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CONVEYANCE OF PLEASANT VALLEY RANGER DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE SITE TO GILA COUNTY, ARIZONA

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1829) to require the Secretary of Agriculture to convey the Pleasant Valley Ranger District Administrative Site to Gila County, Arizona, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1829

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF PLEASANT VALLEY RANGER DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE SITE TO GILA COUNTY, ARIZONA.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COUNTY.—The term “County” means Gila County, Arizona.

(2) MAP.—The term “map” means the map entitled “Pleasant Valley Admin Site Proposal” and dated September 23, 2021.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

(b) CONVEYANCE REQUIRED.—Subject to this section, if the County submits to the Secretary a written request for conveyance of the property described in subsection (c) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall convey to the County all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the property described in subsection (c).

(c) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The property referred to in subsection (b) is the parcel of real property, including all land and improvements, generally depicted as “Gila County Area” on the map, consisting of approximately 232.9 acres of National Forest System land located in the Tonto National Forest in Arizona.

(2) MAP.—

(A) MINOR ERRORS.—The Secretary may correct minor errors in the map.

(B) AVAILABILITY.—A copy of the map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Forest Service.

(3) SURVEY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the National Forest System land to be conveyed under subsection (b) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary.

(d) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The conveyance under subsection (b) shall be—

(1) subject to valid existing rights;

(2) made without consideration;

(3) made by quitclaim deed; and

(4) subject to such other terms and conditions as the Secretary considers to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(e) COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.—As a condition of the conveyance under subsection (b), the County shall pay all costs associated with the conveyance, including the cost of—

(1) a survey, if necessary, under subsection (c)(3);

(2) any environmental analysis or resource survey required under Federal law; and

(3) any analysis required to comply with division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “National Historic Preservation Act”).

(f) ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.—Notwithstanding section 120(h)(3)(A) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9620(h)(3)(A)), the Secretary shall not be required to provide any covenant or warranty for the land and improvements conveyed to the County under subsection (b).

(g) USE OF LAND.—The land conveyed to the county under subsection (b) shall be used by the County only for the purposes of serving and supporting veterans of the Armed Forces.

(h) REVERSION.—If any land conveyed under subsection (b) is used in a manner that is inconsistent with the requirements of subsection (g), all right, title, and interest in and to the land shall revert to the United States, at the discretion of the Secretary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. HAGEMAN) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HAGEMAN. 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 H.R. 1829, as amended, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of Representative CRANE’s bill, H.R. 1829. This is a good bill that would transfer land from the Forest Service to create a retreat facility in Gila County, Arizona, for veterans and their families to relax and enjoy the outdoors.

Gila County is home to more than 5,000 veterans. Overall, the State of Arizona has a population of more than 500,000 veterans. Creating this facility will help those who have served our country find healing and reconnect with nature, and it will help ease the transition back to civilian life.

Almost 60 percent of the land in Gila County is federally owned, which creates significant limitations on available land for laudable efforts like this proposed retreat for veterans. This retreat center would be created from a Forest Service site that was scheduled to be torn down. In total, this 232-acre site includes 17 buildings, 2 residences, 2 barracks, a historic ranger house and barn, and helipads.

Gila County intends to remodel many of the buildings to provide an excellent experience for veterans and their families. Repurposing the site in this way is a win-win, as it will be a great resource for Arizona’s veterans while freeing the Forest Service from maintaining the property that it no longer needs.

I applaud Representative CRANE for his leadership in this effort. His diligent work with Gila County and the Forest Service has led to an important effort which will make a meaningful difference in the lives of Arizona’s veterans. I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1829, which would authorize the Sec-

retary of Agriculture to convey the Pleasant Valley Ranger District Administrative Site to Gila County, Arizona.

Adjacent to the rural town of Young, Arizona, the parcel was previously an administrative site for the Forest Service but is no longer in use for this purpose. The conveyance authorized by this bill would provide Gila County with the opportunity to establish a veterans retreat and community center that would support the communities in Young and the surrounding area.

Supporting and uplifting our Nation’s veterans is a goal that we can all get behind. It is never enough to tell our veterans: “Thank you for your service.” We must always act to show our gratitude by providing veterans the services they need wherever they live.

Our rural and Native American veterans deserve to have a place of their own on their own land to carry out the services we owe these patriotic rural and first Americans. This bill contributes to that goal by conveying Forest Service land to create a vibrant veterans center with family housing, resources, meeting and event spaces, a VA mobile clinic, ceremonial grounds, and access to outdoor recreational opportunities. The partnership made possible by this bill will provide new life to deteriorating buildings, barns, barracks, and existing wastewater systems.

During our hearing on the bill, the chair of the Gila County Board of Supervisors noted the goal of creating “the ultimate experience for veterans and their families.” This bill is a win-win.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CRANE).

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of my bill, which was the first piece of legislation I introduced and is a testament to veterans in Arizona. Specifically, my bill would enable Gila County, Arizona, to operate a veterans center on 232 acres in Young, Arizona.

As a veteran myself, I know the importance of providing these resources cannot be overstated. This legislation will serve our State and its heroes well.

The veterans center would protect and maintain the rich history of the property while providing family housing, meeting and activity spaces, resource rooms, veteran ceremonial grounds, and outdoor recreation. It would be the first of its kind in northern Arizona, providing resources and support to primarily rural veterans and their families.

Furthermore, this legislation is an exemplary model of efficient land management. Out West, the Federal Government retains vast amounts of land, limiting States’ ability to maintain, conserve, recreate, and responsibly produce on the lands within their own States.

Anytime Congress can vote on legislation that returns power to the State is a good thing. In this case, veterans of northern Arizona will get a space to heal and reconnect with their families after putting their lives on the line for the peace and freedom of all Americans.

