

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4257

To maximize land management efficiencies, promote land conservation,  
generate education funding, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 6, 2017

Mr. STEWART (for himself and Mr. POLIS) introduced the following bill; which  
was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To maximize land management efficiencies, promote land  
conservation, generate education funding, 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 “Advancing Conserva-  
5       tion and Education Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds that—

8                   (1) at statehood, Congress granted each of the  
9                   western States land to be held in trust by the States

1 and used for the support of public schools and other  
2 public institutions;

3 (2) since the statehood land grants, Congress  
4 and the executive branch have created multiple Fed-  
5 eral conservation areas on Federal land within the  
6 western States, including National Parks, National  
7 Monuments, national conservation areas, national  
8 grassland, components of the National Wilderness  
9 Preservation System, wilderness study areas, and  
10 national wildlife refuges;

11 (3) since statehood land grant land owned by  
12 the western States are typically scattered across the  
13 public land, creation of Federal conservation areas  
14 often include State land grant parcels with substan-  
15 tially different management mandates, making land  
16 and resource management more difficult, expensive,  
17 and controversial for both Federal land managers  
18 and the western States; and

19 (4) allowing the western States to relinquish  
20 State trust land within Federal conservation areas  
21 and to select replacement land from the public land  
22 within the respective western States, would—

23 (A) enhance management of Federal con-  
24 servation areas by allowing unified management  
25 of those areas; and

(B) increase revenue from the statehood land grants for the support of public schools and other worthy public purposes.

#### 4 SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

## 5 In this Act:

6                             (1) APPLICATION.—The term “application”  
7     means an application for State relinquishment and  
8     selection of land made under this Act in accordance  
9     with section 5.

(2) ELIGIBLE AREA.—The term “eligible area” means land within the outer boundary of—

12 (A) a unit of the National Park System;

13 (B) a component of the National Wilder-  
14 ness Preservation System;

15 (C) a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge  
16 System;

19 (E) an area identified by the Bureau of  
20 Land Management as having wilderness charac-  
21 teristics in a land use plan finalized under  
22 FLPMA;

23 (F) National Forest System land and pub-  
24 lic land administered by the Bureau of Land  
25 Management that has been designated as a na-

1              tional monument, national volcanic monument,  
2              national recreation area, national scenic area,  
3              inventoried roadless area, unit of the Wild and  
4              Scenic Rivers System, wilderness study area, or  
5              Land Use Designation II (as described by sec-  
6              tion 508 of the Alaska National Interest Lands  
7              Conservation Act (Public Law 101–626; 104  
8              Stat. 4428)); or

9                         (G) a sentinel landscape designated by the  
10             Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of De-  
11             fense, and the Secretary of the Interior.

12                 (3) FLPMA.—The term “FLPMA” means the  
13             Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976  
14             (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

15                 (4) PRIORITY AREA.—The term “priority area”  
16             means land within the outer boundary of any—

17                         (A) National Monument;  
18                         (B) national conservation area managed by  
19                     the Bureau of Land Management;  
20                         (C) component of the National Wilderness  
21                     Preservation System; or  
22                         (D) unit of the National Park System.

23                 (5) PUBLIC LAND.—

1                             (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “public land”  
2                             has the meaning given the term “public lands”  
3                             in section 103 of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1702).

4                             (B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “public  
5                             land” does not include Federal land that—

6                                 (i) is within an eligible area;  
7                                 (ii) is within an area of critical envi-  
8                             ronmental concern established pursuant to  
9                             section 202(c)(3) of FLPMA (43 U.S.C.  
10                             1712(c)(3));

11                                 (iii) is within an area withdrawn or  
12                             reserved by an Act of Congress, the Presi-  
13                             dent, or public land order for a particular  
14                             public purpose or program, including for  
15                             the conservation of natural resources;

16                                 (iv) has been acquired using funds  
17                             from the Land and Water Conservation  
18                             Fund established under section 200302 of  
19                             title 54, United States Code; or

20                                 (v) is within the boundary of an In-  
21                             dian reservation, pueblo, or rancheria.

