

and rural communities, including the district I represent, San Francisco, suffer a shortage of quality teachers and are experiencing problems recruiting and retaining teachers. To alleviate this problem, we must take additional steps to help teachers and public sector employees obtain affordable housing in the communities they serve.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and continue working to increase affordable housing opportunities across the country.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5640.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 5640.

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

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

FOREST SERVICE RELEASES PREFERRED PROPOSAL FOR ROADLESS AREA INITIATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, in the brief time I have today, I would like to talk about what consumer advocates would call a case of bait and switch. The shameful deceit of which I speak was made clear on November 13, because, on that day, the Clinton administration's Forest Service released their, quote-unquote, referred proposal for a roadless area initiative that will close off 60 million acres of public land from the public itself. As we have learned just recently, the Forest Service may actually issue the final version of this plan as early as next week.

This plan bans road construction, timber harvesting, and even road reconstruction in these areas. This affects 69,000 acres of the Chequamegon-

Nicolet National Forest in my district, and, as I said, millions of acres all across our Nation.

It locks away all of this land from economic opportunities as well as from the taxpayers who use the land for recreation. I call it a bait and switch because, throughout this process, while the administration was talking a good game about continued access to the forest during the public comment period, they obviously intended all along to institute this much more sweeping, much more restrictive proposal after the public's opportunity for comment had expired.

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Mr. Speaker, throughout this process, the people of northern Wisconsin have been assured and reassured that responsible timber harvesting would not be restricted under this plan. Now, the Forest Service drops this final proposal on the folks whose livelihoods are at stake and, to add insult to injury, offers them no chance whatsoever to comment, telling them that they have already had their chance to speak out.

This is an unbelievable act of arrogance by an outgoing administration, and it should outrage every Member of this body, no matter what their party, no matter how they feel about the issue itself. Our forests should not be locked away from the public by Washington bureaucrats.

Keeping our forests open to multiple uses is essential to preserving the way of life in my district and in forests all across America. Entire communities and their economies rely on this access for their very survival. And what is not discussed nearly often enough, keeping these areas open to responsible multiple use is essential to preserving the forests themselves.

Let us go back some time, to 1924, when the Wisconsin legislature originally decided to release these lands to the Federal Government to create the national forests. The Federal Government said explicitly and on the public record that it was acquiring these lands to restore them to a condition of maximum productivity and to maintain public access. That was the reason for taking these forests, to maintain public access. But, of course, the new restrictions that I am talking of fly in the face of that agreement.

Obviously, if the Wisconsin legislature, if the Wisconsin citizens knew then what we know now, they never would have transferred these lands. In fact, some of my constituents are even exploring legal action to try to reclaim these lands.

I am outraged and I am disappointed that the Forest Service has brushed aside so cavalierly the economic impact this policy will have on communities and citizens all across northern Wisconsin. Perhaps if the Forest Service had listened or accepted further

comment from the people in my district, they would have understood the real impact of this policy.

I am going to do everything I can, and I am sure some of my colleagues will follow suit, to make sure that the people in communities like those in northern Wisconsin have the chance to publicly comment and have their opinions recorded. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am going to place these letters that I have right here from my constituents into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. These letters are but a very small representation, a handful of the hundreds of letters that I have received opposing this plan.

There are comments like this one, from my constituent, Brian Swearingen, in Appleton, Wisconsin. He writes, "While the Forest Service suggests that it has the public interest in mind when advocating this initiative, little thought appears to have been given to the impact this policy will have on Americans who enjoy using our country's public lands."

I will submit these for the RECORD. We can only hope that the powers that be will take them into account.

APPLETON, WI, November 17, 2000.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MARK GREEN: As someone who enjoys visiting and using our public lands, I am writing you to express my grave concern over the various policy initiatives undertaken by the Clinton Administration to limit access to public lands. Of particular concern to me is the Roadless initiative sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service.