I would like to take a moment to thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR), my friend who helped lay the foundation for this effort, as well as Senators SINEMA and KELLY, who are leading this bill in the Senate.

It is my hope that we can get this bill across the finish line.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to put into good use this land for the benefit of our veterans, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I again applaud Representative CRANE for his leadership in this effort. As a veteran himself, I know that he understands just how important this veterans retreat center will be for the community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. HAGEMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1829, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPANDING PUBLIC LANDS OUTDOOR RECREATION EXPERIENCES ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6492) to improve recreation opportunities on, and facilitate greater access to, Federal public land, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6492

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences Act” or the “EXPLORE Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—OUTDOOR RECREATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Subtitle A—Outdoor Recreation Policy

- Sec. 111. Congressional declaration of policy.
- Sec. 112. Identifying opportunities for recreation.

Sec. 113. Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation.

Sec. 114. Recreation budget crosscut.

Subtitle B—Public Recreation on Federal Recreational Lands and Waters

- Sec. 121. Biking on long-distance trails.
- Sec. 122. Protecting America’s rock climbing.
- Sec. 123. Range access.
- Sec. 124. Restoration of overnight campsites.
- Sec. 125. Federal interior land media.
- Sec. 126. Cape and antler preservation enhancement.
- Sec. 127. Motorized and nonmotorized access.
- Sec. 128. Aquatic resource activities assistance.

Subtitle C—Supporting Gateway Communities and Addressing Park Overcrowding

- Sec. 131. Gateway communities.
- Sec. 132. Improved recreation visitation data.
- Sec. 133. Monitoring for improved recreation decision making.

Subtitle D—Broadband Connectivity on Federal Recreational Lands and Waters

- Sec. 141. Connect Our Parks.
- Sec. 142. Broadband internet connectivity at developed recreation sites.
- Sec. 143. Public lands telecommunications cooperative agreements.

Subtitle E—Public-Private Parks Partnerships

- Sec. 151. Authorization for lease of forest service administrative sites.
- Sec. 152. Partnership agreements creating tangible savings.
- Sec. 153. Partnership agreements to modernize federally owned campgrounds, resorts, cabins, and visitor centers on Federal recreational lands and waters.
- Sec. 154. Parking and Restroom opportunities for Federal recreational lands and waters.
- Sec. 155. Pay-for-performance projects.
- Sec. 156. Outdoor recreation legacy partnership program.
- Sec. 157. American battlefield protection program enhancement.

TITLE II—ACCESS AMERICA

Sec. 201. Definitions.

Subtitle A—Access for People With Disabilities

- Sec. 211. Accessible recreation inventory.
- Sec. 212. Trail inventory.
- Sec. 213. Trail pilot program.
- Sec. 214. Accessible trails.
- Sec. 215. Accessible recreation opportunities.
- Sec. 216. Assistive technology.
- Sec. 217. Savings clause.

Subtitle B—Military and Veterans in Parks

- Sec. 221. Promotion of outdoor recreation for military servicemembers and veterans.
- Sec. 222. Military Veterans Outdoor Recreation Liaisons.
- Sec. 223. Partnerships to promote military and veteran recreation.
- Sec. 224. National strategy for military and veteran recreation.
- Sec. 225. Recreation resource advisory committees.
- Sec. 226. Career and volunteer opportunities for veterans.

Subtitle C—Youth Access

- Sec. 231. Increasing youth recreation visits to Federal land.
- Sec. 232. Every Kid Outdoors Act extension.

TITLE III—SIMPLIFYING OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR RECREATION

Sec. 301. Definitions.

Subtitle A—Modernizing Recreation Permitting

- Sec. 311. Special recreation permit and fee.
- Sec. 312. Permitting process improvements.
- Sec. 313. Permit flexibility.
- Sec. 314. Permit administration.
- Sec. 315. Service First Initiative; Permits for multijurisdictional trips.
- Sec. 316. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management temporary special recreation permits for outfitting and guiding.
- Sec. 317. Reviews for long-term permits.
- Sec. 318. Adjustment of allocated visitor-use days.
- Sec. 319. Liability.
- Sec. 320. Cost recovery reform.
- Sec. 321. Availability of Federal, State, and local recreation passes.
- Sec. 322. Online purchases and establishment of a digital version of America the Beautiful—The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes.

Sec. 323. Savings provision.

Subtitle B—Making Recreation a Priority

Sec. 331. Extension of seasonal recreation opportunities.

Subtitle C—Maintenance of Public Land

Sec. 341. Volunteers in the National Forests and Public Lands Act.

Sec. 342. Reference.

Subtitle D—Recreation Not Red Tape

- Sec. 351. Good neighbor authority for recreation.
- Sec. 352. Permit relief for picnic areas.
- Sec. 353. Interagency report on special recreation permits for underserved communities.
- Sec. 354. Modernizing Access to Our Public Land Act amendments.
- Sec. 355. Savings provision.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY.—The term “Federal land management agency” has the meaning given the term in section 802 of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801).

(2) FEDERAL RECREATIONAL LANDS AND WATERS.—The term “Federal recreational lands and waters” has the meaning given the term in section 802 of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801).

(3) GATEWAY COMMUNITY.—The term “gateway community” means a community that serves as an entry point, or is adjacent, to a recreation destination on Federal recreational lands and waters or non-Federal land at which there is consistently high, in the determination of the Secretaries, seasonal or year-round visitation.

(4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(5) LAND USE PLAN.—The term “land use plan” means—

(A) a land use plan prepared by the Secretary pursuant to section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712); and

(B) a land management plan prepared by the Forest Service for a unit of the National Forest Service pursuant to section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604).

(6) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries” means each of—

- (A) the Secretary; and
- (B) the Secretary of Agriculture.

(7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(8) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Secretary concerned” means—