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**TITLE:** DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

**TEXT:** [\*H3363]

Mr. Chairman, I rise to enter into a colloquy with the gentleman from New Mexico (Chairman Skeen). The land acquisition that I would like to bring to the gentleman's attention today is 5,988 acres which is in-holding called Thunder Mountain. Thunder Mountain is located in the Payette National Forest in West Central Idaho and is located in the heart of the Frank Church-River of No Return **Wilderness** area.

This area is home to five listed species and large populations of game, large game including elk, deer, moose, and bighorn sheep. The purchase of this land would allow the Forest Service to protect the critical areas that are necessary for generations to come.

I offer my appreciation to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. Skeen) in advance for the gentleman's sincere consideration of this effort.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OTTER. I yield to the gentleman from New Mexico.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for bringing this land acquisition request to our attention and for making his interests known. There were many worthy land acquisition projects requested for fiscal year 2002.

We tried to fund as many as we could; nevertheless, we will closely examine this request should the opportunity arise in conference.

Mr. OTTER. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OTTER. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I have been in that area that the gentleman is talking about, and I think it is something we ought to look at very closely.

We appreciate the concern of the gentleman from Idaho for endangered species. That is kind of a new thing from Idaho, and we appreciate it.

Mr. OTTER. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I want to say to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. Dicks) I appreciate his concern for those of us in Idaho who are becoming more endangered every year.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment No. 5 offered by Mr. Rahall:

At the end of the bill, insert after the last section (preceding the short title) the following new section:

Sec. [\*H3414]

Mr. CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the Committee of today, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. Rahall) and a Member opposed each will control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. Rahall).

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, America's national monuments are under siege. Under the guise of an energy crisis, both the President and his Interior Secretary have publicly suggested that some of our national monuments might be pretty nice places for oil and gas drilling or perhaps even a coal mine.

In my view, this is not what America is about. Americans are rightfully concerned about energy security, but I do not think that the majority of Americans believe that we are in such a sorry state of affairs that we must unleash big oil onto some of our most cherished and sacred public lands.

Make no mistake about it, some of the oil and gas companies have been hankering to get into these areas for years. They are salivating over the thought that these monuments might be opened.

Mr. Chairman, I maintain that our national monuments, our national heritage must not be sacrificed on the alter of greed and profit.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would simply prohibit the issuance of new energy leases in designated national monuments.

It would not, it would not vanquish any valid existing right, nor would it prevent leasing in any situation where that activity was authorized when the monument was established. Establishment

of a national monument is an authority vested with the President under what is known as the Antiquities Act.

Beginning with that great Republican conservative Teddy Roosevelt, 14 of the 17 Presidents who served since 1906 have used this power. In all, they have established 122 national monuments, with Congress subsequently redesignating 30 of them as national parks.

We are talking about places like the California Coastal National Monument and the Giant Sequoia National Monument in California. The Craters of the Moon National Monument in Idaho and Vermillion Cliffs National Monument in Arizona.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RAHALL. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. Rahall) a question. I did not want to interrupt the gentleman, and I will be glad to give him some additional time.

I say to the gentleman, is it not true that before these became monuments, these were all Federal lands? Mr. Chairman, sometimes people think that Presidents go out and create just out of whole cloth **wilderness** or whatever area, but the monument has to have been Federal land before it became a monument; is that not correct?

Mr. RAHALL. Reclaiming my time, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. Dicks), the distinguished ranking member, is exactly right.

Mr. Chairman, I yield further to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. Dicks).

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to point that out to my colleagues.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that the gentleman from West Virginia be granted an additional minute due to my interruption.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair is unable to grant that request unless there is a unanimous consent request that each side get an additional minute, because this is a controlled-time debate.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, these places I just mentioned, they are incredible treasures. They are incredible treasures; from the Atlantic to the Pacific, historic sites, glacial fjords, towering mountains and fragile deserts. Indeed, they are a lasting legacy that we as Americans can hand down for generations to come.

Are we really that desperate that we will allow coal mining or oil and gas drilling in these national monuments? I do not believe so. Yet there are some, there are some who see things differently.

Under the Bush administration, the Interior Department has conducted a new analysis of the energy potential of national monument lands, not all monuments, mind you, not an analysis of all monuments, just those it so happened were designated by President Clinton.

What a surprise. This new analysis found that a number of our national monuments may contain some oil and gas and coal resources. These areas apparently now represent the administration's monument hit list. So the question comes down to this: 95 percent of BLM lands in the western energy-producing States are already open to oil, gas and coal leasing; 95 percent BLM lands are already open to oil, gas and coal leasing.

Must we now sacrifice the remaining 5 percent of protected areas, our **wilderness**, our historic sites, our wildlife preserves? Must they now be subjected to exploitation and speculation? I say no, and I sincerely hope that this body says no as well.

Vote for our heritage. Vote for our legacy. Vote for our future generations. Vote for American values. And vote for this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

This amendment would put in place a moratorium, stopping any new energy development within the current boundaries of the newly created national monuments without regard to the energy needs of the Nation. Passage of this amendment would limit the Department's capability to consider actions through the land planning process that could be in our Nation's interest. If after extensive consultation with all parties the President determines that it is in the best interest of the American people to modify a monument boundary, while still maintaining the integrity of our precious national monuments, he should not be prohibited from doing so.

Members have been rightfully concerned about the electricity situation in California and the rest of the West right now, and about supply and price problems of various energy fuels. This amendment sends the wrong message. It says regardless of the energy situation, we are going to place certain lands off limits, even if the President determines that leasing of those lands will not interfere with their national monument significance.

Therefore, I must ask for my colleagues' support in defeating this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. George Miller), the ranking member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and a former ranking member of the Committee on Resources.