

[DISCUSSION DRAFT]

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. WESTERMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes.

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. TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—LANDSCAPE-SCALE RESTORATION

Subtitle A—Addressing Emergency Wildfire Risks in High Priority Firesheds

- Sec. 101. Designation of fireshed management areas.
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- Sec. 103. Fireshed registry.
- Sec. 104. Shared stewardship.
- Sec. 105. Fireshed assessments.
- Sec. 106. Emergency fireshed management.
- Sec. 107. Sunset.

Subtitle B—Expanding Collaborative Tools to Reduce Wildfire Risk and Improve Forest Health

- Sec. 111. Modification of the treatment of certain revenue and payments under good neighbor agreements.
- Sec. 112. Fixing stewardship end result contracting.
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- Sec. 201. Community wildfire risk reduction program.
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- Sec. 204. Vegetation management, facility inspection, and operation and maintenance relating to electric transmission and distribution facility rights-of-way.
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- Sec. 206. Seeds of success.

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- Sec. 301. Biochar innovations and opportunities for conservation, health, and advancements in research.
- Sec. 302. Accurate hazardous fuels reduction reports.
- Sec. 303. Public-private wildfire technology deployment and testbed partnership.
- Sec. 304. GAO study on Forest Service policies.
- Sec. 305. Forest Service western headquarters study.

1 SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

2 In this Act:

1 (1) FIRESHED.—The term “fireshed” means a
2 landscape-scale area that faces similar wildfire
3 threat where a response strategy could influence the
4 wildfire outcome.

5 (2) FIRESHED REGISTRY.—The term “Fireshed
6 Registry” means the fireshed registry established
7 under section 103.

8 (3) FOREST PLAN.—The term “forest plan”
9 means—

10 (A) a land use plan prepared by the Bu-
11 reau of Land Management for public lands pur-
12 suant to section 202 of the Federal Land Policy
13 and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C.
14 1712); or

15 (B) a land and resource management plan
16 prepared by the Forest Service for a unit of the
17 National Forest System pursuant to section 6
18 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Re-
19 sources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C.
20 1604).

21 (4) GOVERNOR.—The term “Governor” means
22 the Governor or any other appropriate executive offi-
23 cial of an affected State or Indian tribe or the Com-
24 monwealth of Puerto Rico.

1 (5) HAZARDOUS FUELS MANAGEMENT.—The
2 term “hazardous fuels management” means any
3 vegetation management activities that reduce the
4 risk of wildfire, including mechanical thinning, mas-
5 tication, prescribed burning, cultural burning, timber
6 harvest, mastication, and grazing.

7 (6) HFRA TERMS.—The terms “at-risk commu-
8 nity”, “community wildfire protection plan”, and
9 “wildland-urban interface” have the meanings given
10 such terms, respectively, in section 101 of the
11 Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C.
12 6511).

13 (7) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term “public lands”
14 has the meaning given that term in section 103 of
15 the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of
16 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702), except that the term in-
17 cludes Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands and Or-
18 egon and California Railroad Grant lands.

19 (8) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
20 TEES.—The term “relevant Congressional Commit-
21 tees” means—

22 (A) the Committees on Natural Resources
23 and Agriculture of the House of Representa-
24 tives; and

1 (B) the Committees on Energy and Nat-
2 ural Resources and Agriculture, Nutrition, and
3 Forestry of the Senate.

4 (9) RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL.—The term “re-
5 sponsible official” means an employee of the Depart-
6 ment of the Interior or Forest Service who has the
7 authority to make and implement a decision on a
8 proposed action.

9 (10) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
10 means each of—

11 (A) the Secretary of the Interior; and

12 (B) the Secretary of Agriculture.

13 (11) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary”
14 means the Secretary of Agriculture.

15 (12) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term
16 “Secretary concerned” means—

17 (A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with re-
18 spect to National Forest System lands; and

19 (B) the Secretary of the Interior, with re-
20 spect to public lands.

1 **TITLE I—LANDSCAPE-SCALE**
2 **RESTORATION**
3 **Subtitle A—Addressing Emergency**
4 **Wildfire Risks in High Priority**
5 **Fresheds**

6 **SEC. 101. DESIGNATION OF FIRESHED MANAGEMENT**
7 **AREAS.**

8 (a) DESIGNATION OF FIRESHED MANAGEMENT
9 AREAS.—

10 (1) INITIAL DESIGNATIONS.—For the period of
11 time beginning on the date of enactment of this Act
12 to 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act,
13 there are designated freshed management areas,
14 which—

15 (A) shall be comprised of individual land-
16 scape-scale fresheds identified as being a high
17 risk freshed in the “Wildfire Crisis Strategy”
18 published by the Forest Service in January
19 2022;

20 (B) shall be comprised of individual land-
21 scape-scale fresheds identified by the Secretary
22 as being in the top 20 percent of the 7,688
23 fresheds published by the Rocky Mountain Re-
24 search Station of the Forest Service in 2019 for

1 wildfire exposure based on the following cri-
2 teria:

3 (i) Wildfire exposure to communities,
4 including risk to structures and life.

5 (ii) Wildfire exposure to municipal wa-
6 tersheds.

7 (iii) Risk of forest conversion due to
8 wildfire.

9 (C) shall not overlap with any other
10 fireshed management areas;

11 (D) may contain Federal and non-Federal
12 land; and

13 (E) where the Secretary concerned shall
14 carry out fireshed management projects.

15 (2) FURTHER FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREA
16 DESIGNATIONS.—

17 (A) IN GENERAL.—On the date that is 5
18 years after the date of the enactment of this
19 Act and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary
20 shall submit to the relevant Congressional Com-
21 mittees an updated map of firesheds based on
22 the Fireshed Registry maintained under section
23 103.

24 (B) DESIGNATION.—Not later than 30
25 days after submitting an updated fireshed map

1 under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall
2 designate additional fireshed management areas
3 that—

4 (i) are identified as being in the top
5 20 percent of firesheds for wildfire expo-
6 sure based on the following criteria:

7 (I) Wildfire exposure to commu-
8 nities, including risk to structures and
9 life.

10 (II) Wildfire exposure to munic-
11 ipal watersheds.

12 (III) Risk of forest conversion
13 due to wildfire.

14 (ii) shall not overlap with any other
15 fireshed management areas;

16 (iii) may contain Federal and non-
17 Federal land; and

18 (iv) where the Secretary concerned
19 shall carry out fireshed management
20 projects.

21 (b) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—The designation of
22 fireshed management areas under this section shall not
23 be subject to the requirements of the National Environ-
24 mental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

1 **SEC. 102. FIRESHED CENTER.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the
4 Forest Service a Fireshed Center (hereinafter re-
5 ferred to as the “Center”) comprised of at least one
6 representative from each of the following:

7 (A) The Forest Service.

8 (B) The Bureau of Land Management.

9 (C) The National Park Service.

10 (D) The Bureau of Indian Affairs.

11 (E) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

12 (F) The U.S. Geological Survey.

13 (G) The Department of Defense.

14 (H) The Department of Homeland Secu-
15 rity.

16 (I) The Department of Energy.

17 (J) The Federal Emergency Management
18 Agency.

19 (K) National Science Foundation.

20 (L) The National Oceanic and Atmos-
21 pheric Administration.

22 (M) The National Aeronautics and Space
23 Administration.

24 (N) The National Institute of Standards
25 and Technology.

1 (2) DIRECTOR.—The Secretary of Agriculture,
2 acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall
3 appoint a Director of the Center, who shall—

4 (A) be an employee of the Department of
5 the Interior or the Forest Service; and

6 (B) serve a term no longer than 7 years.

7 (3) ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATION.—The Sec-
8 retary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of
9 the Forest Service, may appoint additional rep-
10 resentatives of Federal agencies to the Center, as
11 the Chief determines necessary.

12 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Center are to—

13 (1) comprehensively assess and predict fire in
14 the wildland and built environment interface through
15 data aggregation and science-based decision support
16 services;

17 (2) reduce fragmentation and duplication across
18 Federal land management agencies with respect to
19 predictive service and decision support functions re-
20 lated to wildland fire;

21 (3) promote interorganizational coordination
22 and sharing of data regarding wildland fire decision
23 making;

1 (4) streamline procurement processes and cy-
2 bersecurity systems related to addressing wildland
3 fire;

4 (5) provide publicly accessible data, models,
5 technologies, assessments, and fire weather forecasts
6 to support short- and long-term planning regarding
7 wildland fire and post-fire recovery; and

8 (6) maintain the Fireshed Registry created
9 under section 103.

