

Democrat YATES to urge increased funding for the refuge system. This funding is absolutely necessary for the conservation goals of our refuges to be adequately addressed, and strongly urge support of this investment through the appropriations process.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1420, the Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. In an attempt to assist in the fulfillment of important international treaty obligations of the United States, today we are asked to support a bill which reinforces an unconstitutional program of the Johnson administration, the National Wildlife Refuge Act of 1966.

Rather than this Congress debating the merits or constitutionality of Federal land management programs and the inherently flawed notion of common ownership and the necessarily resulting tragedy of the commons, this bill would amend the 1966 Act to instill internationally centralized management of these wildlife refuges to include requiring the Interior Department, using sound professional judgment, to prepare comprehensive plans detailing the appropriate use of each refuge. Additionally, this bill instills as the mission of the wildlife system the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants, and their habitats and provides the statutory authority for denying use of the refuges for all noncompatible uses which materially interfere with or detract from the mission. Moreover, H.R. 1420 directs the Interior Secretary to direct the continued growth of the System in a manner that is best designed to accomplish the mission [emphasis added].

Apparently, the era of big government is not over. In fact, in the name of satisfying international treaties, it seems as though even the Great Society is alive and well and growing.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, Teddy Roosevelt named Pelican Island, FL as the first United States wildlife refuge. In that tradition, I'm proud that Florida's fourteenth Congressional district boasts four wildlife refuges, including the J.N. "Ding" Darling refuge on my home island of Sanibel.

I want to commend Chairman YOUNG and the Resources Committee; bringing together many diverse interests, they've crafted a bill that meets with the satisfaction of all parties. H.R. 1420, for the first time, establishes a central purpose for the National Wildlife Refuge System, namely, providing a sanctuary for wildlife. It also addresses the issues of compatible uses in a responsible way. As the session continues, the House will undoubtedly face other contentious environmental debates—I am hopeful that we can address those issues in a similarly cooperative and productive manner.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (H.R. 1420). As cochairman of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I encourage all my colleagues to support this important legislation.

The refuge bill is a proenvironment bill which will protect our Nation's tradition of allowing people using their national recreational areas to hunt, fish, and look at birds, while preserving the environment.

Specifically, H.R. 1420 creates a nationwide set of six purposes for our national refuge system. Our refuge system will now be a dedicated network of lands to conserve and manage fish, wildlife, and plant species; to conserve, manage, and restore fish and wildlife

populations, plant communities, and refuge habitats; to preserve, restore, and protect endangered and threatened species; to conserve and manage migratory birds, anadromous fish and marine mammals; to allow compatible wildlife-dependent recreation, which includes hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and environmental education; and to fulfill our international treaty obligations.

This bill also requires the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to create conservation plans for each of America's 511 refuges within the next 15 years. These plans will help Americans understand the goals of our refuges and provide a better accounting of our national treasures.

It is also important to recognize what this bill does not do. This bill does not permit hunting and fishing on every wildlife refuge. The individual refuge manager must find that these activities are compatible with the purpose of the refuge. In addition, this bill sets clear guidelines and standards for managers to determine compatible uses. This bill does not permit non-wildlife activities such as mining, jet skiing, or oil and gas development. This bill does not increase or decrease the size of any of our 511 refuges.

This bill is the first significant refuge reform bill considered by Congress since the original refuge legislation in 1966. This legislation is supported by many outside organizations, including the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Wildlife Legislative Fund of America, American Sportfishing Association, Safari Club International, and many other groups.

I hope that all my colleagues recognize how important this legislation is and vote for H.R. 1420.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1420, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### RAGGEDS WILDERNESS, WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1019) to provide for a boundary adjustment and land conveyance involving the Raggeds Wilderness, White River National Forest, CO, to correct the effects of earlier erroneous land surveys.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1019

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

SECTION 1. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT AND LAND CONVEYANCE. RAGGEDS WILDERNESS, WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST, COLORADO.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) Certain landowners in Gunnison County, Colorado, who own real property adjacent to the portion of the Raggeds Wilderness in the White River National Forest, Colorado, have occupied or improved their property in good faith and in reliance on erroneous surveys of their properties that the landowners reasonably believed were accurate.

(2) In 1993, a Forest Service resurvey of the Raggeds Wilderness established accurate boundaries between the wilderness area and adjacent private lands.

(3) The resurvey indicated that a small portion of the Raggeds Wilderness is occupied by adjacent landowners on the basis of the earlier erroneous land surveys.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to remove from the boundaries of the Raggeds Wilderness certain real property so as to permit the Secretary of Agriculture to use the authority of Public Law 97-465 (commonly known as the Small Tracts Act; 16 U.S.C. 521c-521i) to convey the property to the landowners who occupied the property on the basis of erroneous land surveys.

(c) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—The boundary of the Raggeds Wilderness, Gunnison and White River National Forests, Colorado, as designated by section 102(a)(16) of Public Law 96-560 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note), is hereby modified to exclude from the area encompassed by the wilderness a parcel of real property approximately 0.86-acres in size situated in the SW¼ of the NE¼ of Section 28, Township 11 South, Range 88 West of the 6th Principal Meridian, as depicted on the map entitled "Encroachment-Raggeds Wilderness", dated November 17, 1993. Such map shall be on file and available for inspection in the appropriate offices of the United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.

(d) CONVEYANCE OF LAND REMOVED FROM WILDERNESS AREA.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall use the authority provided by Public Law 97-465 (commonly known as the Small Tracts Act; 16 U.S.C. 521c-521i) to convey all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the real property excluded from the boundaries of the Raggeds Wilderness under subsection (c) to those owners of real property in Gunnison County, Colorado, whose real property adjoins the excluded lands and who have occupied the excluded lands in good faith reliance on an erroneous survey.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH] and the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH].

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

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

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1019 provides for a boundary adjustment and land conveyance involving the Raggeds Wilderness, White River National Forest in Colorado, to correct the effects of earlier erroneous land surveys. This bill is identical to legislation which passed within the House of Representatives last year by voice vote. However, the legislation was not acted upon by the Senate prior to the conclusion of the 104th Congress.

In 1993, following a boundary survey, the White River National Forest discovered an encroachment into the