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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 519. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the San Gabriel River Watershed, and for other purposes.

H.R. 788. An act to revise the boundary of the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in the States of Utah and Arizona.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 733. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the McLoughlin House National Historic Site in Oregon City, Oregon, and to administer the site as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 246. An act to provide that certain Bureau of Land Management land shall be held in trust for the Pueblo of Santa Clara and the Pueblo of San Ildefonso in the State of New Mexico.

S. 500. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to study certain sites in the historic district of Beaufort, South Carolina, relating to the Reconstruction Era.

S. 520. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain facilities to the Fremont-Madison Irrigation District in the State of Idaho.

S. 625. An act to authorize the Bureau of Reclamation to conduct certain feasibility studies in the Tualatin River Basin in Oregon, and for other purposes.

S. 635. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to update the feasibility and suitability studies of four national historic trails, and for other purposes.

S. 1015. An act to authorize grants through the Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

tion for mosquito control programs to prevent mosquito-borne diseases, and for other purposes.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority leader, the minority leader or the minority whip limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

ROADLESS RULE ROLLBACK

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, people who care about the environment were heartened 2 weeks ago when the administration declared that it would uphold the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. But alas, the other shoe dropped.

Last week, the administration proposed exempting Alaska's national forests from the roadless rule, reopening them to logging and roadbuilding. Even more troubling, the administration will also turn over significant authority over our Federal forests to the States, allowing governors to provide for exemptions.

Allowing States to exempt themselves from our national environmental laws is not a healthy precedent. States have a mixed record when it comes to environmental stewardship. They are too often overwhelmed by understandable local interest from snowmobiles to timber to water. We need a strong presence. These are, after all, our national forests.

Rather than the administration's vigorous enforcement of environmental

laws, this is another example of a settlement to further erode, rather than strengthen and uphold. There are about 50 pending timber sales in roadless areas in Alaska currently protected under the roadless rule that are ready to go forward when the Tongass exemption is finalized.

Despite the assurances that 95 percent of the Alaska's forests will be protected, the remaining 5 percent allows hundreds of thousands of acres which are among the most valuable for both the timber companies and the environment. This roadless conservation rule was developed during the last 3 years of the Clinton administration. It was finalized after the most extensive public outreach process in history. Six hundred public hearings and more than 1.6 million official comments overwhelming in support of this initiative.

The rule protects 58½ million acres of pristine national forests in 39 States. In my State alone, in Oregon, 2 million acres would have been protected.

The independent editorial boards around the country have zeroed in. In *The New York Times*, it pointed out that this is part of a continued assault on environmental protections. From day one, the Bush administration has sought to unravel the intricate tapestry of rules and regulations that have shielded the national forests from excessive logging and other commercial activities.

In the last 6 months alone, the administration has finalized or proposed new rules that would short-circuit environmental reviews, restrict public participation in land-use decisions, and weaken safeguards for endangered species.

The administration's latest target is the roadless rule. The *San Francisco Chronicle* pointed out the administration's pattern of disingenuousness. The Bush administration's doublespeak about the environment reached a new level of shamelessness this week when

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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