10 (c) AGREEMENTS.—The Center may enter into mem-
11 orandums of understanding with State governments, Trib-
12 al governments, local governments, academic or research
13 institutions, and private entities to improve the informa-
14 tion and operations of the Center.

15 **SEC. 103. FIRESHED REGISTRY.**

16 (a) FIRESHED REGISTRY.—The Secretary of Agri-
17 culture, acting through the Director of the Fireshed Cen-
18 ter appointed under section 102, shall maintain a Fireshed
19 Registry on a publicly accessible website that provides
20 interactive geospatial data on individual firesheds, includ-
21 ing information on—

22 (1) wildfire exposure delineated by ownership,
23 including rights-of-way for utilities and other public
24 or private purposes;

1 (2) any hazardous fuels reduction treatments
2 that have occurred within an individual fireshed in
3 the past 10 years;

4 (3) wildfire exposure delineated by—

5 (A) wildfire exposure to communities, in-
6 cluding risk to structures and life;

7 (B) wildfire exposure to municipal water-
8 sheds; and

9 (C) risk of forest conversion due to wild-
10 fire;

11 (4) the percentage of the fireshed that has
12 burned in wildfires in the past 10 years, including,
13 to the extent practicable, delineations of acres that
14 have burned at a high severity;

15 (5) spatial patterns of wildfire exposure, includ-
16 ing plausible extreme fire events; and

17 (6) any hazardous fuels reduction treatments
18 planned for the fireshed, including fireshed manage-
19 ment projects under section 106 of this Act.

20 (b) COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS.—

21 The Director shall make data from the Fireshed Registry
22 available to local communities developing or updating com-
23 munity wildfire protection plans.

1 (c) REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN.—As part of the
2 website containing the Fireshed Registry, the Director
3 shall—

4 (1) publish fireshed assessments created under
5 section 105; and

6 (2) maintain a searchable database to track—

7 (A) the status of Federal environmental re-
8 views, permits, and authorizations for specific
9 fireshed management projects conducted under
10 section 106, including—

11 (i) a comprehensive permitting time-
12 table;

13 (ii) the status of the compliance of
14 each lead agency, cooperating agency, and
15 participating agency with the permitting
16 timetable;

17 (iii) any modifications of the permit-
18 ting timetable required under clause (i), in-
19 cluding an explanation as to why the per-
20 mitting timetable was modified; and

21 (iv) information about project-related
22 public meetings, public hearings, and pub-
23 lic comment periods, which shall be pre-
24 sented in English and the predominant
25 language of the community or communities

1 most affected by the project, as that infor-
2 mation becomes available;

3 (B) the projected cost of fireshed manage-
4 ment projects; and

5 (C) the effectiveness of completed fireshed
6 management projects in reducing the wildfire
7 exposure within an applicable fireshed, includ-
8 ing—

9 (i) wildfire exposure to communities,
10 including risk to structures and life;

11 (ii) wildfire exposure to municipal wa-
12 tersheds; and

13 (iii) risk of forest conversion due to
14 wildfire.

15 **SEC. 104. SHARED STEWARDSHIP.**

16 (a) JOINT AGREEMENTS.—Not later than 90 days
17 after receiving a request from a Governor of a State, the
18 Secretary concerned shall enter into a shared stewardship
19 agreement with such Governor to jointly—

20 (1) promote the reduction of wildfire exposure,
21 based on the criteria in section 101(a)(1)(B), in
22 fireshed management areas across jurisdictional
23 boundaries;

24 (2) conduct fireshed assessments under section
25 105; and

1 (3) conduct fireshed management projects
2 under section 106 in fireshed management areas.

3 (b) **ADDITIONAL FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.**—

4 With respect to a shared stewardship agreement with a
5 Governor of a State under subsection (a), the Secretary
6 concerned, if requested by such Governor, may—

7 (1) designate additional fireshed management
8 areas under such agreement; and

9 (2) update such agreement to address new wild-
10 fire threats.

11 (c) **SHARED STEWARDSHIP.**—A previously signed
12 shared stewardship agreement, or similar agreement, be-
13 tween a Governor of a State and the Secretary concerned
14 (or an update or successor agreement to such shared stew-
15 ardsHIP agreement) may be treated as an agreement under
16 subsection (a) if such Governor approves such treatment.

17 **SEC. 105. FIRESHED ASSESSMENTS.**

18 (a) **FIRESHED ASSESSMENTS.**—

19 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after
20 the date on which the Secretary concerned enters
21 into an agreement with a Governor of a State under
22 section 104, the Secretary concerned and such Gov-
23 ernor shall, with respect to the fireshed management
24 areas designated in such State, jointly conduct a
25 fireshed assessment that—

- 1 (A) identifies—
- 2 (i) using the best available data, wild-
- 3 fire exposure risks within each such
- 4 firehed management area, including sce-
- 5 nario planning and wildfire hazard map-
- 6 ping and models; and
- 7 (ii) each at-risk community within
- 8 each firehed management area;
- 9 (B) identifies potential firehed manage-
- 10 ment projects to be carried out in such firehed
- 11 management areas, giving priority—
- 12 (i) primarily, to projects with the pur-
- 13 pose of reducing—
- 14 (I) wildfire exposure to commu-
- 15 nities, including risk to structures and
- 16 life;
- 17 (II) wildfire exposure to munic-
- 18 ipal watersheds;
- 19 (III) risk of forest conversion due
- 20 to wildfire; or
- 21 (IV) any combination of purposes
- 22 described in subclauses (I) through
- 23 (III); and
- 24 (ii) secondarily, to projects with the
- 25 purpose of protecting—

1 (I) critical infrastructure, includ-
2 ing utility infrastructure;

3 (II) wildlife habitats, including
4 habitat for species listed under the
5 Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C.
6 1531 et seq.); or

7 (III) any combination of pur-
8 poses described in subclauses (I)
9 through (II);

10 (C) includes—

11 (i) a strategy for reducing the threat
12 of wildfire to at-risk communities in the
13 wildland-urban interface on both Federal
14 and non-Federal land;

15 (ii) a timeline for the implementation
16 of fireshed management projects; and

17 (iii) long-term benchmark goals for
18 the completion of fireshed management
19 projects in the highest wildfire exposure
20 areas;

21 (D) shall be regularly updated based on
22 the best available data, as determined by the
23 Secretary concerned; and

24 (E) shall be publicly available on a website
25 maintained by the Secretary concerned.

1 (2) TRIBAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICI-
2 PATION.—Upon the written request of an Indian
3 Tribe, local government, or Alaska Native Corpora-
4 tion, the Secretary concerned may allow such Indian
5 Tribe or local government to participate in pro-
6 ducing the fireshed assessment under paragraph (1)
7 for the State in which the Indian Tribe or local gov-
8 ernment is located.

9 (3) INFORMATION IMPROVEMENT.—

10 (A) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDER-
11 STANDING.—In carrying out a fireshed assess-
12 ment under this subsection, the Secretary con-
13 cerned may enter into memorandums of under-
14 standing with other Federal agencies or depart-
15 ments, States, Indian Tribes, private entities,
16 or research or educational institutions to im-
17 prove, with respect to such assessment, the use
18 and integration of—

19 (i) advanced remote sensing and
20 geospatial technologies;

21 (ii) statistical modeling and analysis;

22 or

23 (iii) any other technology or combina-
24 tion of technologies and analyses that the
25 Secretary concerned determines will benefit

1 the quality of information of such an as-
2 sessment.

3 (B) BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE.—In using
4 the best available science for the fireshed as-
5 sessments completed under subsection (a)(1),
6 the Secretary concerned and Governor shall, to
7 the maximum extent practicable, incorporate—

8 (i) traditional ecological knowledge
9 from Indian Tribes;

10 (ii) data from State forest action
11 plans and State wildfire risk assessments;

12 (iii) data from the Fireshed Registry
13 maintained under section 103; and

14 (iv) data from other Federal, State,
15 Tribal, and local governments or agencies.

16 (b) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—Fireshed assess-
17 ments conducted under this section shall not be subject
18 to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy
19 Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

20 **SEC. 106. EMERGENCY FIRESHED MANAGEMENT.**

21 (a) FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned,
23 acting through a responsible official, shall carry out
24 fireshed management projects in fireshed manage-

1 ment areas designated under section 101 in accord-
2 ance with this section.

3 (2) FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.—The
4 responsible official shall carry out the following for-
5 est management activities as fireshed management
6 projects under this section:

7 (A) Conducting hazardous fuels manage-
8 ment, including mechanical thinning, prescribed
9 burning, cultural burning, timber harvest, mas-
10 tication, and grazing.

