

EXCHANGE OF LANDS IN SAN MIGUEL, MORA, AND
LAOS COUNTIES, N. MEX.

JANUARY 20, 1926.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the
state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. MORROW, from the Committee on the Public Lands, submitted
the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 6355]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill
H. R. 6355, having considered the same, reports thereon favorably
and recommends that the bill do pass with the following amendment:

Page 1, line 8, strike out the word "and" where it occurs the first
time and insert after the comma following the word "Taos" the
words "and Colfax."

Amend the title so as to read:

Providing for the acquirement by the United States of privately owned lands
in San Miguel, Mora, Taos, and Colfax Counties, New Mexico, within the Mora
grant, and adjoining one or more national forests, by exchanging therefor lands
or timber within the exterior boundaries of any national forest situated within
the State of New Mexico or the State of Arizona.

The recommendations of the Interior Department and the Depart-
ment of Agriculture are indicated by the reports submitted by them,
copies of which are made a part of this report.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 13, 1926.

Hon. N. J. SINNOTT,
Chairman Committee on the Public Lands,
House of Representatives.

MY DEAR MR. SINNOTT: In reply to your request for report upon H. R. 6355,
for the acquirement by the United States of privately owned lands within the
Mora grant, New Mexico, by exchanging therefor lands or timber within the
exterior boundaries of national forests within the States of New Mexico and
Arizona, I have to advise that this is a matter primarily for consideration by the

Secretary of Agriculture, as it relates solely to national forests and privately owned lands.

If the legislation is desired by the Secretary of Agriculture, this department is aware of no objection thereto.

Very truly yours,

HUBERT WORK.

JANUARY 16, 1926.

Hon. N. J. SINNOTT,
*Chairman Committee on the Public Lands,
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. SINNOTT: I have your letter of January 4, requesting a report upon the bill (H. R. 6355) providing for the acquirement by the United States of privately owned lands in San Miguel, Mora, and Taos Counties, N. Mex., within the Mora grant, and adjoining one or more national forests, by exchanging therefor lands or timber within the exterior boundaries of any national forest situated within the State of New Mexico or the State of Arizona.

The bill would permit the owners of private lands within the Mora grant, located in the counties of San Miguel, Mora, and Taos, to offer their holdings to the Government and to receive in exchange equal values of timber to be cut within the national forests of the States of New Mexico and Arizona, the values in each case to be determined by the Secretary of Agriculture and acceptable to the grantor as fair compensation. The timber to be given by the Government would be cut under laws and regulations applicable to the national forests. Provision is made that the consent and approval of the Governor of Arizona shall first be secured before any timber is given in exchange from national forests in the State of Arizona.

Section 2 provides that lands to be conveyed to the Government, not covered by public-land surveys or identified by surveys of the United States, shall be identified by surveys made by employees of the Forest Service and approved by the United States surveyor general. Section 3 provides that the lands accepted by the United States shall become parts of either the Carson or the Santa Fe National Forest, as the Secretary of Agriculture may determine.

Section 4 directs that before any exchange of lands for timber, as provided above, is executed notice of such exchange proposal describing the areas involved shall be published once each week for four successive weeks in some newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties in which may be situated the lands offered the Government and in some like newspaper published in any county in which may be situated any lands or timber to be given in such exchange.

The purpose of this measure is to enable the department to acquire certain very desirable timberlands in the State of New Mexico which have for years been protected and administered under the belief that they were the property of the Government, but which a decision of the Supreme Court, under date of February 18, 1924, has determined are actually a portion of the Mora grant. It is understood that the owners are willing to convey these lands to the Government under very acceptable terms. An exchange will make possible the continuance of Federal protection and administration without disturbance to the stockmen who have used it in the past. Making the terms of the exchange applicable to the State of Arizona as well as New Mexico will facilitate the consummation of a satisfactory trade. The measure therefore meets with the approval of the department.

Sincerely yours,

R. W. DUNLAP, *Acting Secretary.*