

AMENDING BOUNDARIES OF THE FLOWER GARDEN BANKS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Mr. STUDDS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3886) to amend the boundaries of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3886

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

SECTION 1. FLOWER GARDEN BANKS BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

(a) MODIFICATION.—Notwithstanding section 304 of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. 1434), the boundaries of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, as designated by Public Law 102-251, are amended to include the area described in subsection (d), popularly known as Stetson Bank. This area shall be part of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary and shall be managed and regulated as though it had been designated by the Secretary of Commerce under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

(b) DEPICTION OF SANCTUARY BOUNDARIES.—The Secretary of Commerce shall—

(1) prepare a chart depicting the boundaries of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, as modified by this section; and

(2) submit copies of this chart to the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(c) APPLICATION OF REGULATIONS.—Regulations issued by the Secretary of Commerce to implement the designation of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary shall apply to the area described in subsection (d) unless modified by the Secretary. This subsection shall take effect 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) AREA DESCRIBED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the area referred to in subsections (a), (b), and (c) is the area that is—

(A) generally depicted on the Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service map titled "Western Gulf of Mexico, Lease Sale 143, September 1993, Biologically Sensitive Areas, Map 3 of 3, Final";

(B) labeled "Stetson" on the High Island Areas South Addition diagram on that map; and

(C) within the 52 meter isobath.

(2) MINOR BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary of Commerce may make minor adjustments to the boundaries of the area described in paragraph (1) as necessary to protect the living coral resources of Stetson Bank or to simplify administration of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.

(e) PUBLICATION OF NOTICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce shall, as soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, publish in the Federal Register a notice describing—

(A) the boundaries of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, as modified by this section, and

(B) any modification of regulations applicable to that Sanctuary that are necessary to implement that modification of the boundaries of the Secretary.

(2) TREATMENT AS NOTICE REQUIRED UNDER NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES ACT.—A no-

tice published under paragraph (1) shall be considered to be the notice required to be published under section 304(b)(1) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. 1434).

SEC. 2. TRANSFER.

Of amounts appropriated by Public Law 103-139 to the Department of the Navy for Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy, the Secretary of the Navy shall transfer \$8,000,000 not later than April 15, 1994, to the Administrator of the Maritime Administration for the Conversion of the USNS CHAUVENET to a training ship for the Texas Maritime Academy's Training Program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS] will be recognized for 20 minutes, and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FIELDS] will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS].

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3886 amends the boundaries of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary to include a small area known as Stetson Bank.

The gentleman from Texas [Mr. ORTIZ] who admirably serves as the chairman of our Oceanography Subcommittee, was the sponsor of the original legislation that established Flower Garden Banks as a national marine sanctuary. He introduced H.R. 3886 to provide the same protection for Stetson Bank by making it a part of the sanctuary. He is to be commended for both actions.

This sanctuary was established in 1992 to protect the northernmost coral reef on the U.S. continental shelf. A nearby area, Stetson Bank, is a three-quarter square mile shoal known for a spectacular array of marine life. However, damage to that marine life from anchoring, shell collecting, and spearfishing led to calls from scientists and the sport diving community to protect the area.

This bill provides that protection. This is a wise, cost-effective effort to protect vital marine resources in the Gulf of Mexico and I urge the House to adopt this bill.

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

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill introduced by my friend and colleague, chairman SOLOMON ORTIZ.

The bill expands the boundaries of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, located approximately 110 miles offshore Galveston, TX, to include Stetson Bank. The Stetson Bank area is part of the northernmost coral reef in the continental shelf of North America. It is blanketed with hard corals, sponges, 253 known invertebrate species, and its home for scores of tropical fish, giant sea turtles, hammerhead sharks, and manta rays.

This abundant sea life is an important underwater ecosystem but, regrettably, in recent years certain irresponsible individuals have inflicted great harm on these marine resources. Although mooring buoys are installed in the bank, corals and sponges are being crushed by anchors from large vessels using nearby shipping channels. Spearfishing is decimating the fish populations and coral is being removed by divers.

In recognition of this growing problem, forward-thinking Gulf of Mexico diving groups, as well as the manager of the Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary, believe that folding this .75-acre site into the existing sanctuary would effectively protect these resources for future generations. Stetson Bank has been designed by the Minerals Management Service as a no activity zone, and the area is not used by commercial fishermen. I know of no opposition to this measure, and Chairman ORTIZ should be commended for his ongoing and outstanding leadership in seeking to protect the Stetson Bank.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this measure and hope that we will be able to have it enacted before the diving season begins this summer to afford Stetson Bank the full protection of the law.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3886 amends the boundaries of the Flower Garden Banks Marine Sanctuary to include a nearby bank known as Stetson Bank. The Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary was established by Congress in 1992 and has been a model for the entire National Marine Sanctuary Program.

The Sanctuary Program has demonstrated our ability to preserve and protect valuable marine resources, such as the coral reefs of the Flower Garden Banks, while sustaining the important multiple uses of the surrounding marine environment.

H.R. 3886 will add to the existing sanctuary a small coral bank of less than 1 square mile known as Stetson Bank. This bank is renowned for its spectacular array of fish and invertebrates and is a common destination for scuba divers.

However, its value has caused it to come under increasing pressure from anchor damage, spearfishing, and shell collectors. In response, local scientists and sport diving groups have led an effort to put the bank under protection.