11 (B) Creating fuel breaks and fire breaks.

12 (C) Removing hazard trees, dead trees,
13 dying trees, or trees at risk of dying, as deter-
14 mined by the responsible official.

15 (D) Developing, approving, or conducting
16 routine maintenance under a vegetation man-
17 agement, facility inspection, and operation and
18 maintenance plan submitted under section
19 512(c)(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Man-
20 agement Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(1)).

21 (E) Removing trees to address over-
22 stocking or crowding in a forest stand, con-
23 sistent with the appropriate basal area of the
24 forest stand as determined by the responsible
25 official.

1 (F) Using chemical treatments to address
2 insects and disease and control vegetation com-
3 petition or invasive species.

4 (G) Any activities recommended by the
5 state-specific firehesh assessment carried out
6 under section 105.

7 (H) Any activities recommended by an ap-
8 plicable community wildfire protection plan.

9 (I) Any combination of activities described
10 in this paragraph.

11 (3) EMERGENCY FIREHESH MANAGEMENT.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—For any firehesh man-
13 agement area designated under section 101, the
14 following shall have the force and effect of law:

15 (i) Section 220.4(b) of title 36, Code
16 of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the
17 date of enactment of this Act), with re-
18 spect to lands under the jurisdiction of the
19 Secretary.

20 (ii) Section 46.150 of title 43, Code of
21 Federal Regulations (as in effect on the
22 date of enactment of this Act), with re-
23 spect to lands under the jurisdiction of the
24 Secretary of the Interior.

1 (iii) Section 402.05 of title 50, Code
2 of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the
3 date of enactment of this Act).

4 (iv) Section 800.12 of title 36, Code
5 of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the
6 date of enactment of this Act).

7 (B) UTILIZATION OF EXISTING STREAM-
8 LINED AUTHORITIES IN FIRESHED MANAGE-
9 MENT AREAS.—

10 (i) IN GENERAL.—Fireshed manage-
11 ment projects carried out under this sec-
12 tion shall be:

13 (I) Considered an action categori-
14 cally excluded from the preparation of
15 an environmental assessment or an
16 environmental impact statement under
17 section 102 of the National Environ-
18 mental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.
19 4332) under the following authorities:

20 (aa) Section 603(a) of the
21 Healthy Forests Restoration Act
22 of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591b(a)).

23 (bb) Section 605(a) of the
24 Healthy Forests Restoration Act
25 of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591d(a)).

1 (cc) Section 606(b) of the
2 Healthy Forests Restoration Act
3 of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591e(b)).

4 (dd) Section 40806(b) of the
5 Infrastructure Investment and
6 Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b(b)).

7 (ee) Section 4(c)(4) of the
8 Lake Tahoe Restoration Act
9 (Public Law 106–506; 114 Stat.
10 2353), as amended by the Water
11 Infrastructure Improvements for
12 the Nation Act (Public Law 114–
13 322).

14 (II) Subject to the rule estab-
15 lished under section 40807(d) of the
16 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs
17 Act (16 U.S.C. 6592c(d)) by sub-
18 stituting “fireshed management
19 projects” for “authorized emergency
20 action under this section” each place
21 it appears in such subsections.

22 (ii) EXCEPTIONS.—The following pro-
23 visions shall not apply to fireshed manage-
24 ment projects that occur in a fireshed
25 management area where the Secretary con-

1 cerned and the Governor have completed a
2 freshed assessment under section 105:

3 (I) Section 603(c)(1) of the
4 Healthy Forests Restoration Act of
5 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591b(e)(1)).

6 (II) Section 605(c)(1) of the
7 Healthy Forests Restoration Act of
8 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591d(e)(1)).

9 (III) Section 606(g) of the
10 Healthy Forests Restoration Act of
11 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591e(g)).

12 (IV) Section 40806(d) of the In-
13 frastructure Investment and Jobs Act
14 (16 U.S.C. 6592b(d)).

15 (V) Section 4(c)(4)(C) of the
16 Lake Tahoe Restoration Act (Public
17 Law 106–506; 114 Stat. 2353), as
18 amended by the Water Infrastructure
19 Improvements for the Nation Act
20 (Public Law 114–322) and the re-
21 quirement for projects to be located in
22 the Lake Tahoe Basin Management
23 Unit.

24 (iii) FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT RE-
25 QUIREMENTS.—The Secretary concerned

1 shall ensure compliance with all applicable
2 laws and regulations, including the Na-
3 tional Environmental Policy Act (42
4 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the amendments
5 made to such statute by the Fiscal Respon-
6 sibility Act of 2023 (Public Law 118–5).

7 (iv) USE OF OTHER AUTHORITIES.—
8 To the maximum extent practicable, the
9 Secretary concerned shall use the authori-
10 ties provided under this section in com-
11 bination with other authorities to carry out
12 fireshed management projects, including—

13 (I) good neighbor agreements en-
14 tered into under section 8206 of the
15 Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C.
16 2113a) (as amended by this Act); and

17 (II) stewardship contracting
18 projects entered into under section
19 604 of the Healthy Forests Restora-
20 tion Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591e)
21 (as amended by this Act).

22 **SEC. 107. SUNSET.**

23 The provisions of this subtitle shall terminate on the
24 date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this
25 Act.

1 **Subtitle B—Expanding Collaborative Tools to Reduce Wildfire**
2 **Risk and Improve Forest Health**

4 **SEC. 111. MODIFICATION OF THE TREATMENT OF CERTAIN**
5 **REVENUE AND PAYMENTS UNDER GOOD**
6 **NEIGHBOR AGREEMENTS.**

7 (a) GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY.—Section 8206 of
8 the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) is amend-
9 ed—

10 (1) in subsection (a)(6), by striking “or Indian
11 tribe”; and

12 (2) in subsection (b)—

13 (A) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “,
14 Indian tribe,” after “Governor”;

15 (B) in paragraph (2)(C)—

16 (i) by striking clause (i) and inserting
17 the following:

18 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Funds received
19 from the sale of timber or forest product
20 by a Governor, an Indian tribe, or a county
21 under a good neighbor agreement shall be
22 retained and used by the Governor, Indian
23 tribe, or county, as applicable—

1 “(I) to carry out authorized res-
2 toration services under the good
3 neighbor agreement; and

4 “(II) if there are funds remain-
5 ing after carrying out subclause (I),
6 to carry out authorized restoration
7 services under other good neighbor
8 agreements and for the administration
9 of a good neighbor authority program
10 by a Governor, Indian tribe, or coun-
11 ty.”; and

12 (ii) in clause (ii), by striking “2024”
13 and inserting “2029”;

14 (C) in paragraph (3), by inserting “, In-
15 dian tribe,” after “Governor”; and

16 (D) by striking paragraph (4).

17 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 8206(a)
18 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a(a)) is
19 amended—

20 (1) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting “, Indian
21 tribe,” after “Governor”; and

22 (2) in paragraph (5), by inserting “, Indian
23 tribe,” after “Governor”.

24 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
25 this section apply to any project initiated pursuant to a

1 good neighbor agreement (as defined in section 8206(a)
2 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a(a))—

3 (1) before the date of enactment of this Act, if
4 the project was initiated after the date of enactment
5 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public
6 Law 115–334; 132 Stat. 4490); or

7 (2) on or after the date of enactment of this
8 Act.

9 **SEC. 112. FIXING STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CON-**
10 **TRACTING.**

11 Section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act
12 of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) is amended—

13 (1) in subsection (b), by inserting “, including
14 retaining and expanding existing forest products in-
15 frastructure” before the period at the end;

16 (2) in subsection (d)(3)(B), by striking “10
17 years” and inserting “20 years”; and

18 (3) in subsection (h), by adding at the end the
19 following:

20 “(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR LONG-TERM STEWARD-
21 SHIP CONTRACTS.—

22 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A long-term agree-
23 ment or contract entered into with an entity
24 under subsection (b) by the Chief or the Direc-
25 tor shall provide that in the case of the can-

1 cellation or termination by the Chief or the Di-
2 rector of such long-term agreement or contract,
3 the Chief or the Director, as applicable, shall
4 provide 10 percent of the agreement or contract
5 amount to such entity as cancellation or termi-
6 nation costs.

7 “(B) DEFINITION OF LONG-TERM AGREE-
8 MENT OR CONTRACT.—In this paragraph, the
9 term ‘long-term agreement or contract’ means
10 an agreement or contract under subsection
11 (b)—

12 “(i) with a term of more than 5 years;
13 and
14 “(ii) entered into on or after the date
15 of the enactment of this paragraph.”.

