



Senate Fix Our Forests Act

Key California Provisions

*California averages more than 7,500 wildfires a year. Since 2017 (not including January's Los Angeles fires), six of the top ten most destructive fires, three of the top five deadliest, and all of the state's nine largest fires have burned. And increasingly catastrophic wildfires are threatening to undo all of our climate efforts: California's 2020 wildfires alone produced enough emissions to negate almost two decades worth of California's greenhouse gas reduction efforts. **This status quo is unsustainable, and we must provide new tools to respond to the scale and magnitude of the crisis on the ground.***

- **Wildfire Intelligence Center:** Establishes a Wildfire Intelligence Center (a joint office comprised of the Departments of Agriculture, the Interior, and Commerce that is modeled after the National Weather Service) to serve as a national hub for wildfire intelligence, prediction, coordination, and response. The center is designed to modernize and unify wildfire management by leveraging real-time data, science, and interagency collaboration. Governed by a 16-member expert Board comprised of career agency staff and led by an Executive Director, the Center could compile comprehensive information on wildfires at all stages to better prepare for wildfires, assist with decision-support during a crisis, inform recovery, and streamline federal wildfire response to ensure that states have a one-stop shop within the federal government. This center would also increase monitoring and imaging capabilities that land management agencies currently cannot achieve.
- **Community Resiliency/Built Environment:** Establishes an interagency program to coordinate federal wildfire risk reduction efforts across 10 federal agencies through research, development of fire-resistant construction standards, hazard mitigation, and public-private partnerships. It also includes a centralized portal and uniform application for multiple wildfire-related grants, streamlines technical assistance, and mandates coordination with non-federal stakeholders. Expands the Joint Fire Science Program to include a new, performance-based R&D initiative focused on innovations in wildfire-resistant building materials, design, planning, and landscape architecture. It includes a "Community Wildfire Defense Innovation Prize" to incentivize scalable, ignition-resistant designs. Expands the Community Wildfire Risk Reduction program, including explicit emphasis on reducing risk to structures, and includes information sharing with non-federal partners. Also, expands eligibility of Community Wildfire Defense Grants to include home hardening.



- **Prescribed Fire:** During the past decade, prescribed fire has only been used to treat 3.6 million acres annually (of the hundreds of millions of acres managed by the Forest Service). This bill includes multiple provisions to increase the use of prescribed fire on both federal and non-federal lands. Activities include contracts, grants, training, environmental reviews, site prep, monitoring, and public outreach. The bill prioritizes large, cross-boundary projects near wildland-urban interfaces, Tribal lands, high-risk fire zones, or critical habitats. It also strengthens the prescribed fire workforce by streamlining supervisory certification requirements and enhancing interoperability between federal and non-federal practitioners.
- **Fire Safe Electrical Corridors:** Several of California's most destructive wildfires have ignited as a result of downed power lines. This bill allows electric utilities with permits or easements on National Forest System or BLM land to cut and remove vegetation near power lines without requiring a separate timber sale (if done in compliance with applicable plans and environmental laws). If the vegetation is sold, proceeds must be returned to the federal government.
- **Streamline Land Management Projects:** Authorizes emergency authorities to increase the pace and scale of wildfire risk reduction projects on federal land. It includes appropriate guardrails to avoid abuse of these authorities and prohibits using emergency authorities for projects not aimed primarily at reducing wildfire risk or protecting communities. Increases the acreage limit of streamlined projects for wildfire resilience projects, fuel breaks, and insect and disease projects from 3,000 acres to 10,000 acres.