of biosphere reserves has been adequate. It has gone up through a local process. It has gone up through the State lands commission.