16 **SEC. 113. INTRA-AGENCY STRIKE TEAMS.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretaries shall each es-
18 tablish intra-agency strike teams to assist the Secretary
19 concerned with—

20 (1) any reviews, including analysis under the
21 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42
22 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), consultations under the Na-
23 tional Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C.
24 470 et seq.), and consultations under the Endan-
25 gered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.),

1 with the intent to accelerate and streamline inter-
2 agency consultation processes;

3 (2) the implementation of any necessary site
4 preparation work in advance of or as part of a
5 fireshed management project;

6 (3) the implementation of fireshed management
7 projects under this Act; and

8 (4) any combination of purposes under para-
9 graphs (1) through (3).

10 (b) MEMBERS.—The Secretaries may appoint no
11 more than 10 individuals each to serve on an intra-agency
12 strike team comprised of—

13 (1) employees of Department under the juris-
14 diction of the Secretary concerned;

15 (2) employees of a different Federal agency,
16 with the consent of that agency's Secretary;

17 (3) private contractors from any nonprofit orga-
18 nization, State government, Tribal Government,
19 local government, quasi-governmental agency, aca-
20 demic institution, or private organization; and

21 (4) volunteers from any nonprofit organization,
22 State government, Tribal Government, local govern-
23 ment, quasi-governmental agency, academic institu-
24 tion, or private organization.

1 (c) SUNSET.—The authority provided under this sec-
2 tion shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the
3 date of enactment of this Act.

4 **SEC. 114. LOCALLY-LED RESTORATION.**

5 (a) THRESHOLD ADJUSTMENT.—Section 14(d) of the
6 National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C.
7 472a(d)) is amended by—

8 (1) striking “\$10,000” and inserting
9 “\$55,000”; and

10 (2) by adding at the end the following: “Begin-
11 ning on January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter,
12 the amount in the first sentence of this subsection
13 shall be adjusted by the Secretary for changes in the
14 Consumer Price Index of All Urban Consumers pub-
15 lished by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the De-
16 partment of Labor.”.

17 (b) FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.—Begin-
18 ning on the date that is 30 days after the date of enact-
19 ment of this Act, the Secretary shall solicit bids under sec-
20 tion 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976
21 (16 U.S.C. 472a(d)) for fireshed management projects
22 under section 106 of this Act.

1 **Subtitle C—Addressing Frivolous**
2 **Litigation**

3 **SEC. 121. COMMONSENSE LITIGATION REFORM.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—A court shall not enjoin a fireshed
5 management project under this Act if the court determines
6 that the plaintiff is unable to demonstrate that the claim
7 of the plaintiff is likely to succeed on the merits.

8 (b) BALANCING SHORT- AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS
9 OF FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES IN CONSIDERING
10 INJUNCTIVE RELIEF.—As part of its weighing the equities
11 while considering any request for an injunction that ap-
12 plies to any agency action as part of a fireshed manage-
13 ment project under this Act, the court reviewing the agen-
14 cy action shall balance the impact to the ecosystem likely
15 affected by the fireshed management project of—

16 (1) the short- and long-term effects of under-
17 taking the agency action; against

18 (2) the short- and long-term effects of not un-
19 dertaking the action.

20 (c) TIME LIMITATIONS FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
22 the length of any preliminary injunctive relief and
23 stays pending appeal that applies to any agency ac-
24 tion as part of a fireshed management project under
25 this Act shall not exceed 30 days.

1 (2) RENEWAL.—

2 (A) IN GENERAL.—A court of competent
3 jurisdiction may issue one or more renewals of
4 any preliminary injunction, or stay pending ap-
5 peal, granted under paragraph (1).

6 (B) UPDATES.—In each renewal of an in-
7 junction in an action, the parties to the action
8 shall present the court with updated informa-
9 tion on the status of the fireshed management
10 project.

11 (d) LIMITATIONS ON CLAIMS.—Notwithstanding any
12 other provision of law, a claim arising under Federal law
13 seeking judicial review of a fireshed management project
14 shall be barred unless—

15 (1) such claim is filed not later than 120 days
16 after the date of publication of a notice in the Fed-
17 eral Register of agency intent to carry out the pro-
18 posed agency action;

19 (2) such claim is filed after the issuance of a
20 record of decision or other final agency action with
21 respect to the relevant proposed agency action; and

22 (3) such claim does not challenge the use of a
23 categorical exclusion under this section.

1 **SEC. 122. CONSULTATION ON FOREST PLANS.**

2 (a) FOREST SERVICE PLANS.—Section 6(d)(2) of the
3 Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act
4 of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(d)(2)) is amended to read as
5 follows:

6 “(2) NO ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION RE-
7 QUIRED UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.—Not-
8 withstanding any other provision of law, the Sec-
9 retary shall not be required to reinitiate consultation
10 under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act
11 of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)) or section 402.16 of
12 title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor
13 regulation), on a land management plan approved,
14 amended, or revised under this section when—

15 “(A) a new species is listed or critical habi-
16 tat is designated under the Endangered Species
17 Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

18 “(B) new information reveals effects of the
19 land management plan that may affect a spe-
20 cies listed or critical habitat designated under
21 that Act in a manner or to an extent not pre-
22 viously considered.”.

23 (b) BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS.—Sec-
24 tion 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act
25 of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712) is amended by adding at the
26 end the following:

1 “(g) NO ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION REQUIRED
2 UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding
3 any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not be re-
4 quired to reinitiate consultation under section 7(a)(2) of
5 the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C.
6 1536(a)(2)) or section 402.16 of title 50, Code of Federal
7 Regulations (or a successor regulation), on a land use plan
8 approved, amended, or revised under this section when—

9 “(1) a new species is listed or critical habitat
10 is designated under the Endangered Species Act of
11 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

12 “(2) new information reveals effects of the land
13 use plan that may affect a species listed or critical
14 habitat designated under that Act in a manner or to
15 an extent not previously considered.”.

16 **SEC. 123. ARBITRATION PILOT PROGRAM.**

17 (a) DISCRETIONARY ARBITRATION PROCESS PILOT
18 PROGRAM.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agri-
20 culture, with respect to National Forest System
21 lands, and the Secretary of the Interior, with respect
22 to public lands, shall each establish a discretionary
23 arbitration pilot program as an alternative dispute
24 resolution process for the activities described in
25 paragraph (2). Such arbitration pilot program shall

1 take place in lieu of judicial review for the activities
2 described in paragraph (2).

3 (2) ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED.—The Secretary
4 concerned, at the sole discretion of the Secretary,
5 may designate objections or protests to forest man-
6 agement activities under this Act for arbitration
7 under the arbitration pilot program established
8 under paragraph (1).

9 (3) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF ARBITRATIONS.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—Under the arbitration
11 pilot program, the Secretary concerned may not
12 arbitrate more than 15 objections or protests to
13 forest management activities under this Act in
14 a fiscal year in—

15 (i) each Forest Service Region; and

16 (ii) each State Region of the Bureau
17 of Land Management.

18 (B) NOT SUBJECT TO JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

19 A determination made by the Secretary con-
20 cerned that an objection or protest to a forest
21 management activity under this Act is an activ-
22 ity described under paragraph (2) shall not be
23 subject to judicial review.

24 (4) DETERMINING AMOUNT OF ARBITRA-
25 TIONS.—An objection or protest to a forest manage-

1 ment activity under this Act shall not be counted to-
2 wards the limitation on number of arbitrations
3 under paragraph (3) unless—

4 (A) on the date such objection or protest
5 is designated for arbitration, the forest manage-
6 ment activity for which such objection or pro-
7 test is filed has not been the subject of arbitra-
8 tion proceedings under the pilot program; and

9 (B) the arbitration proceeding has com-
10 menced with respect to such objection or pro-
11 test.

12 (5) TERMINATION.—

13 (A) IN GENERAL.—The pilot programs es-
14 tablished pursuant to paragraph (1) shall ter-
15 minate on the date that is 7 years after the
16 date of the enactment of this Act.

17 (B) ACTIVITY IN ARBITRATION.—An objec-
18 tion or protest to a forest management activity
19 under this Act that has commenced but has not
20 completed arbitration on the date of termi-
21 nation under subparagraph (A) shall continue
22 until such arbitration is completed.

