



FIX OUR FORESTS ACT

The *Fix Our Forests Act* (FOFA) is a comprehensive, bipartisan bill designed to address the nation's escalating wildfire crisis. FOFA will protect communities and improve forest resilience while giving land management agencies more tools to prevent, fight, and detect wildfires.

SENATE FOFA (S.1462) SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:

Elected Officials and State Agencies/Associations:

- Governor Spencer Cox, Utah
- Governor Jared Polis, Colorado
- Governor Greg Gianforte, Montana
- Governor Gavin Newsom, California
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Western Governors' Association
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources
- California Natural Resources Agency
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Colorado Div. of Fire Prevention and Control
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- Utah Department of Natural Resources
- National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

Environmental Organizations:

- The Nature Conservancy
- National Audubon Society
- National Wildlife Federation
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Trout Unlimited
- The Ruffed Grouse Society & American Woodcock Society
- The Property and Environment Research Center (PERC)
- Rocky Mountain Elk
- Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- Hispanics Enjoy Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors (HECHO)
- Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
- Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Nature is Nonpartisan
- American Conservation Coalition Action

Fire- and Forestry-Focused Organizations:

- International Association of Fire Chiefs
- Alliance for Wildfire Resilience
- Wildfire Alliance
- Tall Timbers
- Megafire Action
- National Association of State Foresters
- Association for Firetech Innovation and Convective Capital
- American Forests
- United Aerial Firefighters Association
- White Oak Initiative
- Vibrant Planet
- Climate and Wildfire Institute

Energy and Water Interests:

- National Water Resources Association
- Colorado Water Congress
- Berkshire Hathaway Energy
- Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions
- National Rural Electric Cooperative Assoc.
- Colorado Rural Electric Association
- United Power
- Tri-State Generation and Transmission
- Edison Electric Institute
- Xcel Energy

Other:

- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
- Bipartisan Policy Center Action
- The Stewardship Project
- Federation of American Scientists
- Utah Farm Bureau Federation
- Arnold Ventures
- American Property Casualty Insurance Association



October 17, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
United States Senate Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
United States Senate Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

We write to you in support of S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act (Act). This legislation offers vital reforms that will improve forest and watershed health, address the wildfire crisis, and renew struggling timber economies across the West. Updates to fire management areas, expedited approval and planning processes, expansion of the Good Neighbor Authority, fostering advancements in cutting-edge wildfire related technology and improved judicial review processes will greatly benefit federal forest management practices.

As governors of Western states, we experience firsthand the increasing forest health and wildfire crises that directly impact our communities and citizens. These challenges are significant and urgent and demand action to strengthen the opportunities and partnerships at our disposal. The Fix Our Forests Act as proposed in the Senate provides important expanded authorities that will allow executive branch agencies and partners, including states, to better meet our goals and objectives. The Senate-proposed version of the Fix Our Forests Act has been thoughtfully and thoroughly developed, drawing support from a diversity of key western constituencies and stakeholders coming from multiple perspectives.

This fire season has already reiterated to our states and communities that state, local and federal leaders must continue to urgently prioritize lowering wildfire risk and intelligently growing the tools at our disposal and efficiency of those tools with respect to wildfire mitigation, suppression, detection, forest and watershed health, and recovery. This fire season is not over yet, and it is clear that future fire seasons will continue to stretch capacities and endanger communities and vital assets without meaningful action as proposed by S. 1462.

While we all see some differing priorities or imperfections in this bill through our individual lenses, we appreciate the incredible work to date to drive toward and deliver a bill that we can all urgently support. This is meaningful progress in addressing the urgent needs our states, communities and forests face, and we urge the committee and the Senate to continue to advance this important bill with likewise urgency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Gianforte".

Governor Greg Gianforte
State of Montana

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jared Polis".

Governor Jared Polis
State of Colorado

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Spencer Cox".

Governor Spencer Cox
State of Utah

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom".

Governor Gavin Newsom
State of California



September 4, 2025

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Bennet
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
Forestry Subcommittee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Klobuchar and Forestry Subcommittee Ranking Member Bennet,

We as conservation and climate organizations write in support of the Senate Fix Our Forest Act, S. 1462.

We each understand that effective forest management can not only prevent catastrophic megafires that threaten lives and livelihoods, but can also preserve important ecosystems and critical habitats. That is why we have been engaging on this Fix Our Forest Act proposal since early 2024, and have been fighting for improvements at every stage.

The bill has come a long way since passing on the House floor by a bipartisan vote in January. Thanks to the efforts of the Senate bill's sponsors, Sens. Curtis, Hickenlooper, Sheehy, and Padilla, important improvements have been made that have allowed for our organizations to back the bill: there are more guardrails around the emergency authorities, clarified forest management activities, broader inclusions of local, state, tribal and stakeholder input, substantially strengthened Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program language, provisions on improving prescribed fire use, and expanded seed nursery and reforestation infrastructure. Further, language has been struck that would limit standing for plaintiffs based on comment period participation, and the statute of limitations has been extended.

Yet the bill is not perfect, and it comes at a precarious time in our nation's history where extreme budget cuts are poised to not only threaten forest health, but potentially public safety as land management agencies are finding their budgets slashed while still being mandated to conduct millions of acres of wildfire mitigation work. However, we believe the wildfire crisis our country is facing, due to in large part the effects of climate change, is too serious and too dangerous for us to not engage in this important bipartisan forest management and wildfire proposal that could impact how the areas most at risk for wildfires are treated and how the decisions to treat are made.

For all these reasons we thank you for your constructive engagement on the Fix Our Forest Act, and encourage you to continue to work to improve this bill and to ensure funding of the federal land management agencies and wildfire management activities at level that meets the scale of the challenge. We ultimately believe both are necessary to enhance the ability of the Forest Service and Department of Interior to tackle the wildfire crisis more effectively at a time where their effectiveness may be most critical.

Thank you,

The Nature Conservancy

National Wildlife Federation

Environmental Defense Fund

National Audubon Society

October 20, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
and Forestry
United States Senate
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
and Forestry
United States Senate
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

Western Governors are encouraged by the development of bipartisan legislation to improve forest management and mitigate wildfire risk. As the wildfire crisis has worsened in recent years, Western Governors have developed and advocated for a range of policy recommendations to promote healthy western forests that can continue to provide our communities with jobs, recreation, quality of life, and important ecosystem services. S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act, advances many of our recommendations, and we are eager to continue to work with the Committee to support critical forest management reforms through the legislative process.

Effective forest management is made possible through coordination between federal, state, local, and tribal land management agencies. The Fix Our Forests Act addresses the need to expand and improve coordination by strengthening the authorities that enable effective cross-boundary management. Sections 104 and 111 of the legislation improve the flexibility and utility of Shared Stewardship and Good Neighbor Authority, making it easier to conduct critical cross-boundary forest health treatments. Western Governors support efforts to provide avenues for states to partner with federal agencies in pursuit of healthier forests and reduced wildfire risk.

One avenue to healthier forests and reduced wildfire risk is expanding the use of prescribed fire. Prescribed fire is one of the most effective and economical techniques for reducing fuel loads across large areas; however, this practice is underused due to a variety of factors. Title 1, Subtitle D of the legislation would holistically address factors that can enable the widespread deployment of prescribed fire. Western Governors support these actions that would remove obstacles to using prescribed fire as a responsible management tool in our states.

The Fix Our Forests Act also offers possible solutions to another obstacle to addressing this crisis: excessively long or burdensome federal permitting processes. Section 113 authorizes the establishment of fireshed management project strike teams with the express purpose of accelerating environmental review, site preparation, and project implementation. Western Governors support the use of specialized teams to bolster National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review capacity and improve the effectiveness of NEPA in forest management. Western Governors also encourage improved coordination of interagency reviews to avoid undue delays in the permitting process.

Section 217 requires the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to establish standard operating procedures for payment timelines but does not recognize the role that non-federal partners play in formulating cost-share agreements. Western Governors request that this provision be modified to

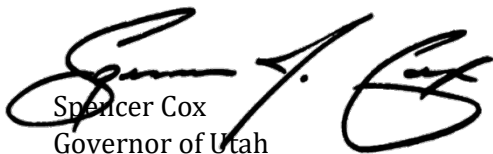
The Honorable John Boozman
The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
October 20, 2025
Page 2

ensure that standard operating procedures for repayment are established with the input and concurrence of a Governor or their designee. Wildfire suppression is an inherently cooperative, cross-jurisdictional activity. When state and federal agencies jointly respond to an incident, the relative costs of suppression are determined by cost-share agreements. Delays in the repayment process force states to carry this debt, incurring opportunity costs and affecting future budgeting priorities for states. Improvements to simplify this process and ensure timely reimbursements are critically needed. Standard operating procedures must also maintain some degree of flexibility to recognize the terms of existing mutual aid or cost-share agreements. Language requiring gubernatorial consultation and concurrence in the Departments' development of payment procedures will ensure a fairer and more durable system for the repayment of wildland firefighting costs.

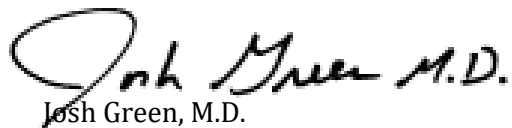
Western Governors' Association policy resolutions 2024-02, National Forest and Rangeland Management, and 2023-10, Infrastructure Permitting, contain the bipartisan policy recommendations adopted by Western Governors on these issues and are attached for your consideration.

We appreciate your bipartisan efforts to address the wildfire crisis through a holistic set of substantive forest management reforms. We look forward to working with you as the bill moves through the legislative process and stand ready to serve as a resource.

Sincerely,



Spencer Cox
Governor of Utah
Chair, WGA



Josh Green, M.D.
Governor of Hawai'i
Vice Chair, WGA

Attachments



October 16, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Thune and Minority Leader Schumer,

We represent a broad range of organizations advocating to increase resilience to catastrophic wildfires, invest in active forest management including thinning, prescribed fire, restoration, and reforestation, improve land use planning and land management, enhance wildlife habitat and water quality, and better protect communities from wildfires. We support S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act.

