

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 5097

To require the identification of certain high-fire-risk Federal forest lands in the State of Nevada, the clearing of forest fuels in such areas, and the submission of a fire prevention plan and budget.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 23, 1994

Mrs. VUCANOVICH introduced the following bill; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Natural Resources and Agriculture

A BILL

To require the identification of certain high-fire-risk Federal forest lands in the State of Nevada, the clearing of forest fuels in such areas, and the submission of a fire prevention plan and budget.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Nevada Forest Protec-
5 tion Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds that—

1 (1) persistent drought and large areas of accu-
2 mulated fuels in forest lands have caused the 1994
3 wildfire season to be one of the most severe in his-
4 tory;

5 (2) an extreme wildfire danger exists in many
6 of the forest lands in Nevada, including such lands
7 in the Lake Tahoe area, which have suffered years
8 of drought and insect infestation that have resulted
9 in a forest that is overloaded with fuels;

10 (3) over 780 wildfires have occurred throughout
11 the State of Nevada in the 1994 wildfire season and
12 have involved more than 215,000 acres, including
13 areas near Caliente, Hallelujah Junction, Panaca,
14 Lone Mountain, Bull Run, Mahogany Springs, Hol-
15 brook Junction, and Verdi;

16 (4) the risk of intense wildfires that pose a seri-
17 ous threat to the health of forest lands and water-
18 sheds can be significantly reduced by the reduction
19 of excessive fuel accumulations, including slash piles
20 and dead trees that become fuel ladders;

21 (5) the highest priority for fuel removal should
22 be placed on areas where the population is greatest
23 and the interface between urban and wild land cre-
24 ates a great fire threat to persons and property; and

1 (6) timber sales and fuels reduction projects
2 should result in major decreases in fuel loading and
3 emphasis should be placed on handpiling and burn-
4 ing as well as the removal or burning of
5 nonmerchantable, smaller, dead trees that are likely
6 to become fuel ladders.

7 **SEC. 3. IDENTIFICATION OF RISK AREAS AND CLEARING OF**
8 **FUELS.**

9 The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior shall,
10 in cooperation with appropriate State and local agencies—

11 (1) identify any area in the State of Nevada,
12 within forest lands under the respective jurisdictions
13 of the Secretaries, that is extremely vulnerable to
14 wildfire due to the accumulation of forest fuels and
15 a combination of fire history, extent of human settle-
16 ment, weather patterns, topography, accessibility,
17 and visitor intensity; and

18 (2) take action to reduce excessive accumula-
19 tions of fuel, including slash piles and dead trees
20 that become fuel ladders, in such areas.

21 **SEC. 4. FIRE PLAN AND BUDGET.**

22 The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior shall
23 jointly prepare, in consultation and coordination with
24 other Federal agencies and the State of Nevada, a strate-
25 gic plan regarding fire prevention for forest lands in the

1 State of Nevada under the respective jurisdictions of the
2 Secretaries and an annual budget for the plan. The Sec-
3 retaries shall submit the plan and budget to the Congress
4 not later than March 1, 1995, for inclusion in the 1996
5 appropriations request.

6 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

7 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
8 as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

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