23 (b) INTERVENING PARTIES.—

24 (1) REQUIREMENTS.—Any person that sub-
25 mitted a public comment on a forest management

1 activity under this Act that is subject to arbitration
2 may intervene in the arbitration—

3 (A) by endorsing—

4 (i) the forest management activity; or

5 (ii) the modification proposal sub-
6 mitted under subparagraph (B); or

7 (B) by submitting a proposal to further
8 modify the forest management activity.

9 (2) DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION.—With respect
10 to an objection or protest that is designated for arbi-
11 tration under this subsection (a), a request to inter-
12 vene in an arbitration must be submitted not later
13 than the date that is 30 days after the date on
14 which such objection or protest was designated for
15 arbitration.

16 (3) MULTIPLE PARTIES.—Multiple intervening
17 parties may submit a joint proposal so long as each
18 intervening party meets the eligibility requirements
19 of paragraph (1).

20 (c) APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRATOR.—

21 (1) APPOINTMENT.—The Secretary of Agri-
22 culture and the Secretary of the Interior shall jointly
23 develop and publish a list of not fewer than 20 indi-
24 viduals eligible to serve as arbitrators for the pilot
25 programs under this section.

1 (2) QUALIFICATIONS.—In order to be eligible to
2 serve as an arbitrator under this subsection, an indi-
3 vidual shall, on the date of the appointment of such
4 arbitrator—

5 (A) be certified by the American Arbitra-
6 tion Association; and

7 (B) not be a registered lobbyist.

8 (3) SELECTION OF ARBITRATOR.—

9 (A) IN GENERAL.—For each arbitration
10 commenced under this section, the Secretary
11 concerned and each applicable objector or
12 protestor shall agree, not later than 14 days
13 after the agreement process is initiated, on a
14 mutually acceptable arbitrator from the list
15 published under this subsection.

16 (B) APPOINTMENT AFTER 14 DAYS.—In
17 the case of an agreement with respect to a mu-
18 tually acceptable arbitrator not being reached
19 within the 14-day limit described in subpara-
20 graph (A), the Secretary concerned shall ap-
21 point an arbitrator from the list published
22 under this subsection.

23 (d) SELECTION OF PROPOSALS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—The arbitrator appointed
25 under subsection (c)—

1 (A) may not modify any of the proposals
2 submitted with the objection, protest, or request
3 to intervene; and

4 (B) shall select to be conducted—

5 (i) the forest management activity, as
6 approved by the Secretary; or

7 (ii) a proposal submitted by an objec-
8 tor or an intervening party.

9 (2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—An arbitrator shall,
10 when selecting a proposal, consider—

11 (A) whether the proposal is consistent with
12 the applicable forest plan, laws, and regula-
13 tions;

14 (B) whether the proposal can be carried
15 out by the Secretary concerned; and

16 (C) the effect of each proposal on—

17 (i) forest health;

18 (ii) potential losses of life and prop-
19 erty;

20 (iii) habitat diversity;

21 (iv) wildfire potential;

22 (v) insect and disease potential;

23 (vi) timber production; and

24 (vii) the implications of a resulting de-
25 cline in forest health, loss of habitat diver-

1 sity, wildfire, or insect or disease infesta-
2 tion, given fire and insect and disease his-
3 toric cycles, on—

4 (I) potential losses of life and
5 property;

6 (II) domestic water costs;

7 (III) wildlife habitat loss; and

8 (IV) other economic and social
9 factors.

10 (e) EFFECT OF DECISION.—The decision of an arbi-
11 trator with respect to a forest management activity under
12 this Act shall—

13 (1) not be considered a major Federal action;

14 (2) be binding; and

15 (3) not be subject to judicial review, except as
16 provided in section 10(a) of title 9, United States
17 Code.

18 (f) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.—Not later than 90
19 days after the date on which the arbitration is filed with
20 respect to a forest management activity under this Act,
21 the arbitration process shall be completed.

1 **TITLE II—PROTECTING COMMU-**
2 **NITIES IN THE WILDLAND-**
3 **URBAN INTERFACE**

4 **SEC. 201. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION PRO-**
5 **GRAM.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days after
7 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
8 the Interior shall establish an interagency program to be
9 known as the “Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Pro-
10 gram” that shall consist of members from each of the fol-
11 lowing:

12 (1) The Office of Wildland Fire of the Depart-
13 ment of the Interior.

14 (2) The National Park Service.

15 (3) The Bureau of Land Management.

16 (4) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

17 (5) The Forest Service.

18 (6) The Federal Emergency Management Agen-
19 cy.

20 (7) The United States Fire Administration.

21 (8) The National Institute of Standards and
22 Technology.

23 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the interagency pro-
24 gram established under subsection (a) is to support inter-

1 agency coordination in reducing the risk of wildfires to
2 communities in the wildland-urban interface through—

3 (1) advancing research and science in wildfire
4 resilience and land management;

5 (2) supporting local adoption of fire-resistant
6 building methods, codes, and standards;

7 (3) supporting local efforts to address the ef-
8 fects of wildland fire on communities, including
9 property damages, air quality, and water quality;

10 (4) encouraging public-private partnerships to
11 reduce hazardous fuels in the wildland-urban inter-
12 face on Federal and non-Federal land; and

13 (5) providing technical and financial assistance
14 to communities through streamlined and unified
15 mechanisms.

16 (c) STREAMLINING GRANT PROGRAMS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—As part of the program es-
18 tablished under subsection (a), the Secretaries and
19 the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Man-
20 agement Agency shall seek to create a single, uni-
21 form application and portal for local communities
22 seeking to apply for Federal financial assistance or
23 technical assistance programs targeted at reducing
24 fire risk to communities, including, but not limited
25 to—

1 (A) community wildfire defense grants ad-
2 ministered by the Secretary of Agriculture; and

3 (B) grants administered by the Adminis-
4 trator, including—

5 (i) emergency management perform-
6 ance grants;

7 (ii) assistance to firefighters grant
8 program;

9 (iii) adequate fire and emergency re-
10 sponse grants; and

11 (iv) hazard mitigation assistance
12 grants, including the Building Resilient In-
13 frastructure and Communities program.

14 (2) SIMPLIFICATIONS.—In creating the portal
15 under paragraph (1), the Secretaries and the Ad-
16 ministrator shall seek to reduce the complexity and
17 length of the application process.

18 (3) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of
19 the Interior shall provide technical assistance to
20 communities looking to apply for financial assistance
21 under the streamlined application and portal created
22 under paragraph (1).

23 (d) SUNSET.—The program created under this sec-
24 tion shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the
25 date of enactment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 202. SUPPRESSION OF WILDFIRES.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to covered National
3 Forest System lands, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting
4 through the Chief of the Forest Service—

5 (1) shall—

6 (A) use all available resources to carry out
7 wildfire suppression with the purpose of extin-
8 guishing wildfires detected on such lands not
9 later than 24 hours after such a wildfire is de-
10 tected;

11 (B) carry out wildfire suppression under
12 subparagraph (A) in a manner that is con-
13 sistent with interagency agreements and appli-
14 cable standards of firefighter safety; and

15 (C) immediately suppress any prescribed
16 fire that exceeds prescription;

17 (2) shall not inhibit the suppression efforts of
18 State or local firefighting agencies that are author-
19 ized to respond to wildfire on such lands;

20 (3) may only use fire as a resource manage-
21 ment tool if the fire is a prescribed fire that com-
22 plies with applicable law and regulations;

23 (4) may only initiate a backfire or burnout dur-
24 ing a wildfire—

25 (A) by order of the responsible incident
26 commander; or

1 (B) in instances that are necessary to pro-
2 tect the health and safety of firefighting per-
3 sonnel; and

4 (5) shall use all available resources to control
5 any such initiated backfire or burnout until extin-
6 guished;

7 (6) shall use all available resources, including
8 infrared technologies, to ensure prescribed burns are
9 extinguished; and

10 (7) shall update the prescribed burn policies of
11 the Forest Service to reflect the findings and rec-
12 ommendations included in the report entitled “Na-
13 tional Prescribed Fire Program Review” published
14 in September 2022 by the Forest Service.

15 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 (1) COVERED NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM
17 LANDS.—The term “covered National Forest System
18 lands” means—

19 (A) during any period for which the Na-
20 tional Multi-Agency Coordination Group of the
21 National Interagency Fire Center has estab-
22 lished a National Wildland Fire Preparedness
23 level of 5, all National Forest System lands; or

24 (B) any area located in National Forest
25 System lands that—

1 (i) the U.S. Drought Monitor has
2 rated as having a D2 (severe drought) in-
3 tensity, D3 (extreme drought) intensity, or
4 D4 (exceptional drought) intensity; or

5 (ii) the Forest Service has identified
6 as being located in a fireshed ranked in the
7 top 10 percent of wildfire exposure (as de-
8 termined using the most recently published
9 Fireshed Registry).

