

The park's commission is comprised of 19 members who serve on a volunteer basis. By including the voices and unique perspective of various local stakeholders, the commission provides a critical link between the National Park Service and local communities with no cost to the American taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1727, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission Extension Act, introduced by my colleague from Maryland, Representative TRONE.

Once a transportation route from Maryland to Washington, D.C., the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park now serves as an area full of recreational opportunities, while maintaining the historical structures of the old transportation route.

The park is comprised of 184 miles along the Potomac River, hosting over 5 million visitors annually. The bill before us would reauthorize the park's advisory commission until 2031 to allow them to continue their leadership in working with their communities to enhance visitor experience and recreational opportunities.

The advisory commission is key to ensuring that local communities have a voice in the operation, maintenance, and restoration of the park.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time and continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE).

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and urge a "yes" vote on my bill, the C&O Canal National Historical Park Commission Extension Act.

Running from D.C. to Cumberland, Maryland, the park's 20,000 acres of land are home to history. George Washington himself spearheaded the efforts to navigate these waters and drive industry in our then-newly formed Republic. For nearly 100 years, the canal transported lumber, crops, and coal, crucial commerce for the many communities depending on it for their livelihoods.

Now a national park, the C&O Canal is home to thousands of native species, over 100 of which are listed as rare and threatened or endangered by the State of Maryland, all of which must be fiercely protected.

For more than 40 years, the advisory commission has served as a link between the surrounding communities and the National Park Service to manage and restore the park. The commission has a proven track record of ensuring the growth and maintenance of the land, as well as protection of the plants and animals living within it.

Every 10 years, Congress must reauthorize this commission for it to continue the vital work, which brings us here today. I am proud to lead this effort with my dear friend, Senator BEN CARDIN, to ensure Americans can enjoy, explore, and protect our park for generations to come.

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I am honored to represent so many Marylanders who get to appreciate the beauty and rich history of the C&O Canal every day.

By reauthorizing the commission, we are showing that Congress values the investments in our Nation's natural resources.

I thank all Members from the C&O Canal region who support this legislation: Representatives BEYER, CONNOLLY, HOLMES, NORTON, MOONEY, RASKIN, and WEXTON. I thank Natural Resources Committee Chair WESTERMAN for moving this bill through committee with unanimous support and Chairwoman DINGELL for her support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a commonsense bill that promotes collaboration between Federal agencies and local stakeholders. It achieves this without adding any burden on the American taxpayer.

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 gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1727, 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. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

CLIFTON OPPORTUNITIES NOW FOR VIBRANT ECONOMIC YIELDS ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2997) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey to Mesa County, Colorado, certain Federal land in Colorado, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2997

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 "Clifton Opportunities Now for Vibrant Economic Yields Act" or as the "CONVEY Act".

SEC. 2. CONVEYANCE OF FEDERAL LAND TO MESA COUNTY, COLORADO.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CLIFTON PARCEL.—The term "Clifton parcel" means the approximately 31.1 acres of Federal land depicted as "31.1 Acres to be Conveyed to Mesa County" on the map titled "Clifton Opportunities Now for Vibrant Economic Yields (CONVEY) Act" and dated April 19, 2023.

(2) COUNTY.—The term "County" means Mesa County, Colorado.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the Secretarial Order dated August 26, 1902, and the Secretarial Order dated July 25, 1908, the Secretary shall convey to the County, as soon as practicable, all rights, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Clifton parcel.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—The conveyance under this section shall be—

(1) subject to valid existing rights; and

(2) for not less than fair market value, as determined in accordance with subsection (d).

(d) APPRAISAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The fair market value of the Clifton parcel shall be determined by an independent appraisal obtained by the Secretary.

(2) APPRAISAL STANDARDS.—The appraisal required by paragraph (1) shall be conducted in accordance with the—

(A) Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions; and

(B) Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(e) COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.—The County shall pay all costs associated with the conveyance required under subsection (b), including all costs associated with any survey conducted for the purpose of accomplishing such conveyance.

(f) PROCEEDS FROM CONVEYANCE.—The proceeds from the conveyance required under subsection (b) shall be—

(1) deposited into the Federal Land Disposal Account established by the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (43 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.); and

(2) available for expenditure under that Act.

(g) MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall finalize a map and a legal description of all land to be conveyed under this Act.

(2) CONTROLLING DOCUMENT.—In the case of a discrepancy between the map and the legal description created under paragraph (1), the map shall control.

(3) CORRECTIONS.—The Secretary and the County, by mutual agreement, may correct any minor errors in the map or the legal description created under paragraph (1).

(4) MAP ON FILE.—The map and the legal description created under paragraph (1) shall be kept on file and available for public inspection in each appropriate office of the Bureau of Land Management.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. 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. 2997, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support Representative BOEBERT's bill, the Clifton Opportunities Now for Vibrant Economic Yields Act, or the CONVEY Act.