22                             (6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
23                             the Secretary of the Interior.

24                             (7) STATE LAND GRANT PARCEL.—The term  
25                             “State land grant parcel” means—

1                             (A) any land granted to a western State by  
2                             Congress through a statehood or territorial land  
3                             grant for the support of public education or  
4                             other public institutions, or subsequently ac-  
5                             quired by the western State for that purpose; or

6                             (B) land granted to the State of Alaska  
7                             under subsections (a), (b), and (k) of section 6  
8                             of the Act of July 7, 1958 (commonly known as  
9                             the “Alaska Statehood Act”) (48 U.S.C. note  
10                             prec. 21; Public Law 85–508).

11                             (8) TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY.—The  
12                             term “traditional cultural property” has the mean-  
13                             ing given the term—

14                             (A) “historic property” in section 800.16  
15                             of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in  
16                             effect on the date of enactment of this Act); or  
17                             (B) “sacred site” in section 1(b) of Execu-  
18                             tive Order 13007 (42 U.S.C. 1996 note; relat-  
19                             ing to Indian sacred sites).

20                             (9) WATER RIGHT.—The term “water right”  
21                             means any right in or to groundwater, surface  
22                             water, or effluent under Federal, State, or other law.

23                             (10) WESTERN STATE.—The term “western  
24                             State” means any of the States of Alaska, Arizona,  
25                             California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico,

1       North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Wash-  
2       ington, and Wyoming.

3       **SEC. 4. RELINQUISHMENT OF STATE LAND GRANT PAR-**  
4                   **CELS AND SELECTION OF REPLACEMENT**  
5                   **LAND.**

6       (a) AUTHORITY TO SELECT.—In accordance with  
7       this Act and in order to facilitate the fulfillment of the  
8       mandates of State land grant parcels and Federal land  
9       described in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section  
10      3(2), on approval by the Secretary of an application under  
11      section 5, a western State may relinquish to the United  
12      States State land grant parcels wholly or primarily within  
13      eligible areas and select in exchange public land within the  
14      western State.

15       (b) VALID EXISTING RIGHTS.—Land conveyed under  
16      this Act shall be subject to valid existing rights.

17       (c) MANAGEMENT AFTER RELINQUISHMENT.—Any  
18      portion of a State land grant parcel acquired by the  
19      United States under this Act that is located within an eli-  
20      gible area shall—

21                  (1) be incorporated in, and be managed as part  
22                  of, the applicable unit described in subparagraphs  
23                  (A) through (G) of section 3(2) in which the land is  
24                  located without further action by the Secretary with  
25                  jurisdiction over the unit; and

1                         (2) if located within the National Forest Sys-  
2                         tem, be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture  
3                         in accordance with—

4                             (A) the Act of March 1, 1911 (commonly  
5                         known as the “Weeks Law”) (16 U.S.C. 552 et  
6                         seq.); and

7                             (B) any laws (including regulations) appli-  
8                         cable to the National Forest System and the  
9                         unit of the National Forest System in which the  
10                         land is located.

11                         (d) LIMITATION.—

12                             (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-  
13                         graphs (2) and (3), until a western State has relin-  
14                         quished and conveyed to the United States substan-  
15                         tially all of the State land grant parcels located in  
16                         priority areas in the western State, the western  
17                         State may not apply to relinquish State land grant  
18                         parcels in other eligible areas in the western State.

19                             (2) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary may waive the  
20                         limitation in paragraph (1) on a determination that  
21                         the relinquishment and conveyance to the United  
22                         States of substantially all State land grant parcels  
23                         located in priority areas in the western State is im-  
24                         practical or infeasible.

17 SEC. 5. PROCESS.

18 (a) PROCESS FOR APPLICATION.—

1 eligible areas and select public land in exchange for  
2 the State land grant parcels.