10 (2) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term
11 “National Forest System” has the meaning given
12 that term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Range-
13 land Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16
14 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

15 **SEC. 203. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE RESEARCH PRO-**
16 **GRAM.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries, acting jointly,
18 shall expand the Joint Fire Science Program to include
19 a joint performance-driven research and development pro-
20 gram known as the “Community Wildfire Defense Re-
21 search Program” for the purpose of testing and advancing
22 innovative designs to create or improve the wildfire-resist-
23 ance of structures and communities.

24 (b) PROGRAM PRIORITIES.—The research carried out
25 under the Community Wildfire Defense Research Program

1 shall evaluate opportunities to create wildfire-resistant
2 structures and communities through—

3 (1) different affordable building materials, in-
4 cluding mass timber;

5 (2) home hardening;

6 (3) subdivision design and other land use plan-
7 ning and design;

8 (4) landscape architecture; and

9 (5) other wildfire-resistant designs for struc-
10 tures or communities, as determined by the Sec-
11 retary.

12 (c) COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE INNOVATION
13 PRIZE.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this section,
15 the Secretaries shall carry out a competition for in-
16 novative designs in the creation or improvement of
17 ignition-resistant structures and fire-adapted com-
18 munities, in accordance with subsection (b).

19 (2) PRIZE.—Subject to availability of appro-
20 priations made in advance for such purpose, the Sec-
21 retaries may award a prize for the competition under
22 paragraph (1).

23 (3) SCALE.—In awarding a prize under para-
24 graph (1), the Secretaries shall prioritize designs

1 with the most potential to scale to existing infra-
2 structure.

3 (d) SUNSET.—The program expanded under this sec-
4 tion shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the
5 date of enactment of this Act.

6 **SEC. 204. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT, FACILITY INSPEC-**
7 **TION, AND OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**
8 **RELATING TO ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION AND**
9 **DISTRIBUTION FACILITY RIGHTS-OF-WAY.**

10 (a) HAZARD TREES WITHIN 50 FEET OF ELECTRIC
11 POWER LINE.—Section 512(a)(1)(B)(ii) of the Federal
12 Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C.
13 1772(a)(1)(B)(ii)) is amended by striking “10” and in-
14 serting “50”.

15 (b) CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE LANDOWNERS.—
16 Section 512(c)(3)(E) of the Federal Land Policy and
17 Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(3)(E)) is
18 amended—

19 (1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

20 (2) in clause (ii), by striking the period and in-
21 serting “; and”; and

22 (3) by adding at the end the following:

23 “(iii) consulting with private land-
24 owners with respect to any hazard trees

1 identified for removal from land owned by
2 such private landowners.”.

3 (c) REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS.—Clause (iv)
4 of section 512(c)(4)(A) of the Federal Land Policy and
5 Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(4)(A)) is
6 amended to read as follows:

7 “(iv) ensures that—

8 “(I) a plan submitted without a
9 modification under clause (iii) shall be
10 automatically approved 60 days after
11 review; and

12 “(II) a plan submitted with a
13 modification under clause (iii) shall be
14 automatically approved 67 days after
15 review.”.

16 **SEC. 205. CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR ELECTRIC UTIL-**
17 **ITY LINES RIGHTS-OF-WAY.**

18 (a) CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ESTABLISHED.—For-
19 est management activities described in subsection (b) are
20 a category of activities designated as being categorically
21 excluded from the preparation of an environmental assess-
22 ment or an environmental impact statement under section
23 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42
24 U.S.C. 4332).

1 (b) FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES DESIGNATED
2 FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.—The forest management
3 activities designated as being categorically excluded under
4 subsection (a) are—

5 (1) the development and approval of a vegeta-
6 tion management, facility inspection, and operation
7 and maintenance plan submitted under section
8 512(c)(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Manage-
9 ment Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(1)) by the
10 Secretary concerned; and

11 (2) the implementation of routine activities con-
12 ducted under the plan referred to in paragraph (1).

13 (c) AVAILABILITY OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.—
14 On and after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
15 Secretary concerned may use the categorical exclusion es-
16 tablished under subsection (a) in accordance with this sec-
17 tion.

18 (d) EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN AREAS.—The categor-
19 ical exclusion established under subsection (a) shall not
20 apply to any forest management activity conducted—

21 (1) in a component of the National Wilderness
22 Preservation System; or

23 (2) on National Forest System lands on which,
24 by Act of Congress, the removal of vegetation is re-
25 stricted or prohibited.

1 (e) PERMANENT ROADS.—

2 (1) PROHIBITION ON ESTABLISHMENT.—A for-
3 est management activity designated under subsection
4 (b) shall not include the establishment of a perma-
5 nent road.

6 (2) EXISTING ROADS.—The Secretary con-
7 cerned may carry out necessary maintenance and re-
8 pair on an existing permanent road for the purposes
9 of conducting a forest management activity des-
10 igned under subsection (b).

11 (3) TEMPORARY ROADS.—The Secretary con-
12 cerned shall decommission any temporary road con-
13 structed for a forest management activity designated
14 under subsection (c) not later than 3 years after the
15 date on which the action is completed.

16 (f) APPLICABLE LAWS.—A forest management activ-
17 ity designated under subsection (b) shall not be subject
18 to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16
19 U.S.C. 1536), section 106 of the National Historic Preser-
20 vation Act, or any other applicable law.

21 **SEC. 206. SEEDS OF SUCCESS.**

22 Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment
23 of this Act, the Secretaries and the Secretary of Defense
24 shall jointly—

1 (1) develop and implement a strategy, to be
2 known as the Seeds of Success strategy, to enhance
3 the domestic supply chain of seeds that—

4 (A) facilitates sustained interagency co-
5 ordination and a comprehensive approach to na-
6 tive plant materials development and restora-
7 tion;

8 (B) promotes the re-seeding of native or
9 fire-resistant grasses post-wildfire, particularly
10 in the wildland-urban interface;

11 (C) creates information on native or fire-
12 resistant grasses that can be shared with State,
13 Tribal, and local governments;

14 (D) builds regional programs and partner-
15 ships to promote native plant materials develop-
16 ment and native plant restoration, giving pri-
17 ority to regions of the Bureau of Land Manage-
18 ment where such partnerships and programs do
19 not already exist;

20 (E) expands seed storage and seed-clean-
21 ing infrastructure;

22 (F) expands the Bureau of Land Manage-
23 ment's Seed Warehouse System, particularly
24 it's cold storage capacity; and

1 (G) shortens the timeline for the approval
2 of permits to collect seeds on public lands man-
3 aged by the Bureau of Land Management; and
4 (2) submit the strategy developed and imple-
5 mented under paragraph (1) to the relevant Con-
6 gressional committees once such strategy is final-
7 ized.

8 **TITLE III—TRANSPARENCY AND**
9 **TECHNOLOGY**

10 **SEC. 301. BIOCHAR INNOVATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES**
11 **FOR CONSERVATION, HEALTH, AND AD-**
12 **VANCEMENTS IN RESEARCH.**

13 (a) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—

14 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

15 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years
16 after the date of the enactment of this section,
17 the Secretaries shall establish a program to
18 enter into partnerships with eligible entities to
19 carry out demonstration projects to support the
20 development and commercialization of biochar
21 in accordance with this subsection.

22 (B) LOCATION OF DEMONSTRATION
23 PROJECTS.—The Secretaries shall, to the max-
24 imum extent practicable, establish at least one
25 biochar demonstration project in each Forest

1 Service region and each Bureau of Land Man-
2 agement region.

3 (2) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to enter into a
4 partnership to carry out a biochar demonstration
5 project under paragraph (1)(A), an eligible entity
6 shall submit to the Secretaries a proposal at such
7 time, in such manner, and containing such informa-
8 tion as the Secretaries may require.

