

As we move forward to implement the Memorials and Museums Master Plan, we anticipate working with the National Park Service on a study that will provide a comprehensive assessment of landscape conditions, land use, and visitor services on and adjacent to the Mall. We expect the study will examine alternatives for educating visitors about memorials located on the Mall.

We look forward to working with the Committee on this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact our General Counsel, Ash Jain, or myself at (202) 482-7200 if we can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

PATRICIA E. GALLAGHER, AICP,
Executive Director.

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA).

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. I want to thank its sponsor, my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), the chairman of our committee, for his leadership on this issue.

Just a few weeks from now on November 11, our Nation will observe Veterans Day. I believe one of the most moving tributes to our veterans is in fact this Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall which honors the service and sacrifice of over 3.5 million Americans who served in Southeast Asia during that conflict.

Our Nation suffered the loss of 58,000 men and women and more than 300,000 came home injured or wounded. The Vietnam wall honors those we lost and pays a testament to their sacrifice. The fact that the wall is the most visited monument in Washington speaks to the experience it offers to every visitor.

As impressive as the wall is, I believe we can enhance the experience by establishing a facility to educate visitors about the sacrifices that our troops made during the conflict. The legislation we are considering today would authorize the creation of an underground educational visitors center within the memorial's existing 2-acre site. The facility will feature photographs of those who were killed or remain missing, as well as some of the more 60,000 items that have been left at the wall over the last few years.

The visitors center would be funded by private donations through the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, a non-profit organization that raised money to build the memorial wall.

Earlier this year I was pleased to take part in a Committee on Resources hearing on the grounds of the national Mall next to the memorial. I believe an educational visitors center will serve as an important learning tool for the millions of visitors who will visit the wall each year, especially those too young to remember the conflict in Vietnam.

Through the passage of this legislation today, we can help the American school children and the public at large have a greater access to the informa-

tion about service, sacrifice, and patriotism for those whose names are inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Wall.

□ 1545

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

I just wanted to thank my speakers for coming in and supporting this important piece of legislation, and I am only sorry I did not get on the gentleman from California's (Mr. POMBO) bill early enough because it would have been something that would be tremendously important. My brother served in Vietnam.

I urge my colleagues to support and endorse this bill.

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

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

I want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA), two of my California colleagues who have worked so hard on this legislation and others over the past several months to make this a reality, and I think that their support is well-known amongst the veteran community, and I thank them for their work.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1442, as amended.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1442, 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.

NEVADA NATIONAL FOREST LAND DISPOSAL ACT OF 2003

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1092) to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to sell certain parcels of Federal land in Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1092

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 "Nevada National Forest Land Disposal Act of 2003".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The United States owns, and the Forest Service administers, land in small and large parcels in Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada.

(2) Much of this Federal land is interspersed with or adjacent to private land, which renders the Federal land difficult, in-

efficient, and expensive for the Forest Service to manage and more appropriate for disposal.

(3) In order to promote responsible and orderly development in Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada, appropriate parcels of the Federal land should be sold by the Federal Government based on recommendations made by units of local government and the public.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to provide for the sale of certain parcels of Federal land in Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada.

SEC. 3. DISPOSAL OF NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS, CARSON CITY AND DOUGLAS COUNTY, NEVADA.

(a) DISPOSAL REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agriculture (in this section referred to as the "Secretary") shall sell any right, title, or interest of the United States in and to the following parcels of National Forest System lands in Carson City or Douglas County, Nevada:

(1) The parcel of land referred to as the "Carson Parcel", consisting of approximately 3 acres, and more particularly described as being a portion of the southeast quarter, section 31, township 15 north, range 20 east, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

(2) The parcel of land referred to as the "Jacks Valley/Highway 395 Parcel", consisting of approximately 28 acres, and more particularly described as being a portion of the northwest quarter of the southeast quarter, section 6, township 14 north, range 20 east, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

