

103^D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 698

To protect Lechuguilla Cave and other resources and values in and adjacent to Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 27, 1993

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

A BILL

To protect Lechuguilla Cave and other resources and values in and adjacent to Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

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 AND FINDINGS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Lechuguilla Cave Protection Act of 1993”.

6 (b) FINDING.—Congress finds and declares that
7 Lechuguilla Cave and the other resources of Carlsbad Cav-
8 erns National Park and adjacent public lands have inter-
9 nationally-significant scientific, environmental, and other
10 values that should be retained in public ownership and

1 protected against adverse effects of mineral exploration
2 and development and other activities presenting threats to
3 those values.

4 **SEC. 2. LAND WITHDRAWAL.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights,
6 the lands referred to in subsection (b), and all other lands
7 within the boundaries of the area specified on the map
8 referred to in such subsection which may become subject
9 to the operation of the public land laws, are hereby with-
10 drawn from all forms of appropriation under the public
11 land laws (including the mining laws) and from the oper-
12 ation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws.

13 (b) LAND DESCRIPTION.—The lands referred to in
14 subsection (a) are the public lands comprising approxi-
15 mately 5100 acres in Eddy County, New Mexico, as gen-
16 erally depicted on the map entitled “Dark Canyon Cave
17 Protection Area”, dated January 1993, and filed in ac-
18 cordance with subsection (c).

19 (c) PUBLICATION AND FILING.—As soon as possible
20 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
21 of the Interior shall publish in the Federal Register a no-
22 tice containing the legal description of the lands with-
23 drawn by subsection (a), and shall file such legal descrip-
24 tion and a detailed map of the lands referred to in such
25 subsection with the Committee on Natural Resources of

1 the House of Representatives and the Committee on En-
2 ergy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

3 (d) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—The map and legal
4 description referred to in subsection (b), shall have the
5 same force and effect as if they were included in this Act
6 except that the Secretary of the Interior may correct cleri-
7 cal and typographical errors in such map and legal de-
8 scription.

9 (e) PUBLIC INSPECTION.—Copies of the map and
10 legal description referred to in subsection (b), shall be
11 available for public inspection in the offices of the Director
12 and appropriate State Director of the Bureau of Land
13 Management.

14 (f) MANAGEMENT.—The lands withdrawn by this sec-
15 tion shall be managed by the Secretary of the Interior,
16 acting through the Bureau of Land Management, pursu-
17 ant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of
18 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 and following) and other applicable
19 provisions of law, including this Act.

20 **SEC. 3. MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING LEASES.**

21 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Sec-
22 retary of the Interior shall not permit the holder of any
23 mineral lease affecting lands withdrawn by section 2 or
24 any adjacent public lands in New Mexico that are man-
25 aged pursuant to section 603 of the Federal Land Policy

1 and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782) to carry
2 out any drilling or other activities on such lands that could
3 have any adverse effects on Lechuguilla Cave or any other
4 cave resources located within Carlsbad Caverns National
5 Park or within the lands withdrawn by section 2.

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