The rising risk of wildfire is an urgent and far-reaching crisis. Across the country, Americans are impacted by severe wildfires, from the tragic Palisades and Eaton Fires in Los Angeles earlier this year, to the smoke-choked skies of our Eastern and Midwestern cities this summer and last. Compounding severe wildfires, we are losing our forests to extreme weather like Hurricane Helene, drought, and insects and diseases that are ravaging heritage species like the white oak and giant sequoias. Just as Americans are directly impacted by wildfires and the loss of hundreds of millions of trees, so too are the natural resources and ecosystems we rely upon to provide drinking and agriculture water, feed and house us, provide for our recreation and hunting grounds, and sustain our traditions and ways of life.

Despite widespread recognition of the need to mitigate the threats posed by catastrophic wildfire and ecosystem degradation, our lands and communities are at risk now more than ever before. Congress has an opportunity and responsibility to act. The Fix Our Forests Act is a critical step forward. The bill provides an opportunity to speed up the planning and implementation of wildfire risk reduction projects on federal lands while expanding

collaborative tools to bring more partners into this vital work. Additionally, it bolsters the use of prescribed fire to help reduce fire severity and restore ecosystems. The bill recognizes that replanting after wildfire and other extreme events goes hand in hand with active forest management and the legislation supports ecosystem and habitat restoration across our public lands and in the priceless white oak forests of the Eastern U.S. The Fix Our Forests Act also takes a broad view of the solutions needed by establishing a Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program to address risk in the built environment and creating a Fire Intelligence Center to improve interagency coordination and adoption of new technologies.

The House has already acted on the companion bill, H.R. 471. It remains for the Senate to continue to advance the Fix Our Forests Act out of the Committee on Agriculture and Nutrition and secure passage of the bill before the full Senate. We commend the work of the Committee and cosponsors to date and we urge you to take swift action. Congress has the opportunity to take bipartisan action now, proactively, before the next fire inevitably costs lives, livelihoods, and ways of life.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Wildfire Resilience	Conservative Coalition for Climate Solutions	Property and Environment Research Center
American Conservation Coalition Action	Federation of American Scientists	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
American Forests	Inclusive Abundance Action	Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition
American Property Casualty Insurance Association	International Association of Fire Chiefs	Tall Timbers
Bipartisan Policy Center Action	Megafire Action	The Stewardship Project
Citizens' Climate Lobby	National Association of State Foresters	Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
City of Flagstaff, Arizona	National Indian Carbon Coalition	United Aerial Firefighters Association
Climate and Wildfire Institute	National Wild Turkey Federation	Vibrant Planet
Coconino County, Arizona	Nature is Nonpartisan	White Oak Initiative
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation	Northern Water	



September 2, 2025

Members of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly supports S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act of 2025, sponsored by Sens. Curtis, Hickenlooper, Padilla, and Sheehy. We urge the Committee to quickly mark-up and report this bill for consideration by the full Senate.

The devastating, ongoing wildfires across several Western states (e.g., Arizona, California, Colorado, and Oregon) highlight the need to prepare for the threat of wildfires while enhancing the ability of communities to withstand and recover from such events. The Fix Our Forests Act will help restore forest health and increase resilience to catastrophic wildfires by:

- Streamlining environmental reviews to reduce project delays;
- Encouraging prescribed fire practices and livestock grazing as wildfire mitigation tools;
- Promoting technology partnerships for wildfire detection and prevention;
- Supporting research into wildfire-resistant building designs and community layouts, aiming to improve structural resilience; and,
- Fostering interagency cooperation to avoid duplication.

In addition, we appreciate that S. 1462 as introduced links important transparency and project consultation language with crucial litigation reform. We urge the Committee to consider further strengthening the legislation by adding reasonable timebound limits on such judicial review to ensure that practical forest management solutions can be implemented in a timely fashion.

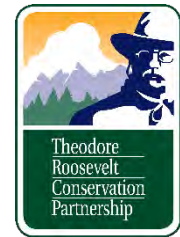
Investing in resilience works. The Chamber's report — [The Preparedness Payoff](#) — conducted in partnership with Allstate and the U.S. Chamber Foundation, found that every \$1 invested in resilience and preparedness saves communities \$13 in damages, cleanup costs, and economic impact. For more information, the wildfire specific research is [here](#).

We urge you to advance S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Marty Durbin
President, Global Energy Institute
Senior Vice President, Policy
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Oct. 20th, 2025



The Honorable John Boozman
Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: TRCP Support for S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act

Dear Chair Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) representing more than 145,000 hunters and anglers nationwide, we thank you for your bipartisan leadership in considering S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act, which we strongly support.

The Fix Our Forests Act aligns with TRCP's mission to sustain fish and wildlife habitat, improve public access, and strengthen the resilience of America's forests and communities. The bill accelerates the planning and implementation of active forest management and wildfire risk reduction, expands collaborative tools and partnerships, and advances the use of prescribed fire, thinning, restoration, and reforestation. It also recognizes the essential role of wetlands, floodplains, and riparian areas in mitigating wildfire risk and protecting drinking water sources for both rural and urban communities.

The legislation takes a comprehensive approach by:

- Establishing a Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program to help protect communities in the wildland–urban interface;
- Creating a Fire Intelligence Center to enhance interagency coordination and technological innovation; and
- Improving key programs such as the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, and Water Source Protection Program to better integrate watershed health and wildfire resilience.

We also commend the bill's recognition of the connection between wildfire mitigation and watershed restoration. Restoring wet meadows, streams, and other aquatic systems creates natural "wet fuel breaks" that slow fire spread, protect water supplies, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. By explicitly including these activities as eligible fireshed management projects, the Fix Our Forests Act provides a vital new tool for land managers to address the nexus of fire and water.

Across the country, Americans are living with the impacts of increasingly severe wildfires. These events threaten not only homes and infrastructure but also the forests, watersheds, and wildlife habitats that sustain our outdoor traditions and local economies.

Congress now has the opportunity to act. The Fix Our Forests Act is a critical step forward to ensure our forests are healthier, our water supplies more secure, and our communities better protected.

Thank you for your commitment to bipartisan, solutions-oriented forest policy. We look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation and, once enacted, to assist in its implementation across the nation's forests and watersheds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joel Webster", is positioned above the typed name.

Joel Webster
Chief Conservation Officer
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership



October 20, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and
Forestry
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and
Forestry
U.S. Senate

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar,

In advance of your Committee's markup on Tuesday, October 21, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) would like to express our support for S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act. The House version of the legislation (H.R. 471) passed the House on a strong bipartisan vote of 279 – 141, a sign of the wide-spread support to combat the wildfire crisis we are facing, and we are thankful to see the Senate hold a markup on the Senate version of this important bill.

As the Committee is aware, more than 117 million acres of our federal forests are fire-prone and need restoration through active management to mitigate severe wildfire risks. As wildfires increasingly degrade the forests, rangelands, and watersheds that America's sportsmen and women depend on for hunting and fishing access, the need to improve how our public lands are managed, in collaboration with other landowners, is paramount. To that end, the Fix Our Forests Act seeks to corner the wildfire crisis by establishing a more proactive management approach through reforms that facilitate increasing the pace of science-based forest restoration work at the landscape-level to improve forest health and resilience to protect communities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, and improve access for hunters and anglers.

S. 1462 prioritizes hazardous fuels management on landscapes at high-risk for wildfire identified in the U.S. Forest Service's January 2022 "Wildfire Crisis Strategy" and the top 20% of firesheds for wildfire exposure, designated as fireshed management areas. Fuel treatment projects, including mechanical thinning, prescribed fire, cultural burning, and timber harvests, will be conducted at scale through categorical exclusion (CE) acreage increases, including insects and disease, wildfire resilience, and fuel breaks to treat forest stands at high risk for wildfire. Increasing the acres of the CEs improves efficiency to enable more acres to be treated, and utilizing these CEs is critical because extended NEPA processes are significantly longer, measured in years. Land managers need expanded authorities to reduce fuel loads on more acres in less time to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire.

Forest treatments in fireshed management areas will also take place through shared stewardship agreements with states and Indian Tribes. Additionally, S. 1462 expands several important collaborative tools that are longstanding priorities for the sportsmen's community, including the Good

Neighbor Authority and stewardship contracting, that will improve their effectiveness in reducing wildfire risk in collaboration with states, Indian tribes, and private partners. Supporting collaborative cross-boundary management is critical to address wildfire risk at scale.

The Fix Our Forests Act importantly addresses the 2015 *Cottonwood Environmental Law Center v. U.S. Forest Service* decision that has hindered forest management projects and threatens to require the U.S. Forest Service to revise forest plans for more than 120 National Forests which, as U.S. Forest Service testified in 2021, would cost millions of dollars and take years to complete. Shortly after the 2015 decision, the Obama administration supported a *Cottonwood* fix and stated in their 2016 petition for writ of certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court that the decision “has the potential to cripple the Forest Service and BLM’s land management functions and to impose substantial and unwarranted burdens on FWS and NMFS.” S. 1462 would not obviate the need for Endangered Species Act consultation on the project level, but it would allow projects to move forward without having to revise a U.S. Forest Service forest plan or Bureau of Land Management resource management plan. *Cottonwood*’s duplicative analysis diverts limited agency resources and holds up wildfire risk reduction projects, which ironically, negatively impacts wildlife as habitat improvements projects that have been enjoined have subsequently had catastrophic wildfires occur in the same analysis area. We appreciate your past work to remedy *Cottonwood*, and we look forward to working with you to overcome the time-consuming hurdles, created by the decision, that delay forest restoration projects without any conservation benefit.