3 (2) TIMING.—Except as provided in section  
4 8(c), the process established by the Secretary under  
5 this section shall ensure that the relinquishment of  
6 State land grant parcels and the conveyance of pub-  
7 lic land is concurrent.

8 (b) PUBLIC NOTICE.—Prior to accepting or con-  
9 veying any land under this Act, the Secretary shall provide  
10 public notice and an opportunity to comment on the pro-  
11 posed conveyances between the western State and the  
12 United States.

13 (c) ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise pro-  
15 vided in this subsection, the Secretary shall acquire  
16 State land grant parcels and convey public land  
17 under this Act in accordance with—

18 (A) the National Environmental Policy Act  
19 of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and  
20 (B) other applicable laws.

21 (2) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OR ENVI-  
22 RONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.—In preparing an  
23 environmental assessment or environmental impact  
24 statement pursuant to section 102(2) of the Na-  
25 tional Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.

1       4332(2)) for the acquisition of State land grant par-  
2       cels and the conveyance of public land under this  
3       Act, if the western State has indicated an unwilling-  
4       ness to consider State land grant parcels for relin-  
5       quishment or public land for acquisition (other than  
6       the State land grant parcels and public land de-  
7       scribed in the proposed agency action), the Secretary  
8       is not required to study, develop, and describe more  
9       than—

- 10                     (A) the proposed agency action; and  
11                     (B) the alternative of no action.

12             (d) AGREEMENTS WITH STATES.—

13                     (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized  
14       to enter into agreements with any of the western  
15       States to facilitate processing of applications and  
16       conveyance of selected land.

17                     (2) AGREEMENT.—On completion of a preappli-  
18       cation process that includes identification of land to  
19       be conveyed, the Secretary and the western State  
20       may enter into a nonbinding agreement that in-  
21       cludes—

- 22                     (A) a time schedule for completing the con-  
23       veyances;

7 (e) APPROVAL OR REJECTION.—The Secretary—

8                         (1) shall issue a final determination on an ap-  
9                         plication not later than 3 years after the date a  
10                       western State submits that application to the Sec-  
11                       retary;

12                   (2) may approve an application in whole or in  
13 part, or as modified by the Secretary as necessary  
14 to balance the equities of the States and interest of  
15 the public;

19 (A) is not reasonably compact and consoli-  
20 dated;

24 (C) will significantly adversely affect public  
25 use of a recreation site or recreation area eligi-

1           ble for the collection of recreation fees under  
2           the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement  
3           Act (16 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.) or other authority;

4           or

5                 (D) is not in the public interest;

6                 (4) shall not accept any State land grant par-  
7           cels that, in the judgment of the Secretary, are not  
8           suitable for inclusion in the applicable unit described  
9           in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section 3(2) in  
10          which the land is located;

11                 (5) shall, prior to approving an application, con-  
12          sult with the head of any Federal agency with juris-  
13          diction over Federal land—

14                 (A) within which a western State proposes  
15          to relinquish a State land grant parcel; or

16                 (B) that is adjacent to public land pro-  
17          posed for conveyance to a western State;

18                 (6) shall, prior to approving an application—

19                 (A) consult, in accordance with Federal  
20          law, with any Indian tribe affected by the sub-  
21          ject of the application, including any Indian  
22          tribe that notifies the Secretary that there is  
23          traditional cultural property located within the  
24          public land proposed for conveyance to the  
25          western State; and

(8) shall, for applications by a western State for the conveyance of a parcel of public land that will result in significantly diminished public access to adjacent Federal land—

(B) reserve a right-of-way through the public land to be conveyed ensuring continued public access to adjacent Federal land; and

4                   (9) shall convey any public land approved for  
5 selection not later than 1 year after entering into a  
6 final agreement between the Secretary and the west-  
7 ern State on the land to be conveyed, subject to such  
8 other terms and conditions as may be appropriate.