(3) The parcel of land referred to as the "Indian Hills Parcel", consisting of approximately 75 acres, and more particularly described as being a portion of the southwest quarter, section 18, township 14 north, range 20 east, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

(4) The parcel of land referred to as the "Mountain House Area Parcel", consisting of approximately 40 acres, and more particularly described as being a portion of the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter, section 12, township 10 north, range 21 east, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

(5) The parcel of land referred to as the "Holbrook Junction Area Parcel", consisting of approximately 80 acres, and more particularly described as being a portion of the west half of the southwest quarter, section 7, township 10 north, range 22 east, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

(6) The two parcels of land referred to as the "Topaz Lake Parcels", consisting of approximately 5 acres (approximately 2.5 acres per parcel), and more particularly described as being portions of the northwest quarter, section 29, township 10 north, range 22 east, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

(b) MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS.—The Secretary may—

(1) correct typographical or clerical errors in the descriptions of land specified in subsection (a); and

(2) for the purposes of soliciting offers for the sale of such land, modify the descriptions based on—

(A) a survey; or

(B) a determination by the Secretary that the modification is in the best interest of the public.

(c) SELECTION AND SALE.—

(1) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate the sale of land under this section with the unit of local government in which the land is located.

(2) EXISTING RIGHTS.—The sale of land under this section shall be subject to all valid existing rights, such as rights-of-way, in effect as of the date of the sale. In the case of the parcel described in subsection (a)(2), all access rights in and to United States Highway 395, together with any and

all abutter's rights adjacent to the westerly right-of-way line of such highway, within the parcel shall be restricted.

(3) ZONING LAWS.—The sale of land under this section shall be in accordance with local land use planning and zoning laws and regulations.

(4) SOLICITATIONS OF OFFERS.—The Secretary shall solicit offers for the sale of land under this section, subject to any terms or conditions that the Secretary may prescribe. The Secretary may reject any offer made under this section if the Secretary determines that the offer is not adequate or not in the public interest.

(5) METHOD OF SALE.—The Secretary shall sell the land described in subsection (a) at public auction.

(d) DISPOSITION OF PROCEEDS.—

(1) PAYMENTS AND DEPOSITS.—Of the gross proceeds from any sale of land under this section, the Secretary shall—

(A) pay five percent to the State of Nevada for use for the general education program of the State;

(B) pay five percent to the Carson Water Subconservancy District in the State;

(C) deposit 25 percent in the fund established under Public Law 90-171 (commonly known as the "Sisk Act"; 16 U.S.C. 484a); and

(D) retain and use, without further appropriation, the remaining funds for the purpose of expanding the Minden Interagency Dispatch Center in Minden, Nevada, as provided in paragraph (3).

(2) USE OF SISK ACT FUNDS.—The amounts deposited under paragraph (1)(C) shall be available to the Secretary until expended, without further appropriation, for the following purposes:

(A) Reimbursement of costs incurred by the local offices of the Forest Service in carrying out land sales under this section, except that the total amount of reimbursement may not exceed 10 percent of the total proceeds of the lands sales.

(B) The development and maintenance of parks, trails, and natural areas in Carson City, Douglas County, or Washoe County, Nevada, in accordance with a cooperative agreement entered into with the unit of local government in which the park, trail, or natural area is located.

(3) MINDEN INTERAGENCY DISPATCH CENTER.—The Minden Interagency Dispatch Center is located on land made available by the State of Nevada in Minden, Nevada, and will serve as a joint facility for the Forest Service and the Nevada Division of Forestry for the purpose of fighting wildland fires. The expansion of the center shall include living quarters and office space for the Blackmountain Hotshot Crew, a guard station for housing engines and patrol vehicles, an air traffic control tower, a training facility, and a warehouse.

(4) LIMITATION.—None of the amounts made available to the Carson Water Subconservancy District under paragraph (1)(B) shall be used to pay the costs of litigation.

(e) RELATION TO OTHER PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LAWS.—The land described in subsection (a) shall not be subject to chapter 5 of title 40, United States Code, as codified by Public Law 107-217 (116 Stat. 1062).