S. 1462 includes provisions to provide important guardrails for the litigation of forest management projects, which are challenged in court more than any other public lands management project case brought under NEPA. Litigants lose more than 75% of their cases, resulting in increased costs and delayed implementation of critical hazardous fuel reduction work. Without these changes, which do not remove public input, the U.S. Forest Service is unlikely to meet its forest restoration goals.

S. 1462 requires federal land management agencies to improve reporting on hazardous fuel reduction work, which is important to have accountability to track progress. Additionally, S. 1462 encourages the U.S. Forest Service to revise out of date forest plans and improve public access to information about forest plans and amendments. Last, the legislation advances efforts to restore white oak species, which are critical for wildlife, by supporting research and pilot programs to improve white regeneration.

In closing, CSF thanks the Committee for holding a markup on the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act, which is strongly supported by CSF and many of the nation’s leading sporting-conservation organizations, and we look forward to working with the Committee and the bill sponsors to see the Fix Our Forests Act signed into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JWC", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

John Culclasure
Senior Director, Forest Policy

June 11, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
1324-A Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Curtis
United States Senate
502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Westerman and Chairman Curtis:

On behalf of the National Water Resources Association (NWRA), I am writing to express our strong support for the *Fix Our Forests Act* (H.R. 471 / S. 1462). We applaud your leadership in advancing this important bipartisan legislation that addresses forest health, reduces wildfire risk, and safeguards critical water resources across the country.

The NWRA is a nonprofit federation of state water resources associations, regional associations, agriculture and municipal water agencies, and industrial water groups. Our members provide water and hydropower to approximately 50 million individuals, families, agricultural producers, and other industries that support our communities large and small, our economy and our environment.

NWRA strongly supports a comprehensive approach to forest and watershed health—from prevention to post-fire mitigation. Catastrophic wildfires are becoming more frequent, intense, and destructive, often burning outside of historical norms. These fires do more than damage forests and threaten communities—they also impair water quality, increase sedimentation, and place major burdens on downstream infrastructure.

Nearly 90% of the population served by public water systems in the Western U.S. depends on water that originates on federally managed forest lands. When fire removes vegetation and destabilizes soils, runoff from burned areas can overwhelm rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and water treatment facilities. The *Fix Our Forests Act* recognizes this connection and makes meaningful reforms to address these risks through proactive management and recovery strategies.

We are particularly encouraged by the bill's:

- **Designation of Fireshed Management Areas** to focus forest health treatments in the highest-risk regions.
- **Creation of an Interagency Fireshed Center** to coordinate science, data, and planning across jurisdictions.
- **Streamlined environmental reviews** that maintain safeguards while accelerating action on priority projects.

- **Support for Good Neighbor Authority expansion** to allow broader participation from states and local partners.
- **Investment in local and tribal capacity, data tools, and restoration programs** to improve on-the-ground outcomes.

Each of these components advances better watershed protection, reduces long-term fire suppression costs, and improves the resilience of the systems our members rely on to deliver clean, reliable water.

The *Fix Our Forests Act* provides a forward-looking framework that strengthens interagency collaboration and delivers common-sense reforms to improve forest and watershed health. NWRA believes this legislation will provide lasting benefits for our environment, public safety, and water quality and infrastructure. We respectfully urge swift passage of the bill and stand ready to support its implementation.

Thank you again for your leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Morrison', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Greg Morrison
Executive Vice President
National Water Resources Association



National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
4350 North Fairfax Drive
Suite 810
Arlington, VA 22203
Tel: 202-296-9680
www.nasda.org

May 15, 2025

Senator John Curtis
502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Tim Sheehy
G55 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator John Hickenlooper
316 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Alex Padilla
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Curtis, Hickenlooper, Sheehy, and Padilla:

Thank you for introducing S. 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act. The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) supports your bipartisan bill, which takes necessary steps toward improving federal forest management practices, reducing catastrophic wildfire risk, and strengthening partnerships with states and local communities.

State Departments of Agriculture work daily to protect the health of our lands and the viability of rural economies. Forests and rangelands are increasingly threatened by devastating wildfires that destroy infrastructure, disrupt grazing and crop production, and degrade watersheds and wildlife habitat. These threats are further compounded by regulatory delays and resource constraints that inhibit effective action.

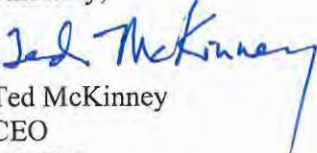
The Fix Our Forests Act includes several critical provisions that align with NASDA's long-standing policy positions and the practical needs of our states. These include:

- Establishing a Wildfire Intelligence Center to improve coordination and response
- Supporting prescribed fire and other proactive fuel reduction tools
- Enhancing shared stewardship agreements to promote state-federal collaboration
- Expanding the use of livestock grazing as a tool for fuel management and post-fire recovery
- Encouraging replanting with fire-resistant species following burns; and
- Streamlining environmental reviews and permitting to accelerate urgently needed management activities.

With more than two-thirds of U.S. forestland held in state and private ownership, the Fix Our Forests Act acknowledges the crucial role of state agencies in forest health, fire prevention, and ecosystem restoration. We particularly appreciate your inclusion of reforms that improve local flexibility and strengthen the role of state foresters and agriculture agencies in managing risk.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing this thoughtful and timely legislation. We urge swift passage of the Fix Our Forests Act and stand ready to work with you to support its implementation.

Sincerely,


Ted McKinney
CEO
NASDA

Thank you, Senators, for your creativity and perseverance on this legislation. We like this language very much and stand ready to help you move it forward.
Sincerely *Jed*

Enhance American food and agricultural communities through policy, partnerships and public engagement.



TRI-STATE

The Honorable John Hickenlooper
U.S. Senator
120 Constitution Ave NE, Suite SH-316
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hickenlooper,

On behalf of Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association (Tri-State), thank you for showing continued support for electric cooperatives through your sponsorship of Senate Bill 1462, the Fix Our Forests Act.

Tri-State is a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative that serves 40 distribution cooperative member systems and over 1 million consumers across Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Wyoming. Your leadership on natural resource issues, particularly those surrounding wildfire, is critically important to Tri-State and the work that we do. As wildfires become more frequent and devastating, electric cooperatives must implement extensive wildfire mitigation plans to provide reliable power and maintain a resilient power system for the rural communities we serve, all while facing high liability risks and an inability to acquire necessary insurance coverage.

The Fix Our Forests Act includes several provisions that would improve Tri-State's ability to complete necessary wildfire mitigation efforts. Key provisions include Section 211, which allows for the management of hazard trees within 150 feet of power lines, and Section 212, which allows utilities to remove dangerous timber and slash from their rights-of-way in national forests without having to carry out an unnecessary and lengthy timber sale. These provisions will make it easier for co-ops to remove trees that pose significant threats to power lines and electrical infrastructure, therefore lowering wildfire risk. Additionally, there are overarching benefits to this bill such as addressing timeline requirements for approving vegetation management plans, establishing programs to help reduce wildfire risks, and strengthening coordination efforts across agencies.

This bill is a key step towards finding solutions in the risky wildfire environment that utilities operate in today. Tri-State and electric cooperatives across the country will benefit from this legislation as it will allow us to complete necessary wildfire mitigation efforts in a more efficient manner and bolster our ability to maintain a resilient power system.

Tri-State is supportive of the Fix Our Forests Act and encourages a continued collaborative effort towards wildfire risk reduction into the future.

Sincerely,

Duane Highley
CEO, Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Inc.



MEGAFIRE ACTION

October 21, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman, Senate Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry.

Dear Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry:

On behalf of Megafire Action—a non-profit organization committed to ending the megafire crisis through a holistic approach to land management, wildfire response, and community resilience—we write in support of S. 1462 the Fix Our Forests Act.

Decades of fire suppression with inattentive land management, expansion of poorly planned development in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), and the accelerating effects of climate change have created a megafire crisis across the United States. Catastrophic megafires—distinguished by their extreme intensity, rapid spread, and large-scale destruction—are no longer anomalies but a persistent national emergency. These fires threaten human lives, destroy homes and critical infrastructure, and reshape ecosystems in ways that may be irreversible. Their impact extends beyond burned landscapes and communities; wildfires release massive amounts of carbon into the atmosphere, exacerbating climate change and contributing to long-term environmental degradation that fuels ever greater wildfires in a viscous feedback loop.¹ We are running out of time to prevent widespread devastation to communities, ecosystems, and the climate, and legislative action is needed now more than ever.

At its core, the Fix Our Forests Act tackles four key challenges: planning, permitting reform, technology adoption for improved decision making, and building community resilience—all essential to scaling up effective wildfire mitigation.

¹ Kaitlyn Thayer, James MacCarthy “5 Graphics Explain the Climate-Fire Feedback Loop.” World Resources Institute. <https://www.wri.org/insights/climate-fire-feedback-loop-explained>



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While this legislation will not resolve the long-standing workforce and budget constraints that have plagued wildfire mitigation and response for decades, it represents a critical and necessary step toward a more proactive and science-driven approach to wildfire management. We cannot ignore the fact that firefighters continue to be put in impossible positions—and our federal fighters in particular have been asked to do too much, with too little, for too long. Aside from passage of the Fix Our Forests Act, a permanent and well-resourced federal wildfire workforce remains an urgent need.

The Fix Our Forests Act directly addresses key hurdles that are worth solving on their own, removing bureaucratic roadblocks that slow down essential forest restoration and community mitigation projects, integrating cutting-edge technology to modernize wildfire decision-making, and building wildfire resilience directly in threatened communities. In short, this legislation will make it easier for the federal wildfire workforce to do the critical work that keeps us safe. This legislation will also make it easier for state, Tribal, and community-based workforces to do their own critical work on both federal and nonfederal lands. By prioritizing landscape restoration and improving coordination across agencies and communities, this legislation lays the foundation for all hands to create a more resilient future, even as broader challenges remain.

