

Union Calendar No. 485

115TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 3961

[Report No. 115-634]

To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Kissimmee River and its tributaries in the State of Florida for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 4, 2017

Mr. SOTO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

APRIL 13, 2018

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on October 4, 2017]

A BILL

To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Kissimmee River and its tributaries in the State of Florida for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Kissimmee River Wild*
5 *and Scenic River Study Act of 2018”.*

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 *Congress finds the following:*

8 *(1) The Kissimmee River has undergone, over the*
9 *course of two decades, the largest river restoration ef-*
10 *fort in the world.*

11 *(2) Extending approximately 105 miles from Or-*
12 *lando to Lake Okeechobee, the Kissimmee River forms*
13 *the headwaters of Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades*
14 *and serves as a vital component of ecosystem restora-*
15 *tion in South Florida as a whole.*

16 *(3) The Kissimmee River Restoration Project has*
17 *significantly improved approximately 63,000 acres of*
18 *wetlands within the Kissimmee River watershed and*
19 *reestablished an environment suitable for fish, wild-*
20 *life, and the wetland plants that existed prior to the*
21 *Kissimmee River’s channelization in the 1960s.*

22 *(4) The Kissimmee River Restoration Project is*
23 *expected to be completed in 2020, at which point it*
24 *is expected to reestablish historic hydrologic condi-*
25 *tions, recreate historic river and floodplain*

1 *connectivity, recreate the historic mosaic of wetland*
2 *plant communities, and restore historic biological di-*
3 *versity and functionality.*

4 (5) *After decades of restoration efforts and the*
5 *expenditure of nearly a billion dollars, upon comple-*
6 *tion of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project, a*
7 *study should be conducted to determine the eligibility*
8 *of including the fully restored Kissimmee River into*
9 *the National Wild and Scenic River program to pre-*
10 *serve the fully restored free-flowing condition and im-*
11 *mediate environment of the river for the benefit and*
12 *enjoyment of present and future generations.*

13 (6) *Inclusion of the Kissimmee River into the*
14 *National Wild and Scenic River program would be a*
15 *fitting tribute to the hard work of the Army Corps of*
16 *Engineers and the South Florida Water Management*
17 *District's restoration work.*

18 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION FOR STUDY.**

19 (a) *DESIGNATION FOR POTENTIAL ADDITION.—Sec-*
20 *tion 5(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C.*
21 *1276(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:*

22 “(____) *KISSIMMEE RIVER, FLORIDA.—The seg-*
23 *ment from the southern shore of Lake Kissimmee to*
24 *its confluence with Lake Okeechobee.”.*

1 **(b) STUDY.**—*Section 5(b) of the Wild and Scenic Riv-*
2 *ers Act (16 U.S.C. 1276(b)) is amended by adding at the*
3 *end the following:*

4 “(____) *KISSIMMEE RIVER, FLORIDA.*—

5 “(A) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 3 years*
6 *after the date on which funds are made available*
7 *to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary of the*
8 *Interior shall complete a study of the Kissimmee*
9 *River, as described in subsection (a)(____), and*
10 *submit a report describing the results of such*
11 *study to the Committee on Natural Resources of*
12 *the House of Representatives and the Committee*
13 *on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.*

14 “(B) *REPORT REQUIREMENTS.*—*The report*
15 *required under subparagraph (A) shall—*

16 “(i) *include a discussion of the effect of*
17 *the designation of the segment to be studied*
18 *under subsection (a)(____) on—*

19 “(I) *existing commercial and rec-*
20 *reational activities, such as cattle*
21 *ranching, dairy production, hunting,*
22 *fishing, trapping, recreational shoot-*
23 *ing, motor boat use, or bridge construc-*
24 *tion;*

1 “(II) the authorization, construc-
2 tion, operation, maintenance, or im-
3 provement of energy production and
4 transmission infrastructure;

5 “(III) military operations; and

6 “(IV) the authority of State and
7 local governments to manage the ac-
8 tivities described in subclauses (I) and
9 (II); and

10 “(ii) identify—

11 “(I) all authorities that will au-
12 thorize or require the Secretary of the
13 Interior to influence local land use de-
14 cisions (such as zoning) or place re-
15 strictions on non-Federal land if the
16 area studied under subsection
17 (a)(____) is designated under the Wild
18 and Scenic Rivers Act;

19 “(II) all authorities that the Sec-
20 retary of the Interior may use to con-
21 demn property if the area studied
22 under subsection (a)(____) is des-
23 ignated under the Wild and Scenic
24 Rivers Act; and

1 “(III) all private property located
2 in the area to be studied under sub-
3 section (a)(____).

4 “(C) NONINTERFERENCE.—This study shall
5 not interfere with the Kissimmee River Restora-
6 tion Project authorized under section 101(8) of
7 the Water Resources Development Act of 1992
8 (Public Law 102–580).”.

9 (c) NO NEGATIVE IMPACT.—Nothing authorized by
10 this Act may negatively impact agricultural production in
11 the Kissimmee River basin.

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