Including Stetson Bank within the sanctuary boundary will place the bank under the existing sanctuary management plan. This will provide the same protections for Stetson Bank as are in place for the existing Flower Gardens Bank Sanctuary.

These protections will ensure that the valuable resources of Stetson Bank are preserved and that the bank will continue to be a popular site for the recreational dive industry.

Mr. Speaker, I especially want to thank Chairman STUDDS and the ranking member, Mr. FIELDS, and their respective staffs for all the help they have provided on this matter.

I believe this is a small but significant piece of legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STUDDS. 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 Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3886, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION GREAT LAKES IMPROVEMENTS ACT

Mr. STUDDS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1394) to improve coordination of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Great Lakes activities, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1394

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 "National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Great Lakes Improvements Act".

SEC. 2. GREAT LAKES OFFICE.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Under Secretary may establish and maintain within the Administration a Great Lakes Office in the Washington, District of Columbia area.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of the Great Lakes Office shall be to promote and coordinate Administration research, monitoring, and assessment work in the Great Lakes region consistent with the goals of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

(c) **DIRECTOR.**—The Director of the Great Lakes Office shall be an individual with extensive knowledge and expertise in the Great Lakes ecosystem, and with appropriate administrative experience.

SEC. 3. GREAT LAKES REPORT.

(a) **CONTENTS.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations under section 5 of this Act, the Under Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Great Lakes Office if established, shall prepare and submit to Congress an annual Great Lakes Report. The Report shall provide information relating to Great Lakes ecosystem research, monitoring, and assessment, including—

(1) the individual activities, projects, or proposals conducted by the Administration in the previous fiscal year, including a summary of funds expended in support of these activities, projects, or proposals;

(2) the amount of funds received from the Administration by each State or local government unit bordering the Great Lakes;

(3) the amount of funds received by individuals or institutions residing or located within a State bordering the Great Lakes;

(4) an inventory of Administration facilities and personnel located in a State bordering the Great Lakes or in the Great Lakes used to conduct or support Administration-funded activities, projects, or proposals in the Great Lakes, including vessels;

(5) the proposed Administration activities, projects, and proposals to benefit the Great Lakes ecosystem for the current fiscal year, including requested funds; and

(6) a proposal for increasing the presence of the Administration in the Great Lakes, and improving the coordination of research within the Administration and with other entities, including the Government of Canada.

(b) **DEADLINE.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations under section 5 of this Act, the Under Secretary shall submit the Great Lakes Report to Congress by October 1 of 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term "Administration" means the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(2) the term "Great Lakes" means—

(A) Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Ontario, and Lake Superior;

(B) their connecting waters, including the St. Marys River, the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, the Detroit River, and the Niagara River; and

(C) the St. Lawrence River;

(3) the term "Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement" means the bilateral agreement between the United States and Canada which was signed in 1978 and amended by the Protocol of 1987; and

(4) the term "Under Secretary" means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Under Secretary to carry out this Act \$100,000 for each of the fiscal years 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS] will be recognized for 20 minutes, and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FIELDS] will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS].

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1394 was introduced by Mr. STUPAK to establish, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA], a Great Lakes Office in the Washington, DC area.

One may ask why a Great Lakes Office in Washington, DC? Would not Kalamazoo be better? In a word, no. The purpose of this office would be to promote and coordinate activities of national programs that conduct research, monitoring, and environmental assessment in the Great Lakes region. These programs at NOAA and other agencies are managed from the national capitol area. The bill also requires an annual report to Congress on NOAA activities in the Great Lakes.

This bill unanimously passed the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee last week, and I urge the House to adopt it.

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

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in qualified support of this bill.

While I concede that the Great Lakes are a tremendous national and international resource—almost on a par with the Gulf of Mexico—I do not feel that a Washington, DC-based regional office to coordinate and promote the Great Lakes work of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] is necessary.

When Congressman Bob Davis introduced an identical measure in 1991, I understand he was expressing his frustration that NOAA had failed to establish a Great Lakes Research Office as required under section 118 of the Clean Water Act. However, NOAA established this office in January 1993, at the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory in Ann Arbor. Therefore, the need for the office is much less pressing.

I also question the costs involved. The President's fiscal year 1995 budget cuts NOAA's coastal and ocean programs significantly. In fact, two programs specific to the Great Lakes, the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory and the National Sea Grant College zebra mussel initiative, are sliced by over \$3.6 million. I think our first priority is to restore these programs and ensure that valuable research, environmental assessment, and navigation aids continue in the Great Lakes. The money would be better spent there than on desks and paper clips in Washington, DC.

However, the version of the bill reported from the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee is much improved. It leaves to the NOAA Administrator the decision to establish a Great Lakes Office. This is an appropriate exercise of executive authority. In addition, the detailed NOAA Great Lakes report to Congress is now subject to appropriations and limited to 4 years. Given the proliferation of reporting requirements, and NOAA's spotty track record for producing timely and useful reports, I believe these are fair limitations.

With these changes, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 1394 as reported by the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1394, a bill to improve the coordination of National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Great Lakes activities. I would like to thank the House leadership, as well as Chairmen ORTIZ and STUDDS, for moving expeditiously to have this bill considered in the Subcommittee on Oceanography, the full Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, and finally on the floor of the House.

H.R. 1394 would create a Washington, DC-, based NOAA Great Lakes office to coordinate and promote Great Lakes activities within