

THE DESIGNATION OF WILSON CREEK IN NORTH CAROLINA AS A WILD, SCENIC, AND RECREATIONAL RIVER

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I rise today to say how pleased I am that the President recently signed into law H.R. 1749, legislation that designates Wilson Creek in North Carolina as a wild and scenic river. This legislation passed the House of Representatives without opposition, and I was proud to support it here in the Senate and to see it pass just prior to the August recess.

The designation of Wilson Creek as a wild and scenic river is critically important to the local community. It will protect Wilson Creek for use by those who seek a relaxing hike in the woods or an exciting rafting experience. The scenic and recreational areas along Wilson Creek are also some of the most beautiful and ecologically valuable countryside in all of North Carolina. In a time when all of us have so much going on in our lives, Wilson Creek will provide us with a place to relax and enjoy a bit of the natural world.

Wilson Creek is truly a national treasure. It possesses remarkable scenic and recreational value and is home to a wide variety of plant and animal species. It is designated as an Outstanding Resource Water, indicating its exceptional recreational and ecological significance and high level of water quality. It winds its way through rare geologic rock formations that are also quite beautiful. The pools and rapids along Wilson Creek provide opportunities for canoe and kayak enthusiasts to test their skills or take a relaxing paddle. For years, visitors have camped, hiked, fished and played along Wilson Creek, and this designation will ensure that they will continue to enjoy all that the area has to offer for years to come.

I would also like to say a few words about the history of this legislation and the impressive effort that has led us to this important point. It is not enough to say that this measure was a bipartisan effort. This law is the result of a cooperative effort spearheaded by the Caldwell County Commissioners, in which every interested party had a voice. Working with the Forest Service, the Avery County Commissioners, the Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce, the Caldwell County Economic Development Commission, local landowners and the local community, the Commissioners helped develop this important plan to protect permanently Wilson Creek. That this legislation has had such strong local support is a testament to the hard work put forward by all of these groups and individuals. The collaborative effort to craft and pass this legislation will serve as a model for other communities that may have similar projects. They are to be commended for their efforts. I would also like to thank other local officials,

citizens, the Forest Service, and everyone else who dedicated so much time, effort, and heart to get us to this point.

Many portions along Wilson Creek exist much as they did more than 100 years ago, and I believe we must do all we can to preserve them. We have a rare opportunity to protect a critically important waterway for future generations, and I am so pleased to see it become law.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

DEVILS LAKE OUTLET

• Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I have spoken many times about the need for an emergency outlet for Devils Lake. An article from the Fargo Forum reaffirms the need to act expediently to build an emergency outlet for Devils Lake before a catastrophic natural spill occurs.

Mr. President, I ask that the article be printed in the RECORD.

[From the Fargo Forum, Aug. 22, 2000]

USGS ADDS EVIDENCE FOR OUTLET

A little-noticed report from the U.S. Geological Survey adds more to the vast body of evidence that the Devils Lake, N.D., area is in a wet cycle and will remain in a wet cycle for some time to come.

And that means Devils Lake, which rose 25 feet from February 1993 to August 1999, likely will continue to rise. The lake's elevation today is about 1446.3 feet, or slightly down from last year's 130-year high. The lake naturally discharges into Stump Lake to the east at level 1447 feet, and into the Tolna Coulee and Sheyenne River at elevation 1459 feet.

Given the USGS conclusions that the wet conditions which have dominated the region since 1977 will continue for at least another decade, it is not unreasonable to assume the lake will rise to the breakout level of 1459 feet.

What happens then?

USGS research suggests a spill into the Sheyenne River would be catastrophic downstream. A discharge would erode sediments in the natural drainage pathways and dump up to 2 million acre feet of water into the river, or about four times the volume of the 1997 flood at Lisbon, N.D. That incredible flood of water would be in addition to normal flows in the Sheyenne.

Opponents of a Devils Lake outlet refuse to recognize the potential of a lake breakout. Like blissful Pollyannas, they don't believe the worst can happen.

It can. If wet conditions persist and nothing is done to control the lake's level, it will.

USGS also says a properly managed outlet would moderate the effects of a catastrophic natural lake breakout. An outlet might not prevent a natural spill into the Sheyenne, but USGS believes chances of a damaging spill would be reduced. Spill volumes and durations would be reduced, thus reducing downstream damage.

An outlet remains the best option for managing the lake's level and protecting downstream interests on the Sheyenne River. The USGS report is the latest evidence supporting an outlet.

Flood prevention is better than reacting to a disaster. The permanent flood at Devils

Lake has caused more than its share of personal heartache and property damage. As the lake rises—it will—the potential for disaster will rise with it. Building an outlet now at least will put in place a tool to moderate the effects of the rising water.●

AMERICANS FAVOR DEATH-TAX REPEAL

• Mr. KYL. Mr. President, a number of Senators who opposed the Death Tax Elimination Act have spoken on the Senate floor in recent weeks, suggesting that only a few people care about the unfairness of the tax.

During the death-tax repeal debate back in July, one of the tax's proponents went so far as to question "whose side are you on?" if you favor repeal. I have no difficulty answering that at all. We are on the side of the American people.

A June 22-25 Gallup poll found that 60 percent of the people support repeal, even though about three-quarters of those supporters do not think they will ever have to pay a death tax themselves.

A poll conducted by Zogby International on July 6 found that, given a choice between a candidate who believes that a large estate left to heirs should be taxed at a rate of 50 percent for anything over \$2 million, and a candidate who believes that the estate tax is unfair to heirs and should be eliminated, 75 percent of the people prefer the person supporting death-tax repeal.

Other polls similarly put support for repeal at between 70 and 80 percent.

Some issues are simply about fairness. It does not matter who benefits. Death-tax proponents just cannot seem to understand that, but the American people do.

The American people have an unwavering sense of fairness. They recognize that there is something terribly wrong when, despite having taxed someone for a lifetime, the federal government can come back one more time when a person dies and take more than half of whatever is left. That is not only unfair, it threatens the American dream.

That is why repeal scores high with the American people in public-opinion polls. It is why repeal is supported by a broad coalition of small business, minority, environmental, family, and seniors organizations. Among those groups are the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the National Indian Business Association, the National Black Chamber of Commerce, the American Farm Bureau Federation, and the National Federation of Independent Business, to name just a few.

Fairness, that is what the effort to repeal the death tax is all about.●

LOCAL RABBI SHEDS TEARS OF JOY

• Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, Rabbi Israel Zoberman, the leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia