

users to build drought mitigation infrastructure and make water available for fish and wildlife restoration efforts, among others.

Since 1992, when this legislation was enacted, Reclamation has relied on these authorities to assist communities across the 17 Reclamation States and territories to effectively manage water resources and mitigate impacts posed by droughts and natural disasters.

As the western United States responds to drought events and with the cost of these events posing ever greater financial burdens, it is critical that Reclamation continues to utilize these important authorities to pursue its vital mission, helping to support local economies and ensuring access to water resources.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, 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 strong support of H.R. 4385 introduced by my colleague from Colorado, Representative NEGUSE.

Over the past several years, we have seen higher temperatures—with 2023 having been the hottest year on record—and reduced precipitation, snowpack, and stream flow due to climate change.

As ongoing impacts of climate change intensify, it is imperative we advance policies that would enhance climate resilience, restoration, and conservation—particularly when it comes to the quality and quantity of our available water resources.

The Drought Preparedness Act helps to do just that by reauthorizing a key program to support the development of drought contingency plans and mitigate climate-related drought impacts, including emergency response for communities grappling with water shortages for human health and safety needs.

I urge the swift passage of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE).

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague and friend from Michigan for yielding. I also thank Chairman WESTERMAN for his leadership and Ranking Member GRIJALVA for his support of this bill—my bill, the Drought Preparedness Act—and for being willing to consider it through the Natural Resources Committee and help us to bring it to the floor today.

Finally, I thank my colleague, Representative CISCOMANI, who co-chairs the Colorado River Caucus here with me in the United States and is a co-lead of this particular bill.

As has been mentioned, throughout the West and certainly in my home

State of Colorado, we have seen continuing drought conditions threaten the lives and the livelihoods of so many of our communities. These ongoing drought conditions are shrinking the region's many, many water lifelines.

I will just say as someone who represents the Second Congressional District of Colorado and has the privilege of representing the Headwaters of the Colorado River, we know in my district and our communities know firsthand just how important that critical water supply is for our State.

That is why we created and formed the bipartisan Colorado River Caucus, a forum for Members located in Colorado River Basin States to discuss the various issues facing the Colorado River, upper basin and lower basin States.

As the Bureau of Reclamation, States, Tribes, and stakeholders are working toward long-term solutions, it is necessary that we continue to provide States and agency partners with every tool possible to mitigate its impacts, and that is exactly what this bill does.

As Representative DINGELL and Chairman WESTERMAN just articulated, the authorities that the Bureau has used in the past include drought contingency planning, resiliency projects, and emergency response actions. It is critical that we empower the Bureau to be able to utilize these tools into the future.

The Bureau of Reclamation testified during the legislative hearing during this particular bill as to just how important these tools are and how critical it is for Congress to ensure that they continue.

I am excited that this bill passed unanimously out of the House Natural Resources Committee and has strong bipartisan support. I urge my colleagues to support this bill here on the floor so we can get this across the finish line and to support Colorado and States across the Rocky Mountain West and the 17 Bureau of Reclamation States as we continue to deal with this crisis.

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, when President George H.W. Bush signed the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991, he said that the legislation would help us serve as good neighbors in times of need.

The Drought Preparedness Act reauthorizes vital authorities that the Bureau of Reclamation has relied on for more than three decades to do just that—help communities respond and to prepare for droughts, ensure effective management of water resources, and encourage fish wildlife restoration efforts. These efforts are critically important.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, 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. 4385.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WILDLIFE INNOVATION AND LONGEVITY DRIVER REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5009) to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5009

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 “Wildlife Innovation and Longevity Driver reauthorization Act” or the “WILD Act”.

SEC. 2. PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE ACT.

Section 5 of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act (16 U.S.C. 3774) is amended by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2024 through 2028”.

SEC. 3. AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT.

(a) PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE.—Section 2101 of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4211) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for African elephants and the habitat of African elephants.

“(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 2306(a) of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4245(a)) is amended by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2024 through 2028”.

SEC. 4. ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT OF 1997.

(a) ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.—Section 5 of the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 4264) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(i) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for Asian elephants and the habitat of Asian elephants.

“(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 8(a) of the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 4266(a)) is amended by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2024 through 2028”.

SEC. 5. RHINOCEROS AND TIGER CONSERVATION ACT OF 1994.

(a) RHINOCEROS AND TIGER CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE.—Section 5 of the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 5304) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for rhinoceroses or tigers and the habitat of rhinoceroses or tigers.

“(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 10(a) of the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 5306(a)) is amended by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2024 through 2028”.

SEC. 6. GREAT APE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2000.

(a) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—Section 4(j)(1) of the Great Ape Conservation Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 6303(j)(1)) is amended by inserting “of up to 5 years” after “multiyear grant”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 6 of the Great Ape Conservation Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 6305) is amended by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2024 through 2028”.