The bipartisan, good faith negotiating process in the Senate led by Senators Curtis, Padilla, Hickenlooper, and Sheehy has resulted in legislation with the potential to significantly enhance landscape resilience and wildfire mitigation efforts. **Megafire Action is proud to support and endorse this legislation.**

Wildfire Resilience Projects Benefit the Environment

Tackling climate change must mean addressing the megafire crisis. FOFA is an important step forward to confront this growing challenge.

Megafires are major contributors to rising global emissions, in 2023 alone Canadian wildfires emitted enough carbon to put it on par with the fossil fuel emissions of India.² Unnaturally extreme megafires are burning through boreal forests faster than they can regrow, threatening to turn a critical natural carbon sink into a carbon emitter.³ Addressing climate change must include addressing the megafire crisis, FOFA is an important step forward in doing so. Opponents have argued that the Fix Our Forests Act would stifle

² Byrne, B., Liu, J., Bowman, K.W. *et al.* Carbon emissions from the 2023 Canadian wildfires. *Nature* 633, 835–839 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07878-z>

³ Manuela Andreoni, “Canada’s Wildfires Were a Top Global Emitter Last Year, Study Says.” *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/28/climate/canada-wildfires-emissions-carbon.html>



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public input, roll back environmental protections and remove science from land management. **These arguments are simply false.**

The Fix Our Forests Act appropriately balances the importance of community engagement and environmental review with the need to dramatically increase the pace and scale at which we reduce wildfire risk on public lands through active management. Section 106 expands four already existing categorical exclusions: the insect and disease, hazardous fuel, sage grouse, and the fuel breaks CE. For all of these CEs some form of public notice, scoping, or collaboration is already enshrined within statute. Section 105 builds community input into firehatched assessments requiring the secretary to coordinate with states, Tribes, and local governments on firehatched assessments and must provide opportunities for the public to participate in these assessments. Finally, Section 105 also requires the use of the best available science for firehatched assessments.

Scientific evidence shows that streamlining forest management as envisioned under the Fix Our Forests Act would not only build wildfire resilience but also directly mitigate future droughts, leading to less fire-prone conditions and less ecological and community damage overall.⁴

Increased active land and fire management results in critical ecological benefits.

Those in opposition to the proactive land and forest management that FOFA would enable commonly argue that treatments don't work in practice because wildfires rarely encounter a treatment. While this was certainly a true statement in the past, both wildfires and treatments have become much more common in recent years, meaning it is now much more common for wildfires to burn into the footprint of past treatments. For example, the State of California has launched a dashboard to track instances of wildfires encountering treatment footprints and to record observations from firefighters on how the treatments did or did not impact the wildfire.⁵ In just the last year in California, 61 wildfires burned into 100 treatments and 79% of the treatments were reported to have had a positive impact on the wildfire.⁶

More and more wildfires burning into past treatment footprints have provided many opportunities for scientists to rigorously study the real-world effectiveness of proactive management treatments. An analysis of 40 peer-reviewed scientific papers published since

⁴ Boardman, E. N., Duan, Z., Wigmosta, M. S., Flake, S. W., Sloggy, M. R., Tarricone, J., & Harpold, A. A. (2025). Restoring historic forest disturbance frequency would partially mitigate droughts in the central Sierra Nevada mountains. *Water Resources Research*, 61, e2024WR039227. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2024WR039227>

⁵ "New CAL FIRE Dashboard Shows Effectiveness of Fuels Treatments." California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force. <https://wildfiretaskforce.org/new-cal-fire-dashboard-shows-effectiveness-of-fuels-treatments/>

⁶ "Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Reporting." CAL FIRE. <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/91ab6b7f0b414d0ea06bf269a4632e15/page/Treatment-Reporting-Overview/>



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2000 have collectively found that when wildfires burned into areas previously treated with a combination of selective thinning and prescribed fire, the severity of those subsequent wildfires were reduced by up to 70% in conifer forests across the Western US.⁷ When wildfires burned into areas recently treated with prescribed fire during the 2020 California wildfire season, the severity of those wildfires dropped by 16% resulting in a net reduction of 14% in smoke emissions when also accounting for the emission of the prescribed fires.⁸

Many studies modeling the likely future conditions under a changing climate have found that expanding the use of beneficial fire and other active management treatments over the next few decades could provide for better environmental outcomes than would be expected if we continued with our current status quo of practices. Studies have found that expanding proactive forest management above current levels could result in:

- **Watershed benefits** by increasing streamflows by as much as 14%⁹
- **Wildfire benefits** by fully offsetting the expected increase in wildfire intensity due to climate change¹⁰
- **Endangered species benefits** by saving at least half of the critical habitat for the Sierra Nevada fisher that is expected to be lost due to climate change¹¹
- **Air quality benefits** by reducing PM_{2.5} emissions by 655,000 metric tons over the next 5 years in California alone¹².

Additionally, Section 301 of FOFA catalyzes advancements and innovations in creating and utilizing biochar. Biochar is carbonized biomass produced by converting feedstock through reductive thermal processing for a nonfuel use. This biochar demonstration project will help build the bioeconomy, reduce fuels in our forests, and prioritize projects that improve forest health, and capture and sequester carbon.

FOFA is evidence based legislation and strengthens how we incorporate science into land and fire management.

⁷ Davis et. al., 2024. "Tamm Review: A Meta-Analysis of Thinning, Prescribed Fire, and Wildfire Effects on Subsequent Wildfire Severity in Conifer Dominated Forests of the Western US." *Forest Ecology and Management* 561: 121885. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foreco.2024.121885>

⁸ Kelp, et. al., 2025. "Effect of Recent Prescribed Burning and Land Management on Wildfire Burn Severity and Smoke Emissions in the Western United States." *AGU Advances* 6 (3). <https://doi.org/10.1029/2025AV001682>.

⁹ Boardman et. al., (2025). "Restoring historic forest disturbance frequency would partially mitigate droughts in the central Sierra Nevada mountains." *WaterResources Research*, 61,e2024WR039227. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2024WR039227>

¹⁰ Brown et. al., 2025. "The Potential for Fuel Reduction to Reduce Wildfire Intensity in a Warming California." *Environmental Research Letters* 20 (2): 024040. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/adab86>.

¹¹ Jones et al. 2025. "Collapse and Restoration of Mature Forest Habitat in California." *Biological Conservation* 308: 111241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2025.111241>.

¹² Kelp, et. al., 2025. "Effect of Recent Prescribed Burning and Land Management on Wildfire Burn Severity and Smoke Emissions in the Western United States." *AGU Advances* 6 (3). <https://doi.org/10.1029/2025AV001682>.



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FOFA would enable more science-informed management and mitigation with real-time analytical services, comprehensively modeling wildfire, consolidating air quality data and establishing information systems accessible to federal, state, local and Tribal governments. Thoughtfully deploying more beneficial fire and active management projects can promote the environmental outcomes we want while avoiding harmful outcomes we don't want. If we choose to expand this proactive approach we can create a better environmental future than would be expected if we don't change the current status quo.

Opponents have falsely claimed that FOFA will make it easier to ramp up large-scale logging. This argument—again—is simply not true. The Fireshed Management Projects under FOFA promote wildfire mitigation, building resilience, and landscape restoration, not logging. Not once does the Senate bill mention commercial logging, additionally the Senate bill has added additional guardrails on the administration's use of emergency authorities by tying them to projects with a land management benefit and codifying Biden-era regulations on their use.

FOFA Builds Community Resilience

FOFA takes inspiration from the landmark 2023 Wildfire Mitigation and Management Commission Report, to establish a Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program (CWRRP) to support interagency coordination.¹³ The program would advance research and science, support local adoption of codes and standards, support local efforts to address wildfire impacts including property damage as well as air and water quality, encourage public-private partnerships for fuel reduction work, and provide technical and financial assistance to communities.

Additionally, Section 201 explicitly incorporates support for fire-resistant building methods, codes, and standards, including ignition-resistant construction, retrofitting, and defensible space, guided by the best available science. These additions are crucial for addressing fire risks in the built environment, making this section inclusive of the kind of urban firestorms seen in Los Angeles in January, 2025. Section 201 strengthens interagency coordination by requiring annual meetings, budgeting alignment, and integration of wildfire mitigation into existing federal programs. It encourages the development of early wildfire detection and community alert systems and requires the program to seek feedback from states, Tribes, local governments, and other stakeholders, and produce a comprehensive biennial report.

Section 203 introduces critical transparency and oversight mechanisms for the CWRRP through a report to Congress. Section 204 and 205 build on the success of the Community

¹³ "On Fire: The Report of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission."
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/wfmmc-final-report-09-2023.pdf>



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Wildfire Defense Grant Program. Key improvements to the CWDG program include allowing eligible applications for infrastructure hardening activities and deployment of wildfire technologies deemed successful under the Sec. 303 pilot program. Additionally, CWDGs no longer require a CWPP, a key barrier for many communities including Los Angeles. Section 205 updates the definition of at-risk community to include at risk from wildfire as recognized in a fireshed, State, Tribal, local, regional, territorial, or national wildfire risk assessment and communities inside of or within five miles of a Wildfire Crisis Strategy landscape.

FOFA Cuts Red Tape to Build Wildfire Resilience

Categorical exclusions (CE) are one tool that have been used by land managers to get urgently needed projects to the ground more quickly and cheaply.

FOFA Section 106 paves the way for increasing the pace and scale of fireshed management by increasing categorical exclusions for wildfire resilience projects from 3,000 to 10,000 acres. CEs are a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determination that certain proposed actions (such as a critical fuels reduction project) do not require lengthier Environmental Assessments (EA) or Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). This limitation expansion to 10,000 acres provides the flexibility to do critical work on the highest risk areas *before* areas succumb to megafire. As mentioned previously in this letter, all of these CEs already have some form of public notice, scoping, or collaboration enshrined within their base statute—not regulation.