9 (3) PRIORITY.—In selecting proposals under
10 paragraph (2), the Secretaries shall give priority to
11 partnering with eligible entities that submit pro-
12 posals to carry out biochar demonstration projects
13 that—

14 (A) have the most carbon sequestration po-
15 tential;

16 (B) will create new jobs and contribute to
17 local economies, particularly in rural areas;

18 (C) will demonstrate—

19 (i) new and innovative uses of biochar;

20 (ii) viable markets for cost effective
21 biochar-based products;

22 (iii) the ecosystem services of biochar;

23 (iv) the benefits of biochar to restore
24 forest heath and resiliency, including for
25 forest soils and watersheds; or

1 (v) any combination of purposes speci-
2 fied in clauses (i) through (iv);

3 (D) are located in local markets that have
4 the greatest need for the biochar production
5 units due to—

6 (i) nearby lands identified as having
7 high or very high or extreme risk of wild-
8 fire;

9 (ii) availability of sufficient quantities
10 of feedstocks; or

11 (iii) a high level of demand for
12 biochar or other commercial byproducts of
13 biochar; or

14 (E) any combination of purposes specified
15 in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

16 (4) USE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out the pro-
17 gram established under paragraph (1)(A), the Secre-
18 taries may enter into partnerships and provide fund-
19 ing to carry out demonstration projects that—

20 (A) acquire and test various feedstocks and
21 their efficacy;

22 (B) develop and optimize commercially and
23 technologically viable biochar production units,
24 including mobile and permanent units;

1 (C) demonstrate the production of biochar
2 from forest residues and the use of biochar to
3 restore forest health and resiliency;

4 (D) build, expand, or establish biochar fa-
5 cilities;

6 (E) conduct research on new and innova-
7 tive uses of biochar or demonstrate cost-effec-
8 tive market opportunities for biochar and
9 biochar-based products;

10 (F) carry out any other activities the Sec-
11 retaries determine appropriate; or

12 (G) any combination of the purposes speci-
13 fied in subparagraphs (A) through (F).

14 (5) FEEDSTOCK REQUIREMENTS.—To the max-
15 imum extent practicable, a biochar demonstration
16 project under this subsection shall, with respect to
17 the feedstock used under such project, derive at
18 least 50 percent of such feedstock from forest
19 thinning and management activities, including mill
20 residues, conducted on National Forest System
21 lands or public lands.

22 (6) REVIEW OF BIOCHAR DEMONSTRATION.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall
24 conduct regionally specific research, including
25 economic analyses and life-cycle assessments, on

- 1 the biochar produced from the demonstration
2 projects under this subsection, including—
- 3 (i) the effects of such biochar on—
- 4 (I) forest health and resiliency;
- 5 (II) carbon capture and seques-
6 tration, including increasing soil car-
7 bon in the short-term and long-term;
- 8 (III) productivity, reduced input
9 costs, and water retention in agricul-
10 tural practices;
- 11 (IV) soil and grassland health for
12 grazing activities, including grazing
13 activities on National Forest System
14 land and public land;
- 15 (V) environmental remediation
16 activities, including abandoned mine
17 land remediation; and
- 18 (VI) other ecosystem services of
19 biochar;
- 20 (ii) the efficacy of biochar as a co-
21 product of biofuels or in biochemicals; and
- 22 (iii) whether biochar can effectively be
23 used to produce any other technologically
24 and commercially viable outcome.

1 (B) COORDINATION.—The Secretaries
2 shall, to the maximum extent practicable, pro-
3 vide data, analysis, and other relevant informa-
4 tion collected under subparagraph (A) to eligi-
5 ble institutions conducting research and devel-
6 opment activities on biochar pursuant to receiv-
7 ing a grant under subsection (b).

8 (7) LIMITATION ON FUNDING FOR ESTAB-
9 LISHING BIOCHAR FACILITIES.—In the case of an el-
10 igible entity that enters into a partnership to carry
11 out a biochar demonstration project under this sub-
12 section and seeks to establish a biochar facility
13 under such demonstration project, the Secretaries
14 may not provide funding to such eligible entity in an
15 amount greater than 35 percent of the capital cost
16 of establishing such biochar facility.

17 (b) BIOCHAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT
18 PROGRAM.—

19 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the In-
20 terior shall establish or expand an existing applied
21 biochar research and development grant program to
22 make competitive grants to eligible institutions to
23 carry out the activities described in paragraph (3).

24 (2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a
25 grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall

1 submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in
2 such manner, and containing such information as
3 the Secretary may require.

4 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution
5 that receives a grant under this subsection shall use
6 the grant funds to conduct applied research on—

7 (A) the effect of biochar on forest health
8 and resiliency, accounting for variations in
9 biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

10 (B) the effect of biochar on soil health and
11 water retention, accounting for variations in
12 biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

13 (C) the long-term carbon sequestration po-
14 tential of biochar;

15 (D) the best management practices of
16 biochar and biochar based-products to—

17 (i) maximize carbon sequestration
18 benefits; and

19 (ii) maximize the commercial viability
20 and application of such products in for-
21 estry, agriculture, environmental remedi-
22 ation, water quality improvement, and
23 other uses;

24 (E) the regional uses of biochar to increase
25 productivity and profitability, including—

1 (i) uses in agriculture and environ-
2 mental remediation; and

3 (ii) use as a co-product in fuel produc-
4 tion;

5 (F) new and innovative uses from biochar
6 byproducts; and

7 (G) opportunities to expand markets for
8 biochar and create jobs, particularly in rural
9 areas.

10 (c) REPORTS.—

11 (1) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2
12 years after the date of the enactment of this section,
13 the Secretaries shall submit a report to Congress
14 that—

15 (A) includes policy and program rec-
16 ommendations to improve the widespread use of
17 biochar;

18 (B) identifies the areas of research needed
19 to advance biochar commercialization; and

20 (C) identifies barriers to further biochar
21 commercialization, including permitting and
22 siting considerations.

23 (2) PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL BUDGET REQUEST.—
24 Beginning 2 years after the date of the enactment
25 of this section and annually until the date described

1 in subsection (d), the Secretaries shall include in the
2 budget materials submitted to Congress in support
3 of the President’s annual budget request (submitted
4 to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31,
5 United States Code) for each fiscal year a report on
6 the status of the demonstration projects carried out
7 under subsection (a) and the research and develop-
8 ment grants carried out under subsection (b).

9 (d) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out this section
10 shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date
11 of the enactment of this section.

12 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13 (1) BIOCHAR.—The term “biochar” means car-
14 bonized biomass produced by converting feedstock
15 through reductive thermal processing for non-fuel
16 uses.

17 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
18 ty” means—

19 (A) State, local, and Tribal governments;

20 (B) eligible institutions; and

21 (C) private, non-private, or cooperative en-
22 tities.

23 (3) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligi-
24 ble institution” means land-grant colleges and uni-

1 versities, including institutions eligible for funding
2 under the—

3 (A) Act of July 2, 1862;

4 (B) Act of August 30, 1890, including
5 Tuskegee University;

6 (C) Public Law 87–788 (commonly known
7 as the “McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962”); or

8 (D) Equity in Educational Land-Grant
9 Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note).

10 (4) FEEDSTOCK.—The term “feedstock” means
11 excess biomass in the form of plant matter or mate-
12 rials that serves as the raw material for the produc-
13 tion of biochar.

14 (5) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
15 means—

16 (A) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting
17 through the Chief of the Forest Service;

18 (B) the Secretary of the Interior, acting
19 through the Director of the Bureau of Land
20 Management; and

21 (B) the Secretary of Energy, acting
22 through the Director of the Office of Science.

1 **SEC. 302. ACCURATE HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION RE-**
2 **PORTS.**

3 (a) INCLUSION OF HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION
4 REPORT IN MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF THE
5 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning with the first fis-
7 cal year that begins after the date of the enactment
8 of this Act, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Sec-
9 retary concerned shall include in the materials sub-
10 mitted in support of the President's budget pursuant
11 to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, a re-
12 port on the number of acres of Federal land on
13 which the Secretary concerned carried out hazardous
14 fuels reduction activities during the preceding fiscal
15 year.

16 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of the re-
17 port required under paragraph (1), the Secretary
18 concerned shall—

19 (A) in determining the number of acres of
20 Federal land on which the Secretary concerned
21 carried out hazardous fuels reduction activities
22 during the period covered by the report—

23 (i) record acres of Federal land on
24 which hazardous fuels reduction activities
25 were completed during such period; and

1 (ii) record each acre described in
2 clause (i) once in the report, regardless of
3 whether multiple hazardous fuels reduction
4 activities were carried out on such acre
5 during such period; and

6 (B) with respect to the acres of Federal
7 land recorded in the report, include information
8 on—

9 (i) which such acres are located in the
10 wildland-urban interface;

11 (ii) the level of wildfire risk (high,
12 moderate, or low) on the first and last day
13 of the period covered by the report;

14 (iii) the types of hazardous fuels ac-
15 tivities completed for such acres, delin-
16 eating between whether such activities
17 were conducted—

18 (I) in a wildfire managed for re-
19 source benefits; or

20 (II) through a planned project;

21 (iv) the cost per acre of hazardous
22 fuels activities carried out during the pe-
23 riod covered by the report;

24 (v) the region or system unit in which
25 the acres are located; and

1 (vi) the effectiveness of the hazardous
2 fuels reduction activities on reducing the
3 risk of wildfire.