9 (f) COSTS.—

10                         (1) IN GENERAL.—All costs of conveyances  
11                         under this Act, including appraisals, surveys, and re-  
12                         lated costs, shall be paid equally by the Secretary  
13                         and the western State.

**20 (g) CONVEYANCE BY WESTERN STATE.—**

(B) not be considered an exchange or acquisition for purposes of sections 205 and 206 of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1715, 1716).

(h) CONVEYANCE BY UNITED STATES.—The conveyance of public land by the United States shall—

16 SEC. 6 MINERAL LAND

17 (a) SELECTION AND CONVEYANCE —

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to this Act, a western State may select, and the Secretary may convey, land that is mineral in character under this Act.

21                   (2) EXCLUSION.—A western State may not se-  
22                   lect, and the Secretary may not convey land that in-  
23                   cludes only—

24 (A) a portion of a mineral lease or permit;

(B) the Federal mineral estate, unless the United States does not own the associated surface estate; or

7 (b) MINING CLAIMS.—

22 (B) the Secretary makes a final determina-  
23 tion not accepting the selection of the land; or

24 (C) the western State withdraws the selec-  
25 tion of the land

1   **SEC. 7. CONSTRUCTION WITH OTHER LAWS.**

2       (a) CONSIDERATION.—In the application of laws, reg-  
3   ulations, and policies relating to selections made under  
4   this Act, the Secretary shall consider the equities of the  
5   western States and the interest of the public.

6       (b) LAND USE PLAN.—The Secretary may approve  
7   an application submitted in accordance with this Act even  
8   if—

9               (1) the selected public land is not otherwise  
10   identified for disposal; or  
11               (2) the land to be acquired is not identified to  
12   be acquired in the applicable land use plan.

13   **SEC. 8. VALUATION.**

14       (a) EQUAL VALUE.—

15               (1) IN GENERAL.—The overall value of the  
16   State land grant parcels and the public land to be  
17   conveyed shall be—

18                       (A) equal; or

19                       (B) if the value is not equal—

20                               (i) equalized by the payment of funds  
21                               to the western State or to the Secretary as  
22                               the circumstances require; or

23                               (ii) reflected on the balance of a ledg-  
24                               er account established under subsection  
25                               (c).

1                         (2) APPRAISAL REQUIRED.—Except as provided  
2                         in subsection (b), the Secretary shall determine the  
3                         value of a State land grant parcel and public land  
4                         through an appraisal completed in accordance  
5                         with—

6                             (A) the Uniform Appraisal Standards for  
7                         Federal Land Acquisitions; and  
8                             (B) the Uniform Standards for Profes-  
9                         sional Appraisal Practice.

10                         (3) EQUALIZATION.—For each transaction, an  
11                         equalization payment described in paragraph  
12                         (1)(B)(i) or a ledger entry described in paragraph  
13                         (1)(B)(ii) may not exceed 25 percent of the total  
14                         value of the land or interest transferred out of Fed-  
15                         eral ownership.

16                         (b) LOW VALUE PARCELS.—

17                         (1) VALUATION.—The Secretary may, with the  
18                         consent of a western State, use a summary appraisal  
19                         or statement of value made by a qualified appraiser  
20                         carried out in accordance with the Uniform Stand-  
21                         ards for Professional Appraisal Practice instead of  
22                         an appraisal that complies with the Uniform Ap-  
23                         praisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions if  
24                         the western State and the Secretary agree that the

1 market value of a State land grant parcel or a parcel  
2 of public land is—

- 3 (A) less than \$500,000; and  
4 (B) less than \$500 per acre.

5 (2) DIVISION.—A State land grant parcel or a  
6 parcel of public land may not be artificially divided  
7 in order to qualify for a summary appraisal or state-  
8 ment of value under paragraph (1).

9 (c) LEDGER ACCOUNTS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and any west-  
11 ern State may agree to use a ledger account to make  
12 equal the value of land relinquished by the western  
13 State and conveyed by the United States to the  
14 western State under this Act.