While the Forest Service suggests that it has the public interest in mind when advocating this initiative, little thought appears to have been given to the impact this policy will have on Americans who enjoy using our country's public lands. Of particular concern is the fact that senior citizens and those with disabilities will be locked out of our public lands if this initiative becomes effective.

It is important that the Congress begin to exercise oversight of the Forest Service especially since the agency seems to be forfeiting its responsibility to manage our national forests with a multiple use perspective. I believe that public lands can be utilized and kept environmentally safe all at the same time. Keeping people out of our public lands should not be an acceptable solution.

The U.S. Forest Service Roadless initiative must be stopped. Please become active on this issue.

Sincerely,

BRIAN SWEARINGEN.

FOREST SAWMILL, INC.,

Wabeno, WI, November 28, 2000.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MARK GREEN: Thank you for your help in the fight against the Roadless area. Here are some of my thoughts on the subject. First I believe we should be allowed to make public comment on the final plan, since it is so different from what we were being told at many of the meetings. In Mike Dombeck's opening letter he says that he wanted to thank all the people that participated in this rule making. The wealth of insight and experience improved the proposal and the analyses of social, economic, and environmental effects. In reading the summary, I get the feeling that none of our ideas were taken into account

and that the meetings were just a smoke screen to make us believe we were getting input.

In looking at the job loss numbers, I believe they aren't accurate. I feel this because every job lost has a trickle down effect that travels through the whole community and the whole state.

The summary also states on page S-27 that timber production has been reduced from 12 Billion board feet in 1987 to 3 Billion board feet in 1999. This disturbs me because these areas are already greatly effected by the dramatic reduction already put in place through the last 12 years. Many of these areas are mere skeletons of what they were in the times of proper forest management. The western states are fine examples of this. The Forest Service's idea to fix the problem is to throw money at the problem. This is never a way to fix a problem. (The plan is described on page S-10.) The way to fix the problem, is to not create it in the first place. This could be done by properly managing the resources we are letting go to waste.

In closing I think we should give our forest back to foresters to manage. This means we should have foresters in every level of the Forest Service to help develop plans of action, instead of people with no idea of how properly managing a forest. During a meeting in Crandon, WI, one of the planners said, this was the best way to develop a plan with public input. I feel this job should be given to trained foresters, because to let the public decide is leaving the decision to people with no education on the subject. These people are ruled by whims, not any knowledge on proper management.

Sincerely,

EDWARD PIONTEK, JR.,
Vice President.

PINE RIVER TRANSPORT, LTD.,
Long Lake, WI, November 30, 2000.

Inventoried Roadless Area in Florence County

The 18,000 acre closure to timber cutting when coupled to all the other forest service set asides is going to further exacerbate the rapid drop in volume harvested from the Nicolet National Forest.

This in addition to the new Administration Rules on hours and the 95% reduction in the amount of sulfur in diesel fuel will make the continued operation of this trucking company very questionable, as fuel costs will soar.

Good management of our National Forests can provide all the multiple use benefits that we all value so highly. At the present time "Mother Nature" in the form of fire, wind and disease has taken over the management of the forests from the Forest Service.

It is my understanding that the so called "Roadless Area" in Florence County is actually fully roaded and is far from the inaccessible pristine areas referred to by Chief Dombeck.

We need some sort of common sense restored versus this high handed rule making of the Clinton-Gore administration.

Sincerely,

RICHARD CONNOR, JR.

FLORENCE COUNTY FORESTRY AND
PARKS, NATURAL RESOURCES CENTER,

Florence, WI, November 30, 2000.

To: Representative Mark Green.

From: David S. Majewski, Administrator,
Florence County Forestry & Parks, Florence, Wisconsin.

Subject: Federal Roadless Initiative.

As I understand there is a need to comment on the proposed "Roadless Initiative" and send the comments to your office.

The present Administration is trying to ram through an effort on behalf of the "preservationists" that will affect many people and communities. Most of the people in this group live far away from the lands that are proposed in this effort and it does not impact their day to day lives or affect their livelihood.