SEC. 7. MARINE TURTLE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2004.

(a) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—Section 4 of the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 (16 U.S.C. 6603) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) MULTIYEAR GRANTS.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary may award to a person who is otherwise eligible for a grant under this section a multiyear grant of up to 5 years to carry out a project that the person demonstrates is an effective, long-term conservation strategy for marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises and the habitat of marine turtles, freshwater turtles, or tortoises.

“(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from awarding a grant on an annual basis.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 7(a) of the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 (16 U.S.C. 6606(a)) is amended by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2024 through 2028”.

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 have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 5009, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1700

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5009, sponsored by my friend and colleague, Congressman DAVE JOYCE of

Ohio. The programs this bill reauthorizes are decades old and have had proven results. This bipartisan piece of legislation will continue our longstanding efforts to promote responsible conservation efforts in the country and internationally.

First, H.R. 5009 authorizes the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, which allows the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to partner with private landowners to preserve habitat for at-risk species on private lands. Over the past 35 years, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program has helped around 30,000 landowners complete more than 50,000 habitat restoration projects totaling more than 6.4 million acres of fish and wildlife habitat.

In February 2023, the service reported that two-thirds of federally listed species have at least some habitat on private land, and some species have most of their remaining habitat on private land. Voluntary, collaborative conservation efforts like the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program help to empower private landowners to aid these species.

Lastly, this bill reauthorizes the programs which make up the multinational species conservation funds. These programs provide grant funding to conserve some of the world's most iconic species, such as elephants, lions, tigers, rhinos, and great apes.

Since their inception, these programs have provided over \$92.5 million in grants and cooperative agreements for conservation projects in 54 countries, while leveraging \$200 million in private matching contributions. These grants and cooperative agreements are vital to reducing illegal trafficking and poaching, decreasing conflict with humans, and improving habitat for these iconic species.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Mr. JOYCE for his work on this bill, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be the co-lead of H.R. 5009, the WILD Act. I want to start by thanking my partner, Representative JOYCE, for his hard work on this bipartisan bill. The WILD Act would authorize and amend several wildlife conservation laws, making it easier to support long-term conservation in the United States and abroad.

The multinational species conservation funds, which are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, support five programs that help conserve iconic wildlife species, including elephants, rhinos, tigers, great apes, and turtles.

Grants awarded through these programs can be used to secure additional matching funds, increasing the impact of U.S. dollars. Awards made through these funds support synchronized aerial surveys, increasing habitat connectivity, reducing poaching and wildlife crime, community engagement activities, and breeding and reintroduction programs.

The WILD Act also would reauthorize the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, which supports habitat restoration efforts across the United States and territories.

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employs biologists who work with private landowners to help them conserve and improve wildlife habitat.

Program staff provide free technical and financial assistance to plan, design, supervise, and monitor customized habitat restoration projects ranging in size from a few acres to hundreds of thousands of acres.

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is an important component of our Nation's collaborative conservation efforts for endangered and threatened species.

Mr. Speaker, the WILD Act is a bipartisan win for conservation. I urge a “yes” vote, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE), who is the bill's sponsor.

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage support for the Wildlife Innovation and Longevity Driver reauthorization Act, also known as the WILD Act.

Like many in northeast Ohio, some of my fondest memories are from growing up connected to the Great Lakes, especially in the wildlife area. However, our Nation's wildlife and habitats are facing unprecedented challenges. As Members of Congress, it is our responsibility to protect and preserve these habitats for future generations.

By reauthorizing the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and the multinational species conservation fund, this critical legislation will not only safeguard the diverse ecosystems of our 50 States and territories, but also ensure the preservation of some of the world's most iconic species.

From the elephants in Africa to the turtles in Lake Erie, we must do everything we can to protect our world's rich biodiversity. For decades, these programs have garnered bipartisan support and have proven to deliver tangible results. Commonsense, community-centered conservation efforts like these help restore habitats and endangered species and wildlife and lift up economies and make communities more secure.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting the WILD Act. I also thank my colleague, my dear friend, Michigan, Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL, for her support on this bill and for leading the bipartisan efforts with me.

Together we can ensure that our children and grandchildren will inherit a world rich in wildlife and abundant natural wonders. The time to act is now for the sake of our planet and all who call it home.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I am

prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I consider myself a conservationist. The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program has long been a critical tool to help advance collaborative conservation on private lands, and the multinational species conservation funds have been essential to conserving some of the world's most iconic species, as we discussed.

