

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE
PRINT 117-54
OFFERED BY MR. NEGUSE OF COLORADO

At the end of title LV of division E, add the following:

1 SEC. 5505. CONTINENTAL DIVIDE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.

2 (a) COMPLETION OF TRAIL.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than November
4 10, 2028, the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure the completion of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail as a contiguous route, consistent with the following provisions of the National Trails System Act:

10 (A) Section 3(a)(2) (16 U.S.C.
11 1242(a)(2)).

12 (B) Section 5(a)(5) (16 U.S.C.
13 1244(a)(5)).

14 (C) Section 7 (16 U.S.C. 1246).

15 (2) PRIORITY OF ACTIONS.—The Secretary and
16 the Secretary of the Interior shall, to the maximum
17 extent practicable, take necessary actions to achieve

1 this goal, including the following steps, listed in
2 order of priority:

3 (A) Complete the Continental Divide Na-
4 tional Scenic Trail by acquiring land or an in-
5 terest in land, or by encouraging States or local
6 governments to enter into cooperative agree-
7 ments to acquire interests in land, to eliminate
8 gaps between sections of the Trail while main-
9 taining the nature and purposes of the Trail.

10 (B) Optimize the Trail by relocating in-
11 compatible existing portions of the Trail on
12 Federal land as necessary to provide for max-
13 imum outdoor recreation potential and for the
14 conservation and enjoyment of the nationally
15 significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural
16 qualities of the areas through which the Trail
17 passes, consistent with the Trail's nature and
18 purposes.

19 (C) Publish maps of the completed Trail
20 corridor.

21 (b) TRAIL COMPLETION TEAM.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out subsection
23 (a), not later than 1 year after the date of the enact-
24 ment of this section, the Secretary, in coordination
25 with the Secretary of the Interior, shall establish a

1 joint Forest Service and Bureau of Land Manage-
2 ment trail completion team to work in coordination
3 with the Trail Administrator to facilitate the comple-
4 tion and optimization of the Trail, pursuant to the
5 purposes of section 3(a)(2) of the National Trails
6 System Act (16 U.S.C. 1242(a)(2)) and the Trail's
7 nature and purposes.

8 (2) DUTIES OF THE TEAM.—The Team shall:

9 (A) Implement land and right-of-way ac-
10 quisitions, relocations, and trail construction
11 consistent with any Optimal Location Review
12 for the trail, giving priority to land that—

13 (i) eliminates gaps between segments
14 of the Trail;

15 (ii) may be acquired by the Secretary
16 or the Secretary of the Interior by pur-
17 chase from a willing seller, donation, ex-
18 change, or by cooperative agreement;

19 (iii) is best suited for inclusion in the
20 Trail corridor in accordance with the pur-
21 poses, policies, and provisions of the Na-
22 tional Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241
23 et seq.); and

24 (iv) has been identified as a segment
25 of the Trail on Federal land that should be

1 relocated to provide for maximum outdoor
2 recreation potential and the conservation
3 and enjoyment of the nationally significant
4 scenic, historic, natural, or cultural quali-
5 ties of the areas through which the Trail
6 passes.

7 (B) Provide the necessary administrative
8 and technical support to complete the Trail cor-
9 ridor under subsection (a).

10 (C) As appropriate, consult with other
11 Federal agencies, Governors of affected States,
12 Indian Tribes, Land Grants-Mercedes,
13 Acequias, relevant landowners or land users of
14 an acequia or land grant-merced, the Conti-
15 nental Divide Trail Coalition, and other volun-
16 teer and nonprofit organizations that assist in,
17 or whose members may be affected by, the de-
18 velopment, maintenance, and management of
19 the Trail.

20 (D) Support the Secretary in the develop-
21 ment of the acquisition and development plan
22 under subsection (c) and annual reports under
23 subsection (f).

24 (c) COMPREHENSIVE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOP-
25 MENT PLAN.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after
2 the establishment of the Team under subsection (b),
3 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Nat-
4 ural Resources of the House of Representatives and
5 the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of
6 the Senate a comprehensive acquisition and develop-
7 ment plan for the Trail.

8 (2) CONTENTS OF PLAN.—The comprehensive
9 acquisition and development plan should—

10 (A) identify any gaps in the Trail where
11 the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior
12 have not been able to acquire land or interests
13 in land by purchase from a willing seller, by do-
14 nation, by exchange, or by cooperative agree-
15 ment;

16 (B) include a plan for closing such gaps by
17 acquiring lands or interests in land; and

18 (C) include general and site-specific devel-
19 opment plans, including anticipated costs.

20 (d) METHOD OF ACQUISITION.—In carrying out this
21 section, the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior—

22 (1) may acquire land only by purchase from a
23 willing seller with donated or appropriated funds, by
24 donation, or by exchange; and

25 (2) may not acquire land by eminent domain.

1 (e) MAINTAINING EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS.—In
2 carrying out this section, the Secretary, the Secretary of
3 the Interior, and the Team shall continue to maintain and
4 develop working relationships with volunteer and nonprofit
5 organizations that assist in the development, maintenance,
6 and management of the Trail.

7 (f) REPORTS.—Not later than September 30, 2024,
8 and at the close of each fiscal year until the acquisition
9 and development plan is fully implemented, the Secretary
10 shall report on the following, in writing, to the Committee
11 on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and
12 the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the
13 Senate:

14 (1) The progress in acquiring land or interests
15 in land to complete the Trail consistent with this
16 section.

17 (2) The amount of land or interests in land ac-
18 quired during the fiscal year and the amount ex-
19 pended for such land or interests in land.

20 (3) The amount of land or interests in land
21 planned for acquisition in the ensuing fiscal year
22 and the estimated cost of such land or interests in
23 land.

24 (4) The estimated amount of land or interests
25 in land remaining to be acquired.

1 (5) The amount of existing Trail miles on Fed-
2 eral lands that need to be relocated to provide for
3 maximum outdoor recreation potential and for con-
4 servation and enjoyment of the nationally significant
5 scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of the
6 areas through which the Trail passes.

7 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) ACEQUIA.—The term “acequia” has the
9 meaning of the term “community ditch” as such
10 term is defined under section 73-2-27 of the New
11 Mexico Statutes.

12 (2) LAND GRANT-MERCED.—The term “land
13 grant-merced” means a community land grant
14 issued under the laws or customs of the Government
15 of Spain or Mexico that is recognized under chapter
16 49 of the New Mexico Statutes (or a successor stat-
17 ute).

18 (3) OPTIMAL LOCATION REVIEW.—The term
19 “Optimal Location Review” means the procedures
20 described in the Continental Divide National Scenic
21 Trail Optimal Location Review Guide, dated Novem-
22 ber 2017.

23 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
24 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
25 Chief of the Forest Service.

1 (5) TEAM.—The term “Team” means the trail
2 completion team established under subsection (b).

3 (6) TRAIL.—The term “Trail” means the Con-
4 tinental Divide National Scenic Trail established by
5 section 5 of the National Trails System Act (16
6 U.S.C. 1244).

