

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 553

To revise the authorized route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota to include existing hiking trails along Lake Superior's north shore and in Superior National Forest and Chippewa National Forest, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 9, 2009

Ms. KLOBUCHAR introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To revise the authorized route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota to include existing hiking trails along Lake Superior's north shore and in Superior National Forest and Chippewa National Forest, 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 “North Country Na-
5 tional Scenic Trail Route Adjustment Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) The North Country National Scenic Trail,
2 although only approximately half completed, provides
3 outstanding outdoor recreation experiences to United
4 States citizens and visitors to the United States.

5 (2) The North Country National Scenic Trail is
6 an outstanding example of the recreation opportuni-
7 ties that can be provided through a partnership of
8 Federal, State, and local governments, private non-
9 profit trail organizations, individual volunteers, and
10 landowners.

11 (3) Modern, digital measuring equipment indi-
12 cates that when construction is completed on the
13 currently authorized route, the actual length of the
14 trail will be approximately 4,200 miles, rather than
15 the 3,200 miles estimated at the time of authoriza-
16 tion in 1980.

17 (4) The currently authorized route in Min-
18 nesota going westward from the vicinity of Duluth to
19 the Chippewa National Forest is not feasible because
20 most of the land between these points is tamarack
21 swamp.

22 (5) More than 300 miles of existing and
23 planned hiking trails extend northeastward from the
24 vicinity of Duluth to the vicinity of Grand Portage,
25 and then westward to the vicinity of Ely. These

1 trails are the Superior Hiking Trail, Border Route
2 Trail, and Kekekabic Trail.

3 (6) The Superior Hiking Trail, Border Route
4 Trail, and Kekekabic Trail would serve as an excel-
5 lent route for the North Country National Scenic
6 Trail in northeastern Minnesota, in lieu of the cur-
7 rent route, and would take hikers through out-
8 standing northern scenery that truly epitomizes the
9 “North Country”.

10 (7) The length of new trail construction to con-
11 nect these routes to the existing authorized trail in
12 the Chippewa National Forest is approximately the
13 same as the length of trail construction that would
14 have been required along the currently authorized
15 route.

16 (8) Public input during a route assessment
17 study conducted by the National Park Service dem-
18 onstrated that there is broad support among af-
19 fected public agencies, private trail organizations,
20 and Minnesota citizens for making this change in
21 the authorized route.

22 (9) This new route would increase the length of
23 the North Country National Scenic Trail by approxi-
24 mately 400 miles, resulting in a revised estimate of

1 the length of a completed North Country National
2 Scenic Trail of approximately 4,600 miles.

3 **SEC. 3. ROUTE REAUTHORIZATION.**

4 Section 5(a)(8) of the National Trails System Act (16
5 U.S.C. 1244(a)) is amended to read as follows:

6 “(8) The North Country National Scenic Trail,
7 a trail of approximately forty-six hundred miles, ex-
8 tending from eastern New York State to the vicinity
9 of Lake Sakakawea in North Dakota, following the
10 approximate route depicted on the map identified as
11 ‘North Country National Scenic Trail, Authorized
12 Route’, dated February 16, 2005, and numbered
13 649/80,002. The map shall be on file and available
14 for public inspection in the office of the Director,
15 National Park Service, Washington, District of Co-
16 lumbia. The trail shall be administered by the Sec-
17 retary of the Interior.”.

○