



June 2, 2025

Dear Senator Bennet and Senator Hickenlooper,

On behalf of Eagle River Fire Protection District, Vail Fire and Emergency Services, Summit Fire and EMS, Red White and Blue Fire District (Breckenridge), Colorado Fire River Fire Rescue, Grand Fire District #1, Aspen Fire Department, and the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Wildland Section, we are writing to express our strong support for the Fix Our Forests Act. This legislation represents a critical step toward advancing wildfire prevention, improving fire response capabilities, and enhancing community resilience across the nation.

As the Western United States continues to experience unprecedented wildfire seasons, we recognize the urgent need for comprehensive and coordinated federal action. The status quo is completely untenable as our local, state, and federal systems are overwhelmed. The Fix Our Forests Act will help address some of the most pressing challenges facing our landscapes and communities by:

- **Accelerating landscape-scale restoration work** through revised categorical exclusion (CE) and permitting thresholds that reduce delays and promote proactive land management. We need your support to enable mitigation work that can be implemented on a large enough scale to make a difference. Landscape-scale fuels treatments and strategic fuelbreaks in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) across vegetation types can be the difference between a community or precious wildland area surviving a fire or being lost. The status quo on permitting is no longer tenable. We must expedite these interventions, and the Fix Our Forests Act will enable us to work with our Federal partners on getting this work done.
- **Driving data-informed decision-making** by improving access to intelligence and leveraging existing decision support tools and data infrastructure. With the Wildfire Intelligence Center, we can ensure states and local departments can better coordinate with the federal government and achieve real-time situational awareness.
- **Leveraging innovative technologies** to enhance wildfire response, including the integration and accessibility of commercially available tools at both federal and state levels.
- **Promoting resilience in the built environment** by creating a Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program and expanding Community Wildfire Defense Grants to include home hardening activities.

We are greatly impressed by the collaborative nature of this legislation and the commitment it reflects to bipartisan solutions that empower local, state, and federal partners alike. We understand that the Senate has emerged with a refined product through tireless bipartisan negotiations, and we commend the ongoing dialogue and thoughtful engagement with stakeholders.



Colorado State Fire Chiefs – Wildland Section
 Leadership for Colorado's Fire & EMS Services

We thank you for your leadership and vision in bringing forward this critical legislation. As leaders of Colorado mountain region fire departments, we stand ready to support the implementation of policies that strengthen our ability to protect lives, property, and the natural environment.

Sincerely,

Fire Chief, Colorado River Fire Rescue

Fire Chief, Vail Fire and Emergency Services

Karl Bauer, Fire Chief

Eagle River Fire Protection District

Fire Chief, Aspen Fire Department

C. Andrew Hoehn
 Fire & EMS Chief
 Red, White, & Blue Fire District

Travis Davis

Fire Chief, Summit Fire and EMS

Fire Chief, Grand Fire District #1

Chair, Colorado State Fire Chiefs, Wildland Section