H.R. 2997 conveys land from the Federal Government to Mesa County in Colorado. As the House Committee on Natural Resources considered and ultimately passed this bill through our committee last year, it was clear Representative BOEBERT had done good work to build consensus and solve an important issue in a local Colorado community.

The bill is good policy. Representative BOEBERT worked with her constituents, county leaders, and the Bureau of Land Management to draft legislation they all support.

Many of our Western States are largely owned by the Federal Government. In Colorado, over 36 percent of the land is federally owned. In Mesa County, an astonishing 72 percent of the land is owned by the Federal Government, and this presents many local challenges.

As communities grow in proximity to Federal lands, there simply is not enough space for new homes, schools, hospitals, or other necessities to sustain a growing population. Large swaths of Federal land limit the tax base to support the local community. While creative solutions have been enacted by Congress to address this issue, there are still setbacks to communities lacking a strong tax base.

The growing population in this Colorado community has encouraged county leaders to seek out new land for development. The land in question is on the Bureau's disposal list, meaning the agency has determined it no longer wants to manage the land and the land does not serve the taxpayers' interest.

While both the Bureau of Land Management and Mesa County are supportive of this land exchange, the process has continued to run into bureaucratic delays. Mesa County has been working for 5 years to acquire a mere 31 acres—let me repeat that: 5 years to acquire 31 acres—all because of bureaucratic delays. We now need an act of Congress to speed up this process.

This is evidence of a much larger problem. There should not be excessive delays preventing the conveyance of land when all parties agree this land would be put to more productive use outside of Federal management and there is a willing buyer.

The House Committee on Natural Resources will continue to conduct oversight on how we can expedite the process of disposing of unwanted Federal

land, especially land that could be better utilized to support small, rural communities and their economies.

While the committee continues its work to address the larger issue of Federal land management, I applaud Representative BOEBERT for her leadership in addressing this important issue for her constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2997 would authorize the Bureau of Land Management, or BLM, to convey 31 acres of Federal land to Mesa County in Colorado.

This parcel of land was once used by the Bureau of Reclamation for irrigation under the Grand Valley Reclamation Project. It has since been designated suitable for disposal by BLM, with agencies having started the withdrawal revocation process.

Following the completion of this process, BLM will engage in a direct sale with Mesa County.

The CONVEY Act is designed to facilitate and expedite the ongoing parcel conveyance process. Following the conveyance, Mesa County will use the land for economic development and growth opportunities in and around Clifton, Colorado.

I thank the majority for working with us to ensure that, under this bill, Mesa County is responsible for paying for all the costs associated with the conveyance, as is typical in these types of transactions.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. BOEBERT), the author of the legislation.

Ms. BOEBERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2997, my Clifton Opportunities Now for Vibrant Economic Yields Act, the CONVEY Act.

This commonsense bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to convey 31.1 acres of land that the Federal Government no longer wishes to manage to Mesa County for economic development in Clifton, Colorado. Mesa County will purchase the land for fair market value.

For over 5 years, Mesa County has been stuck in red tape as they have been diligently pursuing the acquisition of this parcel of land that is on the BLM disposal list. This land holds immense value for Mesa County as it presents a critical opportunity for economic development in Clifton, an area of the county that has struggled economically.

I have worked closely with BLM, the committee, and the Mesa County commissioners to cut through the bureaucracy and expedite this process. The Principal Deputy Director at the Bureau of Land Management, Nada Wolff Culver, said: "The BLM supports H.R. 2997," the CONVEY Act, "and the direct sale of the parcel to Mesa County."

The economic potential of this land will allow Mesa County to attract job creators and foster an environment that encourages economic prosperity for Clifton.

Once Mesa County is able to secure the land, they will establish an economic development board to solicit input from local stakeholders.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, this bill would reduce Federal spending. It also ensures the funds from the sale of this land will be deposited into the Federal Land Disposal Account, established by the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act, and retained by the Bureau of Land Management Colorado office, so the funds from the sale will actually be used in Colorado.

More than 55 percent of Colorado's Third District and 73 percent of Mesa County's land area is Federal land. As Mesa County continues to grow, the county is significantly limited in the land it has available to develop.

These large Federal footprints often stifle local communities that lack power in decisionmaking over the land in their own backyards from moving forward on important development opportunities.

I am proud to empower local communities and jump-start rural economies through innovative solutions that reduce our Federal footprint and cut bureaucratic red tape that is stifling economic growth with the CONVEY Act.

It has been a pleasure to work on this piece of legislation and to offer this to Mesa County to see what they come up with for their economic development.

I urge my colleagues to support this simple, straightforward bill, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank Representative BOEBERT for her hard work and leadership and the effort she put into crafting this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2997, 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.

PILOT BUTTE POWER PLANT CONVEYANCE ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3415) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the Midvale Irrigation District the Pilot