To reduce the risk that CEs will be used for imprudent projects that harm forests or fail to reduce wildfire risk, projects must first be identified by a fireshed assessment that complies with applicable forest plans developed with community input, the best available science, Tribal knowledge, and local participation before the project can be eligible for a 10,000 acre CE.

In assessing the potential benefits of 10,000 acre CEs, we lean on practitioner perspectives. Our advisory board member Kelly Martin—Retired Chief of Fire and Aviation at Yosemite National Park and Prescribed Fire Burn Boss—had the following to say about Categorical Exclusions:

“Categorical exclusions (CE) are a key tool for forest resilience and wildfire mitigation. Currently, there is an over-allocation of funding and human capital dedicated to planning and revising existing NEPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA) documents sometimes 5 to 10 years in the making. This favors what seems like endless and duplicative planning efforts compared to implementing beneficial actions on the ground that we know are based on solid science and research. CEs help



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us streamline the public review process and start putting meaningful projects on the ground faster to meet existential wildfire threats.

Unfortunately, projects done under the current 3,000 acre CEs fall woefully short of what is needed to meet the ever increasing size of contemporary wildfires. Smaller CEs often don't provide the buffer or resiliency needed to change conditions on the ground at a meaningful scale. In contrast, the value of a 10,000 acre CE is that you're not just looking at small sections, you're starting to look at the entire landscape and how it can withstand future challenges to watersheds, biodiversity, and key ecosystem services we deeply care about.

A common mindset around CEs is that they represent a rollback of environmental protections, but CEs are really about accelerating the implementation process for projects that have already been vetted and approved in existing land management plans backed by an EIS or EA. CEs are nothing new, they've been an important part of public engagement and meaningful land management actions for years. The CE reduces planning and analysis tiered to existing EISs and EAs and reduces the need for a redundant round of review for each specific project. This is not about returning to clear cut logging, going into sensitive areas, or removing mature growth old timber. We're talking about targeting areas that are accessible, where intervention can make a meaningful difference to landscape resilience. While forestry in the past, particularly in the early 1900s, often led to negative outcomes, those earlier mistakes should not cloud the judgment of today's forest management strategies, which are vastly more informed by modern science. We're not going back to those days."

While much of the policy focus on permitting reform has centered on landscape-scale fuels treatments in forested environments, fuelbreak projects in chaparral and mixed landscapes directly neighboring communities face many of the same bureaucratic hurdles. FOFA makes a difference in these ecosystems as well, by streamlining environmental review processes for critical wildfire mitigation projects, including fuelbreak maintenance.

A case in point is the Angeles National Forest, which itself burned in the Eaton Fire. The Forestwide Fuelbreak Maintenance Strategy, an 8,685-acre project, initially began as an Environmental Assessment in 2020 but faced significant delays.¹⁴ Recognizing the urgency, land managers shifted to using multiple Categorical Exclusions (CEs) to expedite approval. These exclusions were ultimately granted in November 2023, allowing work to begin in 2024—four years after the project was first proposed.¹⁵ This example underscores the

¹⁴ "Schedule of Proposed Action, 01/01/2025 to 03/31/2025, Angeles National Forest." United States Forest Service. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sopa/components/reports/sopa-110501-2025-01.pdf>

¹⁵ Ibid.



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importance of permitting reform in ensuring that fire mitigation efforts are not stalled by bureaucratic red tape. By making it easier to approve and implement these projects, the Fix Our Forests Act helps improve wildfire preparedness and resilience, not just in conifer forests but across a range of fire-prone landscapes, including the chaparral of Southern California.

FOFA Leverages Cutting Edge Technology

FOFA Establishes the Wildfire Intelligence Center.

Section 102 of the Fix Our Forests Act would establish a Wildfire Intelligence Center to provide technologically-enabled decision support across the entire wildfire lifecycle of prevention, suppression, and recovery efforts. The recent landmark Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission Report called for such a Center to leverage cutting edge technology and improve the interoperability and effectiveness of the many entities engaged in wildfire work.¹⁶

Wildfires burn across jurisdictional lines, necessitating cooperation between local, state, Tribal, and federal agencies, as well as the private sector. The complexity of wildfire management across natural landscapes and the built environment demands a coordinated approach that ensures resources, expertise, and decision-making processes are effectively aligned to mitigate risk and improve response efforts. Whether it's a local fire station, community-led prescribed burn association, the National Park Service, Forest Service Hotshots, Tribes, or public health departments, every organization should have real-time access to the best weather modeling, fire-spread and smoke modeling, fire and fuel treatment history, and common operating pictures available so they can plan effectively, operate safely, and collaborate across jurisdictions.

The Wildfire Intelligence Center will help break down silos and create the coordinated, whole-of-government response necessary to reduce the devastation caused by megafires. In addition to this, the Center would:

- Provide decision support for the pre-positioning of wildfire suppression personnel and assets based on real-time risk, a key issue in the Palisades Fire.¹⁷
- Aid with the creation and updating of Community Wildfire Protection Plans.
- Assist with the safe and effective use of prescribed fire to help prevent catastrophes like the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon fire.¹⁸

¹⁶ "On Fire: The Report of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission."

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/wfmmc-final-report-09-2023.pdf>

¹⁷ Alene Tchekmedyan, Dakota Smith and Hannah Fry, "With a forecast of dangerous winds, LAFD pre-deploys to avoid failings of Palisades fire." LA Times. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-01-20/lafd>

¹⁸ "Report to the Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives." United States Government Accountability Office. <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106239>



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- Leverage commercially available technologies, where available, to perform the functions of the Center so we get up and running quickly.
- Manage the Section 303 wildfire technology demonstration pilot program and streamline procurement processes for firetech.

Currently, inadequate data integration and decision support for fire and land management agencies result in precious resources being spent on scattered, uncoordinated efforts—often referred to as “random acts of restoration.” By centralizing data collection while broadening data access, providing advanced wildfire risk assessments, and supporting decision-making across multiple agencies and jurisdictions, the Wildfire Intelligence Center would improve coordination in wildfire mitigation as well. This is more than just an administrative function—it is a force multiplier. To meet our restoration and wildfire mitigation goals effectively, we must move beyond reactive strategies and fully leverage the power of data and technology.

FOFA scales wildfire technology for the future.

Section 303 of FOFA creates a multi-agency public-private wildfire technology testbed program that identifies and advances key emerging technologies in a competitive pilot program. This provision is a substantial step forward in getting critical new technologies in the hands of those who desperately need them, when they need them. Scaling these solutions as quickly as possible is key to meeting the emergency we are in—we do not have the luxury of continuing R&D and pilots forever. Existing deployments of innovative wildfire technologies have demonstrated their ability to increase the effectiveness of taxpayer-funded programs and are ready to scale nationwide. The Wildfire Intelligence Center will coordinate with the technology pilot program established in Sec. 303 and streamline procurement processes for wildfire technologies, with the aim of getting these technologies past the demonstration phase and into the hands of operators across the country, regardless of agency.

FOFA Bolsters Public Input & Modernizes Legal Review

Section 121 of FOFA primarily reinforces current law and practice regarding the Administrative Procedures Act, and identifies commonsense considerations in judicial review that courts are already likely to consider. The section identifies issues for courts to assess in analyzing whether an order to stop a project is within the public interest. This is a longstanding legal standard for those orders. The public interest considerations underscore the value that wildfire mitigation projects provide for communities and ecosystems – but the section makes clear that these considerations are not the only factors that courts should consider.

The litigation provisions are specific to fire management projects, Section 2 of the bill defines these projects. The Section 2 definition includes forest and vegetation management



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projects to reduce hazardous fuels, create fuel breaks, address insects and disease, among other project types. The USFS replied in its questions for the record to the Senate Agriculture Committee regarding FOFA that only 84 project decisions signed in fiscal years 2015-2024 that were litigated had “Hazardous Fuels Management” cited as a project purpose.¹⁹ For context, USFS estimates that it conducts more than 5,000 hazardous fuels projects on more than 2 million acres every year. Meaning that if USFS averages 5,000 fuels projects each year from 2015-2024, the litigated projects would be 0.168% of total projects.

The Senate FOFA bill significantly improved upon the House language regarding community access to the courts. The Senate bill provides opportunities for community engagement with public participation in Fireshed Assessments, and ensures that public comment is not required in order to have standing in the courts. Additionally, the Senate bill’s statute of limitations at 150 days is an increase from the House bill’s 120 days. For context, the USFS QFRs stated that 43% of lawsuits on hazardous fuels reduction projects over the past decade were filed within 150 days.²⁰ Meaning nearly half of all lawsuits on hazardous fuels reductions projects are *already* being filed within 150 days.

FOFA is a powerful step forward, and in this urgent moment, moving forward toward ending the megafire crisis is exactly what we need. FOFA represents months of negotiations, input from stakeholders across the country and ideological spectrum, and countless hours of technical and substantive work. We thank Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the sponsors of FOFA for their time and work put into this legislation.

We would encourage every Senator to recognize the urgency and the need for this commonsense and bipartisan legislation and to support the Fix Our Forests Act.

Please feel free to contact our Director of Federal Affairs & Strategic Counsel, James Campbell at James@megafire.org with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Matt Weiner
Founder and CEO, Megafire Action

¹⁹ “Legislative Hearing to Review S. 1462, Fix our Forests Act.” Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/e205365e-e545-358f-0b12-62d497c99ac7/S.HRG.119-74_TRANSCRIPT.pdf

²⁰ Ibid.



October 20, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Boozman, and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

We write in support of the Fix Our Forests Act (S. 1462), introduced by Senators John Curtis (R-UT), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Tim Sheehy (R-MT), and Alex Padilla (D-CA). We urge the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee to approve the bill, and for prompt consideration by the full Senate. This bipartisan legislation will increase the nation's resilience to catastrophic wildfires through improved forest and rangeland management, hazardous fuels reduction, and better protection for communities in wildfire prone regions.

