

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,  
*Washington, DC, April 18, 2008.*

Hon. COLLIN C. PETERSON,  
*Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Longworth H.O.B., Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter on April 18, 2008, indicating jurisdictional interests in H.R. 5151, the "Wild Monongahela Act: A National Legacy for West Virginia's Special Places." As you are aware, the Committee on Natural Resources favorably reported an amended version of the bill on April 2, 2008, and would like to have the House of Representatives consider the legislation next week.

I acknowledge your jurisdictional interests in the bill, and note that the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture have had a history of working cooperatively on matters that generally concern forestry. I appreciate your willingness to discharge the bill without further consideration by the Agriculture Committee and understand that this action will in no way waive your Committee's jurisdictional interests in the subject matter of the legislation or serve as a precedent for future referrals.

Furthermore, in the event that a conference with the Senate is requested on this matter, I would support naming Agriculture Committee members to the conference committee. A copy of our exchange letters regarding this bill will be inserted into the Congressional Record during floor consideration.

Thank you for your courtesy in this matter and I look forward to continued cooperation between our respective Committees as we deal with forestry issues in the future.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

NICK J. RAHALL II,  
*Chairman.*

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlelady from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on Earth Day in support of H.R. 5151, the Wild Monongahela Act: A National Legacy for West Virginia's Special Places, introduced by my colleague from West Virginia's Third District and the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, Congressman NICK RAHALL.

I'm proud to be an original cosponsor of this important legislation, and I commend the chairman for all of his hard work on this bill.

In 1964, Congress enacted the Wilderness Act that permanently protected some of the most natural and undisturbed places in America. Today the U.S. Forest Service preserves the natural and cultural resources and values of the forest system, including those of the Monongahela National Forest for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations.

West Virginia's wilderness is part of our history and heritage, and it is passed on as a legacy. This bipartisan bill will protect approximately 38,000 acres of the Mon Forest in West Virginia through the designation of three additional wilderness areas and expansion of three existing Federal wilder-

ness areas including: Big Draft, Cranberry Expansion, Dolly Sods Expansion, Dry Fork Expansion, Roaring Plains West and Spice Run.

West Virginia's national forest provides an excellent outdoor experience with our State's majestic mountains, winding rivers and superb hunting, camping, fishing, backpacking and other activities. Protecting these additional acres of pristine forest will ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy the natural beauty of our home State of West Virginia.

Over the last several months I've engaged in discussion with many of my constituents, many whom are avid hunters, anglers, mountain bikers and outdoorsmen who have a unique and vested interest in the impact of the wilderness designation on their local community. The people of this area are well acquainted with wilderness, and H.R. 5151 reflects their desire to preserve their natural treasures, while maintaining important flexibility for the local residents.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is vitally important to guaranteeing that future generations of Americans can experience the natural wonder and beauty of West Virginia. I applaud Chairman RAHALL and his staff for all of their hard work on this bill and all those in West Virginia who have seen it come to this point.

I encourage my colleagues to support the legislation, and I encourage each of them to experience firsthand the pristine natural beauty of West Virginia and the Mon National Forest.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. But, in conclusion, I want to commend the staff of our Natural Resources Committee as well, Mr. Jim Zoia, who's been with me for numerous years and knows our people in West Virginia, has been with this legislation almost daily.

Rick Healy, our chief counsel. And I wish as well to commend the ranking minority member on my committee, Mr. DON YOUNG, for his assistance and willingness to work with us on this as well, and today's acting ranking member, Mr. JIMMY DUNCAN, for his help on this legislation.

I have no further requests for time, and I'll reserve, pending any further requests that the ranking member has.

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

H.R. 5151 will designate portions of the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia as wilderness, and it is my understanding that Members of Congress whose districts are affected support the bill.

Although we should give considerable deference to those who have been elected to represent the people in the area, I do not necessarily agree that wilderness designation is always the wisest conservation decision we can make. Wilderness designation is the most re-

strictive policy we can impose on an area, and there are often far better, more creative ways to conserve our forests and other natural areas. In many instances, it is a mistake to foreclose active management options that can improve fish and game habitat, increase recreational access and lessen the severity of wildfires. And to protect our economic well-being, provide jobs for young people and protect our national security, our country is going to need continued access to the rich resources our own public lands provide.

We now have over 100 million acres in wilderness areas, and we keep adding to that at a record level. And we are very close to getting to the point where that's beginning to hurt us economically at a time when we don't need more blows to our economy.

Nevertheless, I do wish the people of West Virginia good luck living around these wilderness areas, and I know that they, like the people of my State, will in the long run prove to be better guardians of their mountains, rivers and wildlife than bureaucrats in Washington.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. I yield back, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5151, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### COFFMAN COVE ADMINISTRATIVE SITE CONVEYANCE ACT OF 2008

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 831) to provide for the conveyance of certain Forest Service land to the city of Coffman Cove, Alaska, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 831

*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 "Coffman Cove Administrative Site Conveyance Act of 2008".*

#### SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

*In this Act:*

(1) CITY.—The term "City" means the city of Coffman Cove, Alaska.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture.

**SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE.**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Subject to valid existing rights, the Secretary shall convey to the City, without consideration and by quitclaim deed all right, title, and interest of the United States, except as provided in subsections (c) and (d), in and to the parcel of National Forest System land described in subsection (b).

(b) *DESCRIPTION OF LAND.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The parcel of National Forest System land referred to in subsection (a) is the approximately 12 acres of land identified in U.S. Survey 10099, as depicted on the plat entitled “Subdivision of U.S. Survey No. 10099” and recorded as Plat 2003-1 on January 21, 2003, Petersburg Recording District, Alaska.

(2) *EXCLUDED LAND.*—The parcel of National Forest System land conveyed under subsection (a) does not include the portion of U.S. Survey 10099 that is north of the right-of-way for Forest Development Road 3030-295 and southeast of Tract CC-8.

(c) *RIGHT-OF-WAY.*—The United States may reserve a right-of-way to provide access to the National Forest System land excluded from the conveyance to the City under subsection (b)(2).

(d) *REVERSION.*—If any portion of the land conveyed under subsection (a) (other than a portion of land sold under subsection (e)) ceases to be used for public purposes, the land shall, at the option of the Secretary, revert to the United States.

(e) *CONDITIONS ON SUBSEQUENT CONVEYANCES.*—If the City sells any portion of the land conveyed to the City under subsection (a)—

(1) the amount of consideration for the sale shall reflect fair market value, as determined by an appraisal; and

(2) the City shall pay to the Secretary an amount equal to the gross proceeds of the sale, which shall be available, without further appropriation, for the Tongass National Forest.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, the pending measure was introduced by the ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

The bill would direct the U.S. Forest Service to convey a 12-acre administrative site in the middle of Coffman Cove, Alaska to that city.

□ 1430

The land under discussion is in the center of the town near a new ferry terminal. This conveyance will help the city's efforts to diversify its economic base.

Additionally, the location of the site has been difficult for the Forest Service to manage.

I support passage of H.R. 831.

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 831 introduced by our distinguished colleague, DON YOUNG, conveys approximately 12 acres of National Forest System land to the City of Coffman Cove. The City of Coffman Cove, Alaska, is a small community with about 200 residents that developed around the Tongass National Forest logging camp and work site. The 12-acre Forest Service site is now in the middle of town, and a new ferry terminal is planned for an adjacent parcel. The location of most of the Forest Service site makes it difficult and inefficient for the Forest Service to manage and an obstacle to the future development and design of the city's downtown. Conveyance of the Forest Service site would benefit both the Forest Service and the city in this regard.

In short, this noncontroversial bill simply conveys to Coffman Cove a small parcel of Forest Service land for which the Forest Service has no use. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman RAHALL for scheduling this noncontroversial bill for floor consideration today.

H.R. 831 will provide for the conveyance of approximately 12 acres of surplus Forest Service land to the city of Coffman Cove, Alaska. The 12-acre parcel sits in the middle of town adjacent to the site of a new Inter-Island Ferry Terminal that the city hopes to use to help spur economic growth. In addition to being an obstacle to the ferry terminal and any new economic development in the city's downtown, the location of the parcel makes it difficult and inefficient for the Forest Service to manage. As such, the conveyance provided for in this bill would benefit both the city and the Forest Service, and according to the Congressional Budget Office, it will do so at little or no cost to the taxpayer.

To give you some background, Mr. Speaker, Coffman Cove is a small, isolated community with about 200 residents that developed around a Tongass National Forest logging camp and work site. While the timber industry and the jobs it once provided in the region have largely disappeared, the community remains, and opportunities for economic growth and expansion are limited by the fact that it is surrounded on all sides by the 17-million-acre Tongass National Forest. I don't expect to change that anytime soon, but I think it is more than reasonable to convey 12 acres of surplus Federal land located within the community's economic center.

Mr. Speaker, this bill provides a fair and commonsense solution to a problem. The tiny parcel of land is of no use to the Forest Service and it is an impediment to the growth and economic well-being of an isolated community surrounded by a National Forest larger than the State of West Virginia. I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 831.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 831, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

**MORLEY NELSON SNAKE RIVER BIRDS OF PREY NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA ACT**

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3734) to rename the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area in the State of Idaho as the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area in honor of the late Morley Nelson, an international authority on birds of prey, who was instrumental in the establishment of this National Conservation Area, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3734

*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 “Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area Act”.

**SEC. 2. RENAMING OF SNAKE RIVER BIRDS OF PREY NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA.**

(a) *RENAMING.*—Public Law 103-64 is amended—

(1) in section 2(2) (16 U.S.C. 460iii-1(2)), by inserting “Morley Nelson” before “Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area”; and

(2) in section 3(a)(1) (16 U.S.C. 460iii-2(a)(1)), by inserting “Morley Nelson” before “Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area”.

(b) *REFERENCES.*—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area shall be deemed to be a reference to the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area.

(c) *TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.*—Public Law 103-64 is further amended—

(1) in section 3(a)(1) (16 U.S.C. 460iii-2(a)(1)), by striking “(hereafter referred to as the ‘conservation area’); and

(2) in section 4 (16 U.S.C. 460iii-3)—

(A) in subsection (a)(2), by striking “Conservation Area” and inserting “conservation area”; and