

By April 2009, solar and wind companies had proposed 28 projects to be included in the Mojave Trails National Monument, including sites on former Catellus lands intended for permanent conservation. I visited some of those sites at the time, including one particularly beautiful area known as the Broadwell Valley, where thousands of acres of pristine lands were proposed for development. Seeing it first hand, I quickly came to the conclusion that those lands were simply not the right place for renewable energy development.

Since then, 26 of the 28 applications have been withdrawn. Let me explain why this happened. First, the Energy and Interior Departments developed new solar energy zones. These zones allow projects to be developed on lands least likely to harm plant and wildlife species, and allow projects to be completed faster and with fewer conflicts. This is a smart compromise. Second, California has worked closely with Federal agencies to develop the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. This blueprint will help identify pristine lands that warrant protection and direct energy projects elsewhere. This is a fair balancing of priorities, and I think it provides a clear path forward.

The bill I am introducing also takes additional action to help promote responsible renewable energy development through state land exchanges. There are currently about 370,000 acres of isolated parcels of state lands spread across the California desert. These state-owned lands are largely unusable, due to their location inside Federal national parks, wilderness, monuments, and conservation areas. The bill addresses this problem by requiring the Department of the Interior to develop and implement a plan with the state to exchange these state lands for other BLM or General Services Administration owned property in the next ten years. By swapping state land that is often surrounded by wilderness and national parks for other federal land, these exchanges will provide California with sites for renewable energy production, recreation or other uses.

I strongly urge my colleagues in both the House and the Senate to take a hard look at this legislation. We have made great strides in the past twenty years to strike the right balance between desert conservation, recreational uses, and the development of our natural resources. I believe this legislation continues in that fine tradition. Built on a foundation of consensus and compromise, this legislation fulfills our promise to the next generation that they will have the same opportunities to indulge in the best the California desert has to offer.

I am hopeful this Congress will take this legislation up and move it forward. It's the right thing to do.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3307. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3308. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3309. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3310. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3311. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3307. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

SEC. 31 . . . NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION, TREATMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND USE, FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 449 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end of the following:

“§ 4781. Natural gas production, treatment, management, and use, Fort Knox, Kentucky

“(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of the Army (referred to in this section as the ‘Secretary’) may provide, by contract or otherwise, for the production, treatment, management, and use of natural gas located under Fort Knox, Kentucky, without regard to section 3 of the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands (30 U.S.C. 352).

“(b) LIMITATION ON USES.—Any natural gas produced pursuant to subsection (a)—

“(1) may only be used to support activities and operations at Fort Knox; and

“(2) may not be sold for use elsewhere.

“(c) OWNERSHIP OF FACILITIES.—The Secretary may take ownership of any gas production and treatment equipment and facilities and associated infrastructure from a contractor in accordance with the terms of a contract or other agreement entered into pursuant to subsection (a).

“(d) NO APPLICATION ELSEWHERE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The authority provided by this section applies only with respect to Fort Knox, Kentucky.

“(2) EFFECT OF SECTION.—Nothing in this section authorizes the production, treatment, management, or use of natural gas resources underlying any Department of Defense installation other than Fort Knox.

“(e) APPLICABILITY.—The authority of the Secretary under this section is effective beginning on August 2, 2007.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections of chapter 449 of title 10, United

States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“4781. Natural gas production, treatment, management, and use, Fort Knox, Kentucky.”

SA 3308. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

SEC. 31 . . . DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE NATURAL GAS PIPELINE.

(a) PERMIT.—Section 3(b)(1) of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113-33; 127 Stat. 516) is amended by striking “within, along, or near the approximately 7-mile segment of the George Parks Highway that runs through the Park”.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—Section 3(c)(1) of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113-33; 127 Stat. 516) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and” after the semicolon;

(2) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(3) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B).

(c) APPLICABLE LAW.—Section 3 of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113-33; 127 Stat. 515) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) APPLICABLE LAW.—A high pressure gas transmission pipeline (including appurtenances) in a nonwilderness area within the boundary of the Park, shall not be subject to title XI of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3161 et seq.).”

SA 3309. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44 . . . NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL

(a) NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(a)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 104909. National Park Centennial Challenge Fund

“(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to establish a fund in the Treasury—

“(1) to finance signature projects and programs to enhance the National Park System as the centennial of the National Park System approaches in 2016; and

“(2) to prepare the System for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CHALLENGE FUND.—The term ‘Challenge Fund’ means the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund established by subsection (c)(1).

“(2) QUALIFIED DONATION.—The term ‘qualified donation’ means a cash donation or the pledge of a cash donation guaranteed by an irrevocable letter of credit to the Service