The undersigned trade associations represent a majority of the property casualty insurance industry, including primary writers, reinsurers, agents, and brokers. Our industry has long been engaged in ongoing efforts to prevent and reduce devastation from natural catastrophes, including wildfires. Our members work to help individuals, families, homeowners, businesses, and governments identify and reduce their wildfire risk, promote preparedness, and assist in post-disaster recovery. This includes the creation and funding of research-focused organizations like the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS). IBHS is a leader in the development of evidence-based solutions to effectively reduce wildfire risk and other harm to communities.

The availability and affordability of insurance in wildfire-prone areas have been significantly affected by a combination of factors such as the frequency and severity of wildfires, costs of building materials and labor, and escalating regulatory and legal system costs. In recent years, wildfires have caused tens of billions of dollars in insured losses, and the number of homes in high-risk areas continues to grow—often without adequate mitigation measures in place.

The most destructive, deadly, and costliest wildfires are often “fast fires,” which ignite and rapidly spread during severe wind events overwhelming fire protection resources. Since 2020, at least 10 major wildfire-induced conflagrations — events including the 2025 Palisades and Eaton fires in California, the 2023 Lahaina fire in Hawaii, the 2021 Marshall fire in Colorado, and the 2020 Almeda fire in Oregon — have destroyed more than 26,000 structures.

Actions must be taken to adapt communities to be more resilient to wildfire to slow the spread of wildfire and prevent transition from the natural environment into the built environment, becoming urban fires (“conflagrations”) that increase the scale of destruction. This is critical to preventing loss of life and property and is also crucial in reducing harmful environmental contaminants from the combustion of homes and other buildings and their contents.

Sustained mitigation efforts to increase resilience, especially when coordinated across federal, state, and local levels can help reduce the frequency and severity of catastrophic losses, which can help stabilize insurance markets over time. We strongly support provisions contained in S. 1462 to increase resilience in the built environment, such as the establishment of a Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program. This program would support the adoption of fire-resistant building methods and standards, promote ignition-resistant materials, defensible space, and other measures to reduce risk.

We also support meaningful provisions in the bill to reduce the fuel loads in our nation’s forests and rangelands; and to help prevent utility infrastructure from igniting fires by enabling more active vegetation management and removal of hazardous trees in federal rights-of-way. Hardening utility infrastructure is critical as a growing number of utility-involved ignitions across multiple western states during high wind events are resulting in the costliest and deadliest losses in history. If this legislation is enacted and implemented, these measures can help safeguard lives, properties, infrastructure, and the environment and protect against the immediate and long-lasting impacts of wildfire.

We commend the bipartisan work in the Senate to date that has produced S. 1462 and urge its continued advancement by the full Senate. Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important bipartisan legislation.

Sincerely,



Sam Whitfield
Senior Vice President, Federal Government Relations & Political Engagement
American Property Casualty Insurance Association



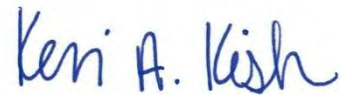
Jimi Grande
SVP – Federal and Political Affairs
National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies



Nicole C. Austin
Senior Vice President and Director of Federal Affairs
Reinsurance Association of America



Nathan Riedel
Senior VP – Federal Government Affairs
Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, Inc.



Keri Kish
General Counsel & Director of Policy
Wholesale & Specialty Insurance Association (WSIA)



Joel Kopperud
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
The Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers

STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT ON THE FIX OUR FORESTS ACT (S.1462)

"I applaud the bipartisan work and leadership of the Senate sponsors of this bill, including Colorado's Senator Hickenlooper, in crafting a bill that will make Colorado communities safer amidst the urgent and growing wildfire crisis in the West. From supporting responsible and expedited on-the-ground fuel reductions, to bolstering the use and development of the latest wildfire satellite monitoring technology which compliments Colorado's national leadership in the aerospace sector, and to investing in stewardship practices for local communities to be better prepared for wildfires and reforestation efforts with the state nursery to improve our ability to recover – this bill makes major strides in addressing the country's wildfire risk and will support Colorado's continued leadership in wildfire preparedness, response and recovery," said **Colorado Governor Jared Polis**.

"We applaud the efforts made by Senator Hickenlooper in the Fix Our Forests Act to provide federal, state, and local partners with the tools needed to address wildfire mitigation in the most vulnerable areas in Colorado. Wildfires do not abide by our political boundaries. But here in Colorado we have built strong coordination among federal, state, local land managers and stakeholders to help reduce the impact of wildfires on our critical infrastructure and landscapes," said **Dan Gibbs, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources**. "We appreciate that this legislation builds upon this important collaboration and draws on existing agreements, such as Shared Stewardship, which will help strengthen our intergovernmental partnerships as we prepare for the next Colorado mega-fire."

"Forests are central to our way of life in Colorado. They support world-class outdoor recreation and a vital water supply that more than 40 million Americans rely upon. I am grateful to Senator John Hickenlooper for his work on the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act," said **Matt McCombs, Colorado State Forester and Director of the Colorado State Forest Service**. "This critical legislation will bolster our shared stewardship ethic in Colorado and enhance our ability as a state to improve forest health, protect lives, communities and water supplies from wildfire, and ensure that the forests that define Colorado endure for generations to come."

"First of all, thanks to Senators Hickenlooper, Curtis, Sheehy, and Padilla for their leadership in moving all this forward! Having spent so many hours working on the Wildfire Mitigation and Management Commission, it is refreshing to see so many of the recommendations moving forward!" said **Mike Morgan, Director of the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control**. "Colorado has taken a very aggressive approach in addressing the wildfire challenges we face and we are pleased to see these efforts at the federal level taking a more holistic look at the challenges we all face and in support of the Commission's recommendations. This bipartisan effort will serve Colorado and America well! I fully support this effort and I am happy to help in any way that would be helpful."

"TNC appreciates the serious undertaking of Senators Curtis, Hickenlooper, Sheehy, and Padilla to build on legislation targeted at preventing more catastrophic wildfires through improved forest and fuels management and expanded use of prescribed fire. TNC has been working to restore

beneficial fire and improve the resilience of forest systems on the ground for more than 60 years. Every year, wildfires continue to grow deadlier and more devastating to communities and the environment, and we remain concerned that the significant cuts to the Forest Service workforce will impede work to protect people and nature from these wildfire risks. We support this legislative effort aimed at improving the forest management process to better address catastrophic wildfires,” said **Kameran Onley, managing director of North America policy and government relations, The Nature Conservancy.**

“For many Americans, catastrophic wildfires are a very real and growing threat to their homes and lives,” said **Environmental Defense Fund Executive Director Amanda Leland.** “The U.S. Forest Service needs new tools and more resources now to prevent and control these wildfires, and with the right funding, this bipartisan proposal will help. Protecting people and nature from catastrophic wildfire requires both a robust, science-based plan of forest management and the resources to implement it.”

“As the megafire crisis grows larger and more severe with each fire season, we need policy solutions that reflect the urgency and scale of the problem. Senators Curtis, Hickenlooper, Padilla and Sheehy have negotiated a Senate companion to the Fix Our Forests Act that will move the federal government towards a science-based, strategic approach to addressing megafires. We look forward to working with the sponsors to advance this bill and enact the most transformative wildfire and land management law in a generation—since the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, if not the National Forest Management Act of 1976,” said **Matt Weiner, CEO of Megafire Action.**

“We are thrilled to see the Fix Our Forests Act introduced in the Senate through a bipartisan cooperation between Senators Curtis, Hickenlooper, Padilla, and Sheehy. The bill greatly expands upon the version that passed the House, adding critical details to support wildfire risk reduction in the built environment and provisions for mitigating the health impacts of smoke to communities while promoting expanded use of prescribed fire,” said **Annie Schmidt and Tyson Bertone-Riggs, Managing Directors, Alliance for Wildfire Resilience.** “Covering a third of the recommendations of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, this bill is a significant step forward in wildfire policy and, coupled with sufficient funding and staffing to realize the proposed tools and programs, will make a real difference in our nation’s experience with wildfire.”

“I thank Senators Hickenlooper, Padilla, Curtis, and Sheehy for introducing this bipartisan legislation,” said **Fire Chief Josh Waldo, President and Board Chair of the International Association of Fire Chiefs.** “As we saw in January’s fires in Los Angeles, the nation faces a serious and growing risk from fires in the wildland urban interface (WUI). This legislation will enact many of the recommendations of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission. It also will improve coordination of federal wildland fire preparedness efforts; promote the use of prescribed fires and other preventative measures to prevent WUI fires; and promote the development of new technologies to help local fire departments. We look forward to working with the bill’s sponsors to pass this legislation.”

“Our national forests provide essential wildlife habitat, store carbon, and supply communities across the nation with clean air and water. These vital landscapes are under threat and must be proactively stewarded if they are to survive the changing climate, rapidly intensifying wildfires, and past management missteps. The bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act will help increase the pace and scale of evidence-backed forest management, including the use of beneficial prescribed fire and the restoration of white oak forests. But we must have a robust and talented federal workforce in place for it to succeed,” said **Abby Tinsley, vice president for conservation policy at the National Wildlife Federation**. “We will work with Senators Hickenlooper, Padilla, Sheehy, Curtis, and Chairman Westerman in the House to strengthen and advance this important conversation.”

“The health of our nation’s forests is dependent on the rivers, streams, and wetlands that sustain them. Actively conserving and restoring these critical aquatic resources is an important tool that can be used to mitigate the impacts of wildfire and drought, among other threats,” said **Alicia Marrs, director of western water for the National Wildlife Federation**. “We’re encouraged to see language in the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act that recognizes the wildfire benefits of aquatic restoration. We look forward to continuing to work with leaders from both sides of the aisle to elevate these common sense and cost-effective approaches to forest and water management for all Americans.”