4 (3) TRANSPARENCY.—The Secretary concerned
5 shall make each report submitted under paragraph
6 (1) publicly available on the website of the Depart-
7 ment of Agriculture and the Department of the Inte-
8 rior, as applicable.

9 (b) ACCURATE DATA COLLECTION.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
11 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
12 concerned shall implement standardized procedures
13 for tracking data related to hazardous fuels reduc-
14 tion activities carried out by the Secretary con-
15 cerned.

16 (2) ELEMENTS.—The standardized procedures
17 required under paragraph (1) shall include—

18 (A) regular, standardized data reviews of
19 the accuracy and timely input of data used to
20 track hazardous fuels reduction activities;

21 (B) verification methods that validate
22 whether such data accurately correlates to the
23 hazardous fuels reduction activities carried out
24 by the Secretary concerned;

1 (C) an analysis of the short- and long-term
2 effectiveness of the hazardous fuels reduction
3 activities on reducing the risk of wildfire; and

4 (D) for hazardous fuels reduction activities
5 that occur partially within the wildland-urban
6 interface, methods to distinguish which acres
7 are located within the wildland-urban interface
8 and which acres are located outside the
9 wildland-urban interface.

10 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 2 weeks after im-
11 plementing the standardized procedures required
12 under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall
13 submit to Congress a report that describes—

14 (A) such standardized procedures; and

15 (B) program and policy recommendations
16 to Congress to address any limitations in track-
17 ing data related to hazardous fuels reduction
18 activities under this subsection.

19 (c) GAO STUDY.—Not later than 2 years after the
20 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
21 of the United States shall—

22 (1) conduct a study on the implementation of
23 this section, including any limitations with respect
24 to—

1 (A) reporting hazardous fuels reduction ac-
2 tivities under subsection (a); or

3 (B) tracking data related to hazardous
4 fuels reduction activities under subsection (b);
5 and

6 (2) submit to Congress a report that describes
7 the results of the study under paragraph (1).

8 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION ACTIV-
10 ITY.—The term “hazardous fuels reduction activ-
11 ity”—

12 (A) means any vegetation management ac-
13 tivity to reduce the risk of wildfire, including
14 mechanical treatments and prescribed burning;
15 and

16 (B) does not include the awarding of con-
17 tracts to conduct hazardous fuels reduction ac-
18 tivities.

19 (2) FEDERAL LANDS.—The term “Federal
20 lands” means lands under the jurisdiction of the
21 Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agri-
22 culture.

23 (e) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No addi-
24 tional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements
25 of this section, and the activities authorized by this section

1 are subject to the availability of appropriations made in
2 advance for such purposes.

3 **SEC. 303. PUBLIC-PRIVATE WILDFIRE TECHNOLOGY DE-**
4 **PLOYMENT AND TESTBED PARTNERSHIP.**

5 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) COVERED AGENCY.—The term “covered
7 agency” means—

8 (A) each Federal land management agency
9 (as such term is defined in the Federal Lands
10 Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C.
11 6801));

12 (B) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
13 Administration;

14 (C) the United States Fire Administration;

15 (D) the Federal Emergency Management
16 Agency;

17 (E) the National Aeronautics and Space
18 Administration;

19 (F) the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

20 (G) the Department of Defense; and

21 (H) any other Federal agency involved in
22 wildfire response.

23 (2) COVERED ENTITY.—The term “covered en-
24 tity” means—

25 (A) a private entity;

1 (B) a nonprofit organization; or

2 (C) an institution of higher education (as
3 defined in section 101 of the Higher Education
4 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).

5 (3) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
6 means the Secretary of Agriculture and the Sec-
7 retary of the Interior, acting jointly.

8 (4) DEPLOYMENT AND TESTBED PILOT PRO-
9 GRAM.—The term “Deployment and Testbed Pilot
10 Program” means the pilot program developed under
11 subsection (b).

12 (b) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the
13 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in co-
14 ordination with the heads of the covered agencies, shall
15 establish a deployment and testbed pilot program (in this
16 section referred to as “Pilot Program”) for new and inno-
17 vative wildfire prevention, detection, communication, and
18 mitigation technologies.

19 (c) FUNCTIONS.—In carrying out the Pilot Program,
20 the Secretaries shall—

21 (1) incorporate the Pilot Program into an exist-
22 ing interagency coordinating group on wildfires;

23 (2) in consultation with the heads of covered
24 agencies, identify and advance key technology pri-
25 ority areas with respect to wildfire prevention, detec-

1 tion, communication, and mitigation technologies, in-
2 cluding—

3 (A) hazardous fuels reduction treatments
4 or activities;

5 (B) dispatch communications;

6 (C) remote sensing, detection, and track-
7 ing;

8 (D) safety equipment; and

9 (E) common operating pictures or oper-
10 ational dashboards; and

11 (3) partner with each covered entity selected to
12 participate in the Pilot Program with the appro-
13 priate covered agency to coordinate real-time and
14 on-the-ground testing of technology during wildland
15 fire mitigation activities and training.

16 (d) APPLICATIONS.—To participate in the Pilot Pro-
17 gram, a covered entity shall submit to the Secretaries an
18 application at such time, in such manner, and containing
19 such information as the Secretaries may require, which
20 shall include a proposal to test technologies specific to key
21 technology priority areas identified under subsection
22 (c)(2).

23 (e) PRIORITIZATION OF EMERGING TECH-
24 NOLOGIES.—In selecting covered entities to participate in
25 the Pilot Program, the Secretaries shall give priority to

1 covered entities developing and applying emerging tech-
2 nologies, including artificial intelligence, quantum sensing,
3 computing and quantum-hybrid applications, augmented
4 reality, and 5G private networks and device-to-device com-
5 munications supporting nomadic mesh networks, for wild-
6 fire mitigation.

7 (f) OUTREACH.—The Secretaries, in coordination
8 with the heads of covered agencies, shall make public the
9 key technology priority areas identified under subsection
10 (c)(2) and invite covered entities to apply to test and dem-
11 onstrate their technologies to address those priority areas.

12 (g) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later
13 than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act,
14 and each year thereafter for the duration of the Pilot Pro-
15 gram, the Secretaries shall submit to the relevant congress-
16 sional committees and the Committee on Science, Space,
17 and Technology of the House of Representatives and the
18 Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of
19 the Senate a report that includes the following with re-
20 spect to the Pilot Program:

21 (1) A list of participating covered entities.

22 (2) A brief description of the technologies test-
23 ed by such covered entities.

1 (3) An estimate of the cost of acquiring the
2 technology tested in the program and applying it at
3 scale.

4 (4) Outreach efforts by Federal agencies to cov-
5 ered entities developing wildfire technologies.

6 (5) Assessments of, and recommendations relat-
7 ing to, new technologies with potential adoption and
8 application at-scale in Federal land management
9 agencies' wildfire prevention, detection, communica-
10 tion, and mitigation efforts.

11 (h) **TERMINATION.**—The Pilot Program shall expire
12 7 years after the date of this Act.

13 **SEC. 304. GAO STUDY ON FOREST SERVICE POLICIES.**

14 Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment
15 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
16 shall—

17 (1) conduct a study evaluating—

18 (A) the effectiveness of Forest Service
19 wildland firefighting operations;

20 (B) transparency and accountability meas-
21 ures in the Forest Service's budget and ac-
22 counting process; and

23 (D) the suitability and feasibility of estab-
24 lishing a new Federal agency with the responsi-

1 bility of responding and suppressing wildland
2 fires on Federal lands; and

3 (2) submit to Congress a report that describes
4 the results of the study required under paragraph
5 (1).

6 **SEC. 305. FOREST SERVICE WESTERN HEADQUARTERS**
7 **STUDY.**

8 Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment
9 of this Act, the Chief of the Forest Service shall—

10 (1) conduct a study evaluating—

11 (A) potential locations for a Western head-
12 quarters for the Forest Service, including po-
13 tential locations in at least three different West-
14 ern states; and

15 (B) benefits of creating a Western head-
16 quarters for the Forest Service including—

17 (i) improved customer service;

18 (ii) employee recruitment and reten-
19 tion; and

20 (iii) operational efficiencies and cost
21 savings; and

22 (2) submit to Congress a report that describes
23 the results of the study required under paragraph
24 (1).