(f) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, all Federal land described in subsection (a) is withdrawn from location, entry, and patent under the public land laws, mining laws, and mineral leasing laws, including geothermal leasing laws.

(g) REVOCATION OF PUBLIC LAND ORDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To facilitate the sale of parcels of land described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall revoke any public land orders in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act that withdraw the parcels from all forms of appropriation under the

public land laws, to the extent that the orders apply to land described in such subsection (a).

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—A revocation under paragraph (1) shall be effective on the date on which the instrument conveying the parcels of land subject to the public land order is executed.

(h) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate an annual report on all land sales made under this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) and the gentleman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) 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, H.R. 1092, sponsored by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS), would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to sell certain parcels of Federal land in Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada.

This legislation would dispose of Federal land interspersed with or adjacent to private land in Carson City and Douglas County. The parcels identified have been difficult and expensive for the Forest Service to manage, and the land has lost its National Forest character.

I urge support for the legislation.

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

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

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1092 would direct the Secretary of Agriculture to auction six Federal parcels in Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada. Proceeds would be used for the general education fund in Nevada and other purposes, including the development and maintenance of parks and trails in Carson City and Douglas and Washoe Counties.

The majority has explained the bill, and we have no objection.

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

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS).

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), the chairman of the committee, for allowing me this time to speak on this piece of legislation, and I rise today in support and urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1092, the Nevada National Forest Disposal Act.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation is important to the people of the State of Nevada, and as a lifelong resident of the great State, where the Federal Government manages almost 90 percent of all land, I am committed to promoting sensible public lands management policies that allow for responsible economic growth while protecting our precious natural resources and scenic vistas.

This legislation, the Nevada National Forest Disposal Act will require the Secretary of the Interior to sell in a public auction six parcels of land in Nevada, ranging in size from three acres to 75 acres. Each parcel borders private lands on at least two sides, and each is located within residential areas or next to a busy highway. None of these lands are pristine forest lands. In fact, barely any vegetation and no forest characterization can be found on some of the lots recognized in this legislation.

This bill would remove these lands from the Federal management and sell them to the local community at fair market value to allow for much-needed economic development in Carson City and Douglas County, and the revenues of the sale will benefit the entire State as well as the United States Forest Service.

Sixty-five percent of the revenues from the land sales will go towards a fund to build an Interagency Dispatch Center to serve as a joint facility for the Forest Service and Nevada Division of Forestry to fight wildland fires. Twenty-five percent of the revenue will be used for development and maintenance of parks, trails and natural areas in Carson City, Douglas County and Washoe County. Five percent will go into Nevada's general education program, and 5 percent will go to the Carson Water Subconservancy District.

This commonsense bill has the support of the counties, the State of Nevada and both of Nevada's U.S. Senators as well.

The intent of this legislation, and in truth, as smart public lands management, is to dispose of public lands which do not make sense for the Federal Government to manage and to use the revenues from the land sales to better manage and protect other Federal lands. H.R. 1092 accomplishes this goal.

Mr. Speaker, let me also take this opportunity to quickly explain two changes that were made to the bill before it came to the floor.

First, the State of Nevada requested to limit access on one parcel which borders a major freeway in order to prevent a major disruption in freeway traffic. As one can imagine, it would be a disaster if the future owner of the land put a driveway right into the middle of this heavily-used freeway. This legislation protects against such a scenario and ensures the integrity of the existing freeway.

The second change simply requires the Secretary to sell these parcels in a public auction. These changes only strengthen the bill which is a win-win for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1092 is a model of efficient public lands policy. It is important to the State of Nevada, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1092, 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.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to sell certain parcels of Federal land in Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IRVINE BASIN SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1598) to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in projects within the San Diego Creek Watershed, California, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1598

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 "Irvine Basin Surface and Groundwater Improvement Act of 2003".

