



The Resilient Federal Forests Act

The Resilient Federal Forests Act provides comprehensive solutions to **address the rapidly declining health of American forests and prevent catastrophic wildfires** by expediting environmental analysis, reducing frivolous lawsuits, and increasing the pace and scale of critical forest restoration projects.

More than **80 million acres** of national forests are overgrown, fire-prone and in dire need of active management. The Resilient Federal Forests Act **restores forest health, increases resiliency to wildfire, and supports the economic revitalization** of rural communities.

- Utilizes state-of-the-art science to **triage the top 10 percent of high-risk firesheds**.
- **Simplifies and expedites environmental analysis** to reduce costs and planning times of critical forest management projects while maintaining thorough environmental reviews.
- Speeds up essential forest management projects by **ending frivolous litigation**.
- Gives the Forest Service the necessary tools to **restore watersheds, improve wildlife habitat, and protect critical infrastructure and public safety** in wildland-urban interfaces.
- Accelerates reviews for salvage operations and reforestation activities to encourage quick reforestation, remove dangerous hazard trees, and **economically revitalize rural areas**.
- **Incentives collaborative projects of up to 30,000 acres** to increase the pace and scale of active management.
- Creates **new, innovative authorities that increase tribal management** of forestlands.
- Codifies the principles of shared stewardship and **permanently reauthorizes the Good Neighbor Authority** to ensure states are equal partners in forest management activities.
- **Removes cumbersome interagency consultation requirements** that delay forest management activities and attract obstructionist litigation.
- **Expands and improves existing authorities** to address insect and disease infestations and increase resiliency to wildfires.

Over **10 million acres of forests burned in 2020** during another historic wildfire season and **more than 1 million acres have already been destroyed this year alone**. The Resilient Federal Forests Act **gives the agencies the tools they need now** to immediately implement the most vital management projects in high risk areas.

Contact

Aniela Butler (Aniela@mail.house.gov) | Brandon Miller (Brandon.Miller@mail.house.gov)



Major Provisions of RFFA

Triage Landscape-Scale Firesheds to Protect Communities and Critical Infrastructure

Utilizes cutting-edge Forest Service science as an innovative blueprint to target the top 10 percent of high-risk firesheds, which make up 85 percent of overall wildfire exposure. This science-based approach builds on the foundation of shared stewardship to reward collaboration and promote state partnerships that will expedite and streamline large-scale management projects to reduce overall wildfire risks to communities and infrastructure.

Prevents Wildfires and Returns Resiliency to Federal Forests and Rangelands

Gives the USFS and BLM tools to immediately mitigate insect and disease infestation, improve