

American Wetlands Conservation Act is a critical part of this effort. The bill, as amended at subcommittee, is strongly supported by Ducks Unlimited and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The Partnerships for Wildlife Act was enacted to ensure that nongame, non-endangered wildlife did not slip through the cracks between existing conservation programs. It also matches Federal dollars with State and local funds to support a wide variety of wildlife conservation and appreciation projects.

H.R. 2556 reauthorizes the North American Wetlands Conservation Act at its current authorization levels for three years. I urge Members to vote aye on this important environmental bill.

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

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

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2556. This bill helps protect wildlife habitat and will enhance the management of nongame wildlife. I want to thank the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) for bringing this legislation before the House. The bill reauthorizes the highly successful North American Wetlands Conservation Act and will improve the management of nongame species of wildlife by reauthorizing the program of Federal matching grants for such activities.

In the seven years of its existence, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act has resulted in the protection of millions of acres of wetlands in the United States, Canada and Mexico. \$244 million in North American wetlands programs grants for this voluntarily, non-regulatory program have been matched by more than \$510 million in funding by conservation partners, conserving valuable habitat for migratory birds and many non-migratory species as well.

The amendment also reauthorizes the Partnerships for Wildlife Act, which provides matching grants for nongame wildlife conservation and appreciation. Unfortunately, we do not have a dedicated source of funding like the Wallop-Breaux Fund for nongame conservation. Lacking a dedicated source of funding, conservation needs for these species are mounting. For example, the states currently estimate their unmet needs for management and conservation of nongame species at over \$300 million annually.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we have the opportunity to give permanent funding for nongame species serious consideration in the near future. But, in the meantime, we will continue doing what we can under the Partnerships for Wildlife Program.

In summary, this is sound legislation to benefit wildlife through non-regu-

latory programs that leverage scarce Federal resources, and I urge the House to support H.R. 2556.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act is a program that has proven itself in many ways. The law was designed to be a catalyst for partnerships between various levels of government and the private sector to accomplish incentive-based wetlands conservation. It demanded a non-federal match in order to level federal dollars and the match that has been produced has more than doubled that required threshold. This high match level is one evidence of the success of partnership the Act intended and delivered.

Another group of very important partners are the members of the North American Wetlands Council. These unpaid volunteers contribute incredible numbers of man hours to this process. Ducks Unlimited is an excellent example of a Wetlands Council member. From the beginning of the program DU has volunteered to serve. They not only commit the equivalent of a full time staff member to assist in carrying out Council business, they play a key role in communicating support for the program on Capitol Hill. They have contributed by far and away more match funding continentally for these projects than any other partner group. It is partners like DU with a demonstrated level of commitment that the Act envisions should serve on the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. That kind of commitment is what creates this program's level of success.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2556, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2556, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

NEW WILDLIFE REFUGE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 512) to prohibit the expenditure of funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the creation of new National Wildlife Refuges without specific authorization from Congress pursuant to a recommendation from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to create the refuge, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 512

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 "New Wildlife Refuge Authorization Act".

SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF NEW REFUGES.

(a) LIMITATION ON APPROPRIATIONS FROM LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No funds are authorized to be appropriated from the land and water conservation fund for designation of a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System, unless the Secretary of the Interior has—

(A) completed all actions pertaining to environmental review that are required for that designation under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969;

(B) provided notice to each Member of and each Delegate and Resident Commissioner to the Congress elected to represent an area included in the boundaries of the proposed unit, upon the completion of the preliminary project proposal for the designation; and

(C) provided a copy of each final environmental impact statement or each environmental assessment resulting from that environmental review, and a summary of all public comments received by the Secretary on the proposed unit, to—

(i) the Committee on Resources and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(ii) the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(iii) each Member of or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to the Congress elected to represent an area included in the boundaries of the proposed unit.

(2) LIMITATION ON APPLICATION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to appropriation of amounts for a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System that is designated, or specifically authorized to be designated, by law.

(b) NOTICE OF SCOPING.—The Secretary shall publish a notice of each scoping meeting held for the purpose of receiving input from persons affected by the designation of a proposed unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The notice shall be published in a newspaper distributed in each county in which the refuge will be located, by not later than 15 days before the date of the meeting. The notice shall clearly state that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the designation of a new unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

(c) LIMITATION ON APPLICATION OF FEDERAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS.—Land located within the boundaries (or proposed boundaries) of a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System designated after the date of the enactment of this Act shall not be subject to any restriction on use of the lands under Federal law or regulation based solely on a determination of the boundaries, until an interest in the land has been acquired by the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO).

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

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

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, a little history on this particular legislation. I