



June 13, 2017

Chairman Rob Bishop
House Natural Resources Committee
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Raul M. Grijalva
House Natural Resources Committee
US House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva:

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) is pleased to provide comments on the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017. NASF represents the heads of state forestry agencies in all fifty states, the District of Columbia and the US Territories. Through the development of comprehensive State Forest Action Plans our members maintain a broad view of the full set of forestry ownerships within their authority, including federally owned forest lands. For citizens of the United States to realize a full set of forest related benefits, federal lands need to provide a complete and balanced set of environmental, economic and social values.

In February of 2016 our organization adopted a formal position on desired reforms to federal land management policy. Suggestions are organized around:

- *Reforms that would allow federal lands to develop a more balanced set of social, environmental and economic benefits;*
- *Reforms that would lower the costs of agency administration, planning, regulatory compliance and litigation; and*
- *Reforms that would enable vegetation management to be carried out at a scope, scale and pace sufficient to create more sustainable and resilient landscape conditions.*

We feel this bill would indeed create the end results our members support as our members want to see more active management of federal forest lands. Expedited planning and analysis, prompt response to catastrophic events, alternative dispute resolution, greater collaboration and less costly litigation are all outcomes that for which we strongly advocate. In addition, we're encouraged to see some desired modification to Good Neighbor Authority allowing road repair to be part of cooperative projects, as well as support for giving the land management agencies the opportunity to make their own determinations of endangered species jeopardy or adverse effects. Finally, NASF appreciates that this discussion draft recognizes the need to solve the wildfire suppression funding issue. We look forward to working with the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands and Congressman Bruce Westerman to ensure that a solution addresses both fire borrowing

Executive Director
Jay Farrell

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and the erosion of the Forest Service’s budget over-time due to increasing wildfire suppression costs.

We recently provided comments on federal land management reform to the House Natural Resources Committee’s Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. One additional suggestion we made there and would repeat here is to *“Require that National Forest Management Plans specifically address how they support State Forest Action Plans. In addition, encourage regular consultation with State Foresters by National Forest System leadership to ensure their annual programs of work are dovetailed where appropriate.”*

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. We would be happy to answer any questions or provide any additional information that might be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Bill Crapser
Wyoming State Forester
President of the National Association of State Foresters

Executive Director
Jay Farrell

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