

4-18-1876

Improvement of the Oconto River

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

APRIL 18, 1876.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. CAMERON, of Wisconsin, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 176.]

The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (S. 176) relating to the improvement of the Oconto River in the State of Wisconsin, have considered the same, and beg leave to make the following report :

The Northwestern Improvement Company is a corporation created by the State of Wisconsin for the purpose of making certain improvements in the Oconto River, a stream emptying into Green Bay, in the northern portion of the State. The river, at some distance above its mouth, divides into what are called the North and South Branches.

The company have already, under their charter, succeeded in improving the main stream, together with the North Branch. They have built seven dams, and so cleared the river of rocks and sand as to permit logs to be run with facility from the lumbering-camps above to the mills below.

They are now desirous of commencing similar improvements upon the South Branch. A portion of this branch, however, passes through the Menomonee Indian reservation. The company ask the passage of this bill to enable them to go upon the reservation and make the same improvements they have already made elsewhere.

The bill provides that the company shall be responsible for all damages in making their improvements, and that Indians and all others shall have the right to use the improvements by the payment of charges, to be regulated by the State.

The committee cannot see that the granting of this right will interfere with the rights of any one; but think, on the contrary, that it will be a benefit to all the parties concerned, whether Indians or citizens.

The bill, moreover, has the authority of precedent. On the 15th of May, 1874, an act was approved authorizing the Keshena Improvement Company to go upon the very same reservation and improve the Wolf River. (See Stat. at Large, vol. 18, p. 46.)

Your committee, not knowing but the Committee on Indian Affairs might possess information showing that the rights of the Indians might in some way or to some extent be affected or injured by this bill, have had the same submitted to the Committee on Indian Affairs; which said committee, on the 5th of April, returned the same to your committee, with a report stating that they knew of no reason why it should not pass. The said report of the Committee on Indian Affairs is embodied in, and made a part of, this report.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE OCONTO RIVER.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, April 5, 1876.

SIR: Referring to your communication of February 26, requesting that the inclosed bill (S. 176) and report prepared thereon by subcommittee of the Committee on Commerce, in charge, be considered by the Committee on Indian Affairs, I am directed by the said committee to inform you that they have considered the same, and know of no reason why the bill should not pass, and assent to the same.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. J. OGLESBY,

Chairman (pro tempore) Committee on Indian Affairs.

Hon. ROSCOE CONKLING,

Chairman Committee on Commerce, United States Senate.

Your committee recommend that said bill do pass.