This proposal is a smokescreen, to create more wilderness in the very near future. It is an attempt to stop timber management in these areas. It will affect the economy of many communities surrounding these National Forests. It will also cause many serious problems for forest protection, which include control of insects, disease, and fire.

The proposal is not good for the health of the forests, the economy of the areas, or the many recreational opportunities that are presently available when the forests are managed for multiple use. It is also not good stewardship of the land.

The Public Forests in the Lake States have been managed very conservatively since the early 1900's, the "Early Logging Era". Keeping healthy diverse aged forests is better for our environment than over-aged unhealthy forests. The Forests are used by a wide variety of recreation users and the current management provides for a sustained economy for these rural communities and the Nation. The current multiple use management also provides for healthy forests and very good habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Many of the present wildlife species could not exist without it.

This initiative will: restrict if not eliminate timber management, cause deterioration of health forests, constrict all recreational opportunities, and inhibit habitat for the majority of the present wildlife. This initiative will not preserve these Forests for future generations but will cause more environmental damage when insects, diseases, and fires rage through these areas.

Thank you, for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

DAVID S. MAJEWSKI.

GOODMAN FOREST INDUSTRIES, LTD.,
Long Lake, WI, December 1, 2000.

Re Florence County Roadless Area

I attended a meeting today of the MI-WI Timber Producers Association and found that the 18,000 acre "Roadless" area in Florence County has been heavily logged in recent years and is well roaded.

Who is the Forest Service trying to fool on this? We in the industry believe in "multiple use" of our forest lands, however we can not tolerate any more "lockout" set asides to occur. Stumpage prices are already skyrocketing because of the fact the Forest Service is not even offering 50% of its operating plan on the Nicolet National Forest.

Please let me know if you think Congress can intervene. If not, then industry will have no choice but to take the U.S. Forest Service to court to stop this ridiculous set asides formation.

Sincerely,

RICHARD KRAWZE.

SHAWANO, WI, November 29, 2000.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MARK GREEN: I have been reading, with growing concern, about the Administration's efforts to restrict the use of our public lands and waterways. While I applaud the government's desire to ensure that our natural resources are there for future generations to enjoy, unilaterally cutting off access to these lands is misguided, wrong and in some cases, dangerous.

For example, if the goal of the Forest Service Roadless Initiative is to preserve these lands for our children and grandchildren to enjoy by not building roads and trails into these areas, how can they be expected to enjoy them when they cannot get to them?

By definition, the lands and adjacent waterways maintained by the federal land management agencies are public lands. They are maintained with funds provided by tax dollars as well as entrance and user fees. Yet, the public, as well as Congress, governors, local land managers and fire and rescue personnel, were not involved in the creation of these policies. Much of the Forest Service land has been statutorily designated as multiple-use land. By cutting off access to large portions of the land in its care, the Forest Service is defying a decades old congressional mandate.

Further, this type of thinking, returning our natural areas to what is being described as a pre-European state is very dangerous. As you know, much of our forest land in the western United States is burning out of control (in part as a result of other poorly designed policies). Without roads and firebreaks, the already difficult jobs of firefighters and other rescue personnel would be made even more difficult, if not impossible.

I do not believe that all public lands should be available for all uses. We all share a responsibility to treat our natural areas carefully and safely. However, if we all work together we can create a policy regarding our public lands and waterways that is fair, reasonable and physically and environmentally safe.

Please help us achieve this balance for this generation and those to come.

Sincerely,

KEVIN KING.

TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF FORMER
CONGRESSMAN HENRY B. GONZALEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, I paid my last respects to a man that I knew since the age of 12, a man that I respected and admired immensely, Henry B. Gonzalez. I have called this special order so that we may honor Henry B., a friend and a former colleague.

I would like to express my condolences to his wife, Senora Gonzalez; my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CHARLES GONZALEZ); and the entire Gonzalez family. My heart and prayers are with them in this time of sorrow.

Henry B. was one of the hardest working men I have ever known. My father often referred to him as "EL