I, again, applaud Congressman JOYCE's bipartisan efforts on this legislation that will continue our longstanding efforts to promote responsible conservation efforts in the country and internationally.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support it, 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. 5009.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WINNEBAGO LAND TRANSFER ACT OF 2023

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1240) to transfer administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands from the Army Corps of Engineers to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to take such lands into trust for the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1240

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 "Winnebago Land Transfer Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. LAND TO BE TAKEN INTO TRUST.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Subject to all valid existing rights, all right, title, and interest (including improvements and appurtenances) of the United States in and to the Federal lands described in subsection (b), those Federal lands—

(1) *are declared to be part of the Winnebago Reservation created by the Treaty between the United States and the Winnebago Tribe in 1865; and*

(2) *shall be held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska subject to the same terms and conditions as those lands described in the Treaty with the Winnebago Tribe, 1865 (14 Stat. 671).*

(b) *FEDERAL LANDS DESCRIBED.*—The Federal lands described in this subsection are the following:

(1) *That portion of Tract No. 119, the description of which is filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Iowa*

(Western Division), Civil Case No. 70-C-3015-W, executed May 11, 1973, said tract being situated in Section 8 and the accretion land thereto, the Southwest Quarter of Section 9, the West Half of Section 16, the East Half of Section 17, Township 86 North, Range 47 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, Woodbury County, Iowa, lying Easterly of the Nebraska/Iowa State Line and Southerly of the Easterly extension of the North line of the Winnebago Reservation.

(2) *Tract No. 210, as described in Schedule "A" of the "Declaration of Taking, Legal Description of Tract 210 and Judgment on Stipulation and Order of Distribution", filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Iowa (Western Division), Civil Case No. 70-C-3015-W.*

(3) *Tract No. 113, as described in the "Judgment on Declaration of Taking and Legal Description of Tract 113", filed in the United States District Court for the District of Nebraska, Civ. No. 03498.*

(c) *GAMING PROHIBITION.*—Class II and class III gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.) shall not be allowed at any time on the land taken into trust under subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman 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 have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1240, 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, H.R. 1240, the Winnebago Land Transfer Act of 2023, would replace approximately 1,600 acres of land into trust for the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska.

The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska is one of the federally recognized Tribes of the Ho-Chunk people. Their reservation encompasses 117,000 acres of land located in Thurston and Dixon Counties in Nebraska and Woodbury County in Iowa.

The treaties of 1865 and 1874 between the Tribe and the U.S. Government established the land that is now known as the Winnebago Tribe's reservation.

In 1970, the Army Corps of Engineers condemned tracts of land on the eastern boundary of the Winnebago Reservation in Nebraska and Iowa through eminent domain for the use of the Snyder-Winnebago Oxbow Lake Recreation Complex project. The Tribe challenged this taking in Federal Court. In Nebraska, the District Court ruled in favor of the Tribe, and the parcels in the State were returned.

That was not the case in Iowa. A failure to properly preserve a right of appeal meant that the Eighth Circuit Court could not return the land to the Tribe through a court order, even though they won their case. The land

would have to be returned to the Tribe through an act of Congress.

H.R. 1240 would right the wrong that occurred in 1970 by returning the land and placing it into trust. An additional 60-acre tract that was condemned by the Army Corps of Engineers would also be placed into trust as it would be landlocked by the main parcels being placed into trust.

The land is currently woodland and marsh and has recreational, hunting, and fishing values. The Tribe testified they intend to manage the land under their Winnebago Wildlife and Parks Department and plan to make few, if any, changes to the conservation measures currently in place. Under this legislation, the land would be ineligible for gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. FEENSTRA) for his work on the bill, I encourage adoption of the legislation, 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. 1240, the Winnebago Land Transfer Act of 2023, introduced by my colleague from Iowa, Representative FEENSTRA.

This bill would return two tracts of land acquired through eminent domain by the Army Corps of Engineers back into the trust for the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska.

In 1865, the Winnebago Tribe and the United States signed a treaty promising the Tribe their reservation in Nebraska along the Missouri River for the cession of their Dakota lands.

The United States violated this treaty in the 1970s when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers acquired land from the reservation for flood control by invoking eminent domain without congressional approval or approval of the Secretary of the Interior.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit has since held that the Army Corps of Engineers lacked the authority to exercise eminent domain over trust lands. Despite the court's decision, the land has never been returned to the Tribe and remains in the possession of the Army Corps of Engineers.

H.R. 1240 seeks to rectify this wrong by returning and reintegrating the land into the Winnebago Tribe's reservation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to right this wrong and vote "yes," and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the bill's sponsor, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. FEENSTRA).

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN for bringing this important bill to the floor.

The Winnebago Reservation was established by two treaties in 1865 and 1874 and has been the home of the Winnebago Tribe ever since.

In 1975, more than 100 years later, the Army Corps of Engineers took two