“Wildfires grow more intense and destructive each year, leaving behind immense devastation for our forests, wildlife, and communities,” said **Marshall Johnson, chief conservation officer at the National Audubon Society**. “The bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act represents an important step in reducing wildfire risks across forested landscapes. Audubon thanks Senators Hickenlooper, Curtis, Padilla, and Sheehy for working together to craft a bill that sets the stage for improved forest management, and we urge Congress to dedicate the resources necessary to ensure federal agencies are well-equipped to reduce wildfire risks, steward our forestlands, and protect wildlife habitat.”

“The growing frequency and severity of wildfires pose a tremendous threat to the health of our forests and the safety of countless communities. The Fix Our Forests Act takes important steps to mitigate wildfires, improve forest health, and protect local communities. We appreciate this thoughtful, bipartisan effort led by Senators Curtis, Hickenlooper, Sheehy, and Padilla to advance this important legislation,” said **Jennifer Tyler, VP of Government Affairs at Citizens’ Climate Lobby**.

“The declining health of our National Forests and the fish and wildlife habitat that they provide is a concern for America’s hunters and anglers,” said **Joel Pedersen, president and CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**. “TRCP applauds the leadership of Senators Curtis, Sheehy, Hickenlooper, and Padilla for introducing the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act in the Senate and urges Congress to advance these important forest management provisions and to accompany them with adequate resources and capacity to carry out on-the-ground work.”

“HECHO enthusiastically applauds the impressive bipartisan leadership behind the Senate’s Fix Our Forests Act. At a time when cooperation is more important than ever, these Senators are putting forward real, thoughtful solutions to reduce wildfire risk while engaging local and rural communities. This legislation is a critical step toward actively managing our forests to protect public lands, watersheds, and the communities that depend on them. By expediting emergency authorities in high-risk fireheds —and through the creation of the Wildfire Intelligence Center—this effort has the potential to significantly reduce catastrophic wildfires and strengthen prediction and response, particularly in fire-prone states like Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, and Utah. It’s a shining example of the kind of balanced, forward-looking leadership we need to protect our natural landscapes and communities,” said **Camilla Simon, Executive Director of Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors (HECHO)**.

“BPC Action applauds the bipartisan leadership of Sens. Curtis (R-UT), Hickenlooper (D-CO), Sheehy (R-MT), and Padilla (D-CA) on the introduction of the Fix Our Forests Act. By streamlining and improving forest and hazardous fuels management activities on public and Tribal lands, this legislation will help reduce wildfire risks, improve forest health, and protect communities in fire-prone areas. The Fix Our Forests Act also delivers substantial economic and environmental benefits by addressing critical needs to enhance the domestic supply chain of seeds and advance biochar commercialization,” said **Michele Stockwell, President of Bipartisan Policy Center Action (BPC Action)**.

“The Senate’s bipartisan Fix Our Forest Act is a critical step toward restoring forest health and reducing catastrophic wildfire risk. This bipartisan legislation tackles the root causes of catastrophic wildfires by fixing the Cottonwood decision, reforming litigation standards, expanding categorical exclusions up to 10,000 acres, and boosting restoration capacity through long-term stewardship contracts and extended Good Neighbor Authority. Healthy forests require active stewardship—not bureaucratic delay. We thank Senators Hickenlooper, Sheehy, Padilla, and Curtis for bringing forward this bill, and we urge swift passage of this much-needed legislation,” said **Brian Yabolnski, CEO of The Property and Environment Research Center (PERC)**.

“Wildfires continue to ravage communities igniting homes, businesses, and infrastructure. APCIA commends Senators Curtis, Hickenlooper, Sheehy, and Padilla for their bipartisan leadership of the Fix Our Forests Act. The bill would improve fire assessment and prediction for wildland areas and communities to improve response, reduce hazardous fuels, enable greater vegetation management by utilities in federal rights-of-way to prevent fires, and create a community wildfire risk reduction program to support fire-resistant building methods, codes, and standards, promote ignition-resistant materials, defensible space, and other measures to reduce risk,” said **David A. Sampson, President & CEO of the American Property Casualty Insurance Association (APCIA)**.

“The Fix Our Forests Act streamlines collaboration between the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), the USDA Forest Service, and other partners, cutting red tape to accelerate urgent forest restoration and management on federal lands,” said **Matt Lindler, NWTf Director of**

Government Affairs. “This bill ensures we can better manage and conserve vital natural resources for wildlife, hunters and anglers. We are grateful to see the Senate introduce this critical piece of legislation and await the signature from the president.”

“There is no time to waste in restoring and reforesting the forests that work every day to be the lungs of our nation,” said **Brian Kittler, Chief Program Officer-Resilient Forests**. “More than ever before successful and timely forest restoration will require strengthened coordination across federal, state, and tribal governments together with non-profit organizations. This bill prioritizes a complementary series of actions that will accelerate wildfire resilience and community resilience including ensuring post-fire reforestation is implemented quickly and with the best available science.”

“The science is clear: tackling the wildfire crisis requires better forest management, increasing the use of prescribed fire, and investing in and deploying the next generation of wildfire technologies. The Fix Our Forests Act will get this urgently needed work done. Now is the time for the Senate to build on the bipartisan leadership demonstrated by the sponsors and pass this bill,” said **James Campbell, Wildfire Policy Specialist at the Federation of American Scientists**.

“CWI commends Senator Curtis, Senator Hickenlooper, Senator Sheehy, and Senator Padilla for their bipartisan efforts to meaningfully address the wildfire crisis. The Fix Our Forests Act is an important step towards accelerating proven solutions to reduce catastrophic fire risk, improve forest and ecosystem health, and safeguard our local communities,” said **Marissa Christiansen, Executive Director at the Climate and Wildfire Institute**. “We are pleased to see many recommendations from the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission Report included in the updated legislation, including a directive to establish the Wildfire Intelligence Center to serve as the national hub for wildfire data, prediction, and response. We look forward to working with the bill’s sponsors to help accelerate solutions to the wildfire crisis by incorporating the best available science, data, and management principles into commonsense policy reform and decision-making.”

“AFI supports the Fix Our Forests Act and calls on the United States Senate to pass it with the urgency the \$100 billion a year wildfire crisis warrants from our elected officials,” said **Bill Clerico, Founding Chair of AFI and Managing Partner of Convective Capital**. “AFI is particularly supportive of the legislation’s inclusion of a Wildfire Intelligence Center, a long-overdue step to better integrate and coordinate wildfire response efforts and invest in cutting-edge technology. Our country’s wildfire response efforts are antiquated and are leaving us ill-prepared for this growing crisis. FOFA is a critical step to refining our wildfire response efforts and protecting our communities.”

“State forestry agencies play a lead role not only in managing and protecting over 550 million acres of state and private forests, but also working to improve the health and resiliency of federal lands through cross-boundary partnerships nationwide. State Foresters are also responsible for wildfire protection on more than 1.5 billion acres and, in collaboration with local

fire departments, responding to 80 percent of the nation's wildland fires," said **Jay Farrell, Executive Director of the NASF**. "NASF applauds the bipartisan work of Senators Sheehy, Curtis, Hickenlooper, and Padilla to chart a path forward to greatly enhance wildfire management and recovery efforts and stem the tide of disastrous wildfires that threaten our nation's forests and the livelihood of communities that depend on them. We recognize that many of the improvements made in the Fix Our Forests Act are nuanced and look forward to continuing our work with Congress to ensure its landmark reforms become law."

"The poor health of our federal forests exacerbates the wildfires that negatively impact wildlife habitat, sportsmen's access, and communities across the country, and comprehensive reforms are needed to actively treat hazardous fuels efficiently and at scale to increase forest resiliency to severe wildfires, insects, and disease," said **John Culclasure, Senior Director of Forest Policy at the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation**. "We are grateful for the bipartisan leadership of Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus Members Senators Curtis, Hickenlooper, Padilla, and Sheehy for introducing the Fix Our Forests Act to improve forest management through strengthened authorities, collaborative tools, and improved processes. We look forward to working with the bill sponsors to advance the legislation quickly as we approach wildfire season."

"Arnold Ventures praises the bipartisan introduction of the Fix Our Forests Act, an evidence-based, constructive proposal to cut red tape and prevent catastrophic forest fires. We applaud Senators John Curtis (R-UT), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Tim Sheehy (R-MT), and Alex Padilla (D-CA) for their work to craft and introduce this important and necessary legislation. We encourage all Senators to support and ultimately pass the Fix Our Forests Act," said **Charlie Anderson, Executive Vice President for infrastructure at Arnold Ventures**. "AV also thanks Reps. Bruce Westerman (R-AR) and Scott Peters (D-CA) for championing this vital work in the House of Representatives. We are heartened by the collaborative work across party lines in both chambers to support thoughtful, bipartisan policy that will save lives and property."

"Berkshire Hathaway Energy applauds the Senate introduction of the Fix Our Forests Act and thanks the bipartisan group of Senators who worked together to move it forward. The bill's provisions would improve forest management activities on federal and tribal lands in common-sense ways, improving their resilience to wildfire," said **Scott Thon, President and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway Energy**. "Passage and enactment of these provisions would be a step to help prevent catastrophic wildfires and lessen their environmental damage. Berkshire Hathaway Energy recognizes the growing threat of wildfires affects everyone and requires holistic solutions with businesses, governments and key stakeholders working together to design and implement constructive, enduring solutions."

"Our forests face serious threats, and this bipartisan bill is a vital step forward in addressing complex forest health challenges," said **Joel Ferry, Executive Director of the Utah Department of Natural Resources**. "It gives land managers the tools to proactively reduce wildfire risk, protect critical watersheds, and restore forest ecosystems through stronger collaboration."