SEC. 2. PROJECT AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, title XVI; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1635 the following:

"SEC. 1636. IRVINE BASIN GROUNDWATER AND SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

"(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the Irvine Ranch Water District, California, is authorized to participate in the design, planning, and construction of projects to naturally treat impaired surface water, reclaim and reuse impaired groundwater, and provide brine disposal within the San Diego Creek Watershed.

"(b) COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of the projects authorized by this section shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost.

"(c) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not provide funds for the operation or maintenance of a project authorized by this section."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1635 the following:

"1636. Irvine basin groundwater and surface water improvement projects."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

California (Mr. POMBO) and the gentleman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) 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.

H.R. 1598, sponsored by the gentleman from California (Mr. COX), authorizes Federal assistance for the design and construction of a de-salter and a regional brine line to treat brackish groundwater. The bill also provides for strategic placement of wetlands to naturally clean surface water in the San Diego Creek Watershed. All Federal assistance would be limited to 25 percent of the overall project's cost.

This bill is yet another step towards "drought proofing" southern California and will decrease the region's over-dependence on imported Colorado River water.

I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

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

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

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1598. Communities throughout the Nation are finding technologically advanced and innovative ways to solve their water supply and water quality problems. H.R. 1598 is an excellent example of how we can help those communities.

With only a small amount of financial assistance from the Federal Government, we can save water by building water recycling and desalting projects, and may I add, also recycling projects, that are important to southern California. Not too long ago, Congress would have rushed to support an expensive dam and reservoir project. We now have the option to help our cities who understand that the future to securing a reliable water supply is through the promotion of water recycling, conservation and desalination.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the administration can understand how important these projects are, especially water recycling, and how they can help communities solve their water problems that are so urgently needed, even now, especially in the area where there is tremendous drought.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1598.

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

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. COX).

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me the time.

The Irvine Basin Surface and Groundwater Improvement Act is a bill that, as its author, of course, I am very pleased to see on the floor, but one also that I am very very grateful to the

committee for producing. This is going to make a very important contribution to improving water quality in southern California.

I would especially like to thank and recognize the efforts of the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), the chairman of the Committee on Resources. I would like to thank the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), the ranking member, for their support and leadership, and also my colleague from Orange County (Mr. CALVERT), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Water and Power. I thank all of them for their active interest in and support of this important legislation.

This bill authorizes the Federal Government to assist in designing a series of wetlands. As the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) has said, this is an innovative approach, one that has the support of environmentalists and government leaders alike. This series of wetlands is going to clean up polluted surface runoff within the San Diego Creek Watershed in Orange County, California.

For those of my colleagues who are not familiar with southern California, the San Diego Creek is one of our region's major watersheds. It empties into Upper Newport Bay, one of the largest wetlands in the entire coastal region between Los Angeles and San Diego.

The Upper Newport Bay is home to over 75 species of fish, nearly 200 species of birds, and a number of threatened and endangered species, including the light-footed clapper rail, Belding's Savannah sparrow, the American osprey, the California brown pelican and California's least tern. In addition, the Bay is an important stop on the Pacific Flyway for 50,000 migratory birds each year.

Unfortunately, the Upper Newport Bay is threatened by silt and polluted runoff from the San Diego Creek that flows into the Bay. In fact, the Environmental Protection Agency has declared the water quality of San Diego Creek and its tributaries to be limited. That is a bureaucratic euphemism for hazardous to swim in or drink. The reason for this designation is that drainage from urban surfaces flows unfiltered into the watershed.

Thankfully, there is a solution on the horizon to save the Upper Newport Bay. This legislation will use a natural treatment system to reduce the amount of silt and pollutants that gets dumped into San Diego Creek and, in turn, into Upper Newport Bay. The plan was developed by environmentalists and local officials, and it relies on wetlands, nature's own system for filtering pollutants out of the water. Specifically, the plan calls for the creation of an entire network of wetlands to be developed along the San Diego Creek basin.

The natural, beneficial bacteria in the soils of these wetlands, along with