15 (2) IMBALANCES.—A ledger account described  
16 in paragraph (1) shall reflect imbalances in value to  
17 be reconciled in a subsequent transaction.

18 (3) ACCOUNT BALANCING.—Each ledger ac-  
19 count shall be—

20 (A) balanced not later than 3 years after  
21 the date on which the ledger account is estab-  
22 lished; and

23 (B) closed not later than 5 years after the  
24 date of the last conveyance of land under this  
25 Act.

1       (d) COSTS.—

2                 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary or the west-  
3                 ern State may assume costs or other responsibilities  
4                 or requirements for conveying land under this Act  
5                 that ordinarily are borne by the other party.

6                 (2) ADJUSTMENT.—If the Secretary assumes  
7                 costs or other responsibilities under paragraph (1),  
8                 the Secretary shall make adjustments to the value of  
9                 the public land conveyed to the western State to  
10                compensate the Secretary for assuming the costs or  
11                other responsibilities.

12               (e) ADJUSTMENT.—If value is attributed to any par-  
13                cel of public land that has been selected by a western State  
14                because of the presence of minerals under a lease entered  
15                into under the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et  
16                seq.) that is in a producing or producible status, and the  
17                lease is to be conveyed under this Act, the value of the  
18                parcel shall be reduced by the amount that represents the  
19                likely Federal revenue sharing obligation under that Act,  
20                but the adjustment shall not be considered as reflecting  
21                a property right of the western State.

22       **SEC. 9. MISCELLANEOUS.**

23               (a) HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.—

24                 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and the west-  
25                 ern States shall make available for review and in-

1       spection any record relating to hazardous materials  
2       on land to be conveyed under this Act.

3                     (2) CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary and the  
4       western State shall each complete an inspection and  
5       a hazardous materials certification of land to be con-  
6       veyed under this Act before the completion of the  
7       conveyance.

8                     (b) WATER RIGHTS.—

9                     (1) STATE-HELD APPURTEnant WATER  
10      RIGHTS.—Any conveyance of a State land grant par-  
11      cel under this Act may include the conveyance of  
12      State-held water rights appurtenant to the land con-  
13      veyed in accordance with applicable law.

14                     (2) FEDERALLY HELD APPURTEnant WATER  
15      RIGHTS.—Any conveyance of public land under this  
16      Act may include the conveyance of federally held  
17      water rights appurtenant to the land conveyed in ac-  
18      cordance with applicable Federal and State law.

19                     (3) EFFECT.—Nothing in this Act—

20                         (A) creates an implied or expressed Fed-  
21      eral reserved water right;

22                         (B) affects a valid existing water right; or

23                         (C) affects the use of water conveyance in-  
24      frastructure associated with a water right de-  
25      scribed in subparagraph (B).

## 1       (c) GRAZING PERMITS.—

2               (1) IN GENERAL.—If land conveyed under this  
3     Act is subject to a lease, permit, or contract for the  
4     grazing of domestic livestock in effect on the date of  
5     the conveyance, the Secretary (or the Secretary of  
6     Agriculture for land located within the National For-  
7     est System) and the western State shall allow the  
8     grazing to continue for the remainder of the term of  
9     the lease, permit, or contract, subject to the related  
10    terms and conditions of user agreements, including  
11    permitted stocking rates, grazing fee levels, access,  
12    and ownership and use of range improvements.

13              (2) RENEWAL.—On expiration of any grazing  
14    lease, permit, or contract described in paragraph  
15    (1), the party that has jurisdiction over the land on  
16    the date of expiration may elect to renew the lease,  
17    permit, or contract if permitted under applicable  
18    law.

## 19              (3) CANCELLATION.—

20               (A) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act  
21    prevents the Secretary (or the Secretary of Ag-  
22    riculture for land located within the National  
23    Forest System) or the western State from can-  
24    celing or modifying a grazing permit, lease, or  
25    contract if the land subject to the permit, lease,

1           or contract is sold, conveyed, transferred, or  
2           leased for nongrazing purposes.

