H. R. 1500

To accelerate the Wilderness designation process by establishing a timetable for the completion of wilderness studies on Federal Lands.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 1999

Mr. HANSEN (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. HILL of Montana, Mrs. CHENOWETH, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. SALMON, Mr. STUMP, Mr. HEFLY, Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. POMBO, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCINNIS, and Mr. ROHRABACHER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

A BILL

To accelerate the Wilderness designation process by establishing a timetable for the completion of wilderness studies on Federal Lands.

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

2 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

3 This Act may be cited as “America’s Wilderness Protection Act”.

4 SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

5 The Congress finds that—
(1) The designation of certain Federal lands as Wilderness is beneficial to the American people.

(2) The Wilderness Act of 1964 and of the Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 provided for the study of certain lands for wilderness suitability. Areas undergoing such a study have been generally known as “Wilderness Study Areas”. —

(3) Wilderness Study Areas were intended as interim management designations pending completion of wilderness suitability studies. Wilderness Study Area status was not intended as a substitute for wilderness designation by Congress.

(4) It was not the intent of Congress that areas continue under Wilderness Study Area status indefinitely. Perpetuation of Wilderness Study Area status is undesirable and hinders the Wilderness designation process. Lands that merit Wilderness designation should be granted the full protection that such a status would afford, and those lands which do not merit such a designation should be released so that they can be managed for the public good as accorded by law.

(5) The establishment of a timetable for the completion of wilderness studies would facilitate the
wilderness designation process by supplying a time-
frame within which Congress must Act.

**SEC. 3. TIMETABLE FOR WILDERNESS STUDY COMPLETION.**

(a) **EXISTING WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS.**—All areas designated as wilderness study areas as of the date of the enactment of this Act shall be released from wilderness study area status on the earlier of the following:

1. The date 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act.
2. The date on which the area is designated by Act of Congress as wilderness.

(b) **SUBSEQUENT WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS.**—Any wilderness study area designated after the date of enactment of this Act shall remain in wilderness study area status until the earlier of the following:

1. The date 10 years after the date of designation.
2. The date on which the area is designated by Act of Congress as wilderness.

After such 10-year period, any such area not designated as wilderness by Act of Congress shall be released from wilderness study area status.