“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,” wrote **the chair of Colorado State Fire Chiefs, Wildland Section, and the Fire Chiefs of Vail Fire and Emergency Services, Eagle River Fire Protection District, Aspen Fire Department, Red, White, & Blue Fire District, Summit Fire and EMS, Grand Fire District #1, and Colorado River Fire Rescue** in a joint letter of support for the Fix Our Forests Act. “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... 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.”

“It is paramount that we work to improve the health of our nation’s forested lands and protect communities and watersheds, particularly in the West, where wildfires have become increasingly devastating and destructive. This legislation outlines a comprehensive approach to improving forest and watershed health by helping to foster a collaborative partnership between federal agencies and local communities, authorizing common sense environmental streamlining authorities, and expanding important research initiatives,” wrote **Colorado Water Congress** in a joint letter of support for the Fix Our Forests Act. “The resources included in this bill are crucial to help control and reduce the severity of wildfires and protect Colorado’s watersheds. CWC supports a collaborative process of planning, prioritizing, and implementing hazardous fuel reduction and forest health improvement projects while protecting, restoring, and enhancing forest ecosystems to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species, improve biological diversity, water quality, and enhance productivity.”

“The Fix Our Forests Act is a critical step forward. The bill provides an opportunity to speed up the planning and implementation of wildfire risk reduction projects on federal lands while expanding collaborative tools to bring more partners into this vital work. Additionally, it bolsters the use of prescribed fire to help reduce fire severity and restore ecosystems. The bill recognizes that replanting after wildfire and other extreme events goes hand in hand with active forest management and the legislation supports ecosystem and habitat restoration across our public lands and in the priceless white oak forests of the Eastern U.S. The Fix Our Forests Act also takes a broad view of the solutions needed by establishing a Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program to address risk in the built environment and creating a Fire Intelligence Center to improve interagency coordination and adoption of new technologies,” wrote **a coalition of 22 different wildfire organizations** in a joint letter of support for the Fix Our Forests Act.

“The Fix Our Forests Act provides a forward-looking framework that strengthens interagency collaboration and delivers common-sense reforms to improve forest and watershed health. NWRA believes this legislation will provide lasting benefits for our environment, public safety, and water quality and infrastructure,” wrote the **National Water Resources Association** in a letter of support for the Fix Our Forests Act.

"As FAS continues to emphasize, failing to address the root causes of devastating wildfires is a policy choice. And it's a choice we can no longer afford," said **Daniel Correa, CEO of Federation of American Scientists**, "Swift passage of the Fix Our Forests Act in the Senate would put us on track to better manage the entire wildfire lifecycle of prevention, suppression, and recovery, including through smart and systematic use of science and technology for decision support."

"The health of our nation's forests is dependent on the rivers, streams, and wetlands that sustain them. Actively conserving and restoring these critical aquatic resources is an important tool that can be used to mitigate the impacts of wildfire and drought, among other threats," said **Alicia Marrs, director of western water at the National Wildlife Federation**, "We're encouraged to see language in the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act that recognizes the wildfire benefits of aquatic restoration. We look forward to continuing to work with leaders from both sides of the aisle to elevate these common sense and cost-effective approaches to forest and water management for all Americans."

"An antiquated NEPA review system delays environmental progress, whether it is protecting our natural resources from forest fires or deploying innovative technologies. This bill takes important steps to address those obstacles that hinder effective land management. For too long we have tiptoed around meaningful and impactful reforms, leading to habitat and human loss in the process. CRES is proud to support this effort spearheaded by Senators Curtis, Sheehy, Hickenlooper and Padilla," said **Heather Reams, President of Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions**.

"The Fix Our Forests Act includes vital provisions that would improve wildfire mitigation and grid hardening efforts. Specifically, the bill streamlines federal permitting processes, authorizes the management of hazard trees within 150 feet of power lines, and establishes timelines for approval of vegetation management plans. It also incorporates key reforms from the Fire Safe Electrical Corridors Act, allowing electric utilities to remove felled timber and slash from rights-of-way in national forests without being subject to time-consuming timber sales procedures. These are common-sense, pragmatic changes that will reduce regulatory barriers and allow electric co-ops to act more quickly to protect their infrastructure and the communities they serve," said **Kent Singer, Executive Director of Colorado Rural Electric Association**

"**Western Governors** have long supported several policies which are included in the Fix Our Forests Act. Shared stewardship, prescribed fire, and other management strategies addressed in the bill are imperative to the health and resilience of forests and the communities that live among them. The Western Governors' Association applauds the bipartisan efforts of U.S. Senators John Curtis (R-UT), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Tim Sheehy (R-MT), and Alex Padilla (D-CA) to address these issues of critical importance to the West. WGA encourages swift consideration of this important piece of legislation by the full Senate."

"With more than two-thirds of U.S. forestland held in state and private ownership, the Fix Our Forests Act acknowledges the crucial role of state agencies in forest health, fire prevention, and ecosystem restoration. We particularly appreciate your inclusion of reforms that improve local flexibility and strengthen the role of state foresters and agriculture agencies in managing risk," said **Ted McKinney, CEO of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture**.

"We write to express support of the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act. This legislation is designed to reduce the risk of devastating wildfires that are causing billions of dollars in damages and displacing thousands of people across the United States. Colorado suffered several serious events in the last few years and the state is among the highest in the country for wildfire risk. We are confident the Fix Our Forests Act will help reduce wildfire risk for Colorado communities and speed up mitigation projects while maintaining environmental safeguards and encouraging local involvement in the cooperative community. Further, we believe this will help the availability of liability insurance that has grown difficult to obtain," wrote **Mark A. Gabriel, President and CEO of United Power**.

"RMEF has long supported reforms of federal policy to actively manage our forests, sagebrush and grasslands for improved wildlife habitat and reduced catastrophic fire risk. That is why we strongly support the passage of the Fix Our Forests Act," said **Kyle Weaver, President and CEO of Rocky Mountain Elk**.

"Last month, after seeing the devastating fires in Los Angeles, CCL volunteers sent 4,509 messages (and counting!) to Congress, urging them to work in a bipartisan way to reduce wildfire risk. Democratic Rep. Scott Peters from California and Republican Rep. Bruce Westerman from Arkansas have now introduced an updated version of the Fix Our Forests Act. The bill is intended to improve forest health, increase resilience to wildfires, boost forest restoration projects, protect communities, and more. If your representative in the House voted in favor of the Fix Our Forests Act, you can send an appreciation to the office or post it on social media," wrote **Citizens' Climate Lobby**.

"The accelerating frequency and severity of wildfires are devastating communities, crippling infrastructure, and inflicting enormous losses to our economy. Beyond the immediate destruction and long-term recovery, these fires release large amounts of carbon dioxide and other harmful greenhouse gases, threatening human health and undermining hard-won progress on emissions reductions critical to combating climate change," wrote **Nat Keohane, President of The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions**. "The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) is pleased to endorse the active forest management and resilience strategies outlined in the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act, which will remove barriers hindering wildfire prevention, leading to better outcomes for communities and the U.S. economy. Many efforts in the bill closely align with C2ES's Wildfire Resilience Policy Recommendations drafted with the support of local, state, and business leaders in the West."

"We are particularly encouraged by the bill's: designation of Fireshed Management Areas to focus forest health treatments in the highest-risk regions; creation of an Interagency Fireshed

Center to coordinate science, data, and planning across jurisdictions; streamlined environmental reviews that maintain safeguards while accelerating action on priority projects; support for Good Neighbor Authority expansion to allow broader participation from states and local partners; investment in local and tribal capacity, data tools, and restoration programs to improve on-the-ground outcomes,” wrote **Greg Morrison, Executive Vice President of National Water Resources Association**. “Each of these components advances better watershed protection, reduces long-term fire suppression costs, and improves the resilience of the systems our members rely on to deliver clean, reliable water. The Fix Our Forests Act provides a forward-looking framework that strengthens interagency collaboration and delivers common-sense reforms to improve forest and watershed health. NWRA believes this legislation will provide lasting benefits for our environment, public safety, and water quality and infrastructure. We respectfully urge swift passage of the bill and stand ready to support its implementation.”

“NRECA applauds the introduction of a Senate Fix Our Forests Act, which will help co-ops better address wildfire hazards on utility rights-of-way and protect the communities they serve. Bureaucratic hurdles and red tape fall particularly hard on electric co-ops as they work to maintain their infrastructure on public lands. The Fix our Forests Act streamlines and strengthens existing federal processes for essential electric grid maintenance activities on public lands. We thank Sens. Sheehy, Curtis, Hickenlooper and Padilla for working to ensure that co-ops can protect the nation’s natural resources while providing affordable and reliable power to America’s rural communities,” said **Jim Matheson, CEO of National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)**.

The Fix Our Forests Act is supported by Colorado Governor Jared Polis; Utah Governor Spencer Cox; California Governor Gavin Newsom; Colorado Department of Natural Resources; Colorado State Forest Service; American Property Casualty Insurance Association; California Natural Resources Agency; Climate and Wildfire Institute; Utah Farm Bureau Federation; The Nature Conservancy; Association for Firetech Innovation and Convective Capital; Federation of American Scientists; National Audubon Society; Berkshire Hathaway Energy; Arnold Ventures; Utah Department of Natural Resources; The Property and Environment Research Center (PERC); Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership; National Wild Turkey Federation; National Wildlife Federation; Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions; American Forests; Colorado Rural Electric Association; Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation; Western Governors’ Association; National Association of State Departments of Agriculture; National Association of State Foresters; United Power; Rocky Mountain Elk; Citizen’ Climate Lobby; Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control; Bipartisan Policy Center Action; International Association of Fire Chiefs; Alliance for Wildfire Resilience; Wildfire Alliance; Tall Timbers; Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition; The Stewardship Project; Megafire Action; California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection; Hispanics Enjoy Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors; Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society; State of Utah; Environmental Defense Fund; Rural County Representatives of California; Salesforce; Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility; C2ES; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Colorado State Fire Chiefs Wildland Section; Colorado Water Congress; and National Water Resources Association.