3           (B) LIMITATION.—Except to the extent  
4           reasonably necessary to accommodate surface  
5           operations in support of mineral development,  
6           the Secretary (or the Secretary of Agriculture  
7           for land located within the National Forest Sys-  
8           tem) or the western State shall not cancel or  
9           modify a grazing permit, lease, or contract for  
10          land conveyed pursuant to this Act because the  
11          land subject to the permit, lease, or contract  
12          has been leased for mineral development.

13          (4) BASE PROPERTIES.—If land conveyed by  
14          the western State under this Act is used by a graz-  
15          ing permittee or lessee to meet the base property re-  
16          quirements for a Federal grazing permit or lease,  
17          the land shall continue to qualify as a base property  
18          for the remaining term of the lease or permit and  
19          the term of any renewal or extension of the lease or  
20          permit.

21          (5) RANGE IMPROVEMENTS.—Nothing in this  
22          Act prohibits a holder of a grazing lease, permit, or  
23          contract from being compensated for range improve-  
24          ments pursuant to the terms of the lease, permit, or  
25          contract under existing Federal or State laws.

## 1       (d) ROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAYS.—

2                 (1) IN GENERAL.—If land conveyed under this  
3       Act is subject to a road lease, road right-of-way,  
4       road easement, or other valid existing right in effect  
5       on the date of the conveyance, the Secretary (or the  
6       Secretary of Agriculture for land located within the  
7       National Forest System) and the western State shall  
8       allow the lease, right-of-way, easement, or other  
9       valid existing right to continue for the remainder of  
10      the term of the lease, right-of-way, easement, or  
11      other valid existing right, subject to the applicable  
12      terms and conditions of the lease, right-of-way, ease-  
13      ment, or other valid existing right.

14                 (2) RENEWAL.—On expiration of any road  
15      lease, road right-of-way, road easement, or other  
16      valid existing right described in paragraph (1), the  
17      party that has jurisdiction over the land on the date  
18      of expiration may elect to renew the lease, right-of-  
19      way, easement, or other valid existing right if per-  
20      mitted under applicable law.

## 21       (e) PROTECTION OF INDIAN RIGHTS.—

22                 (1) TREATY RIGHTS.—Nothing in this Act al-  
23      ters or diminishes the treaty rights of any Indian  
24      tribe.

## 2 Act affects—

(A) land held in trust by the Secretary for  
any Indian tribe; or

5 (B) any individual Indian allotment.

(3) EFFECT.—Nothing in this Act alters, diminishes or enlarges the application of—

(A) division A of subtitle III of title 54

<sup>9</sup> United States Code (formerly known as the

<sup>10</sup> “National Historic Preservation Act” (16

11 U.S.C. 470 et seq.));

12 (B) the Native American Graves Protec-

13                      tion and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et  
14                      seq.);

<sup>15</sup> (C) Public Law 95-341 (commonly known

as the “American Indian Religious Freedom Act” (42 U.S.C. 1996);

18 (D) chapter 3125 of title 54, United States

19 Code: or

20 (E) the Archaeological Resources Protec-  
21 tion Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470aa et seq.).

22 SEC 10 EEEFFECT

23 Nothing in this Act repeals or limits, expressly or by

<sup>24</sup> implication any authority in existence on the date of en-

25. enactment of this Act for the selection or exchange of land

**1 SEC. 11. TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.**

2       (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the pro-  
3 visions of this Act shall cease to be effective with regard  
4 to any State land grant parcel located within an eligible  
5 area for which an application has not been filed by the  
6 date that is 20 years after the date of the enactment of  
7 this Act.

8       (b) NEW ELIGIBLE AREAS.—If the application de-  
9 scribed in subsection (a) is for a State land grant parcel  
10 that is located within an eligible area established after the  
11 date of enactment of this Act, the provisions of this Act  
12 shall remain effective for 20 years after the date on which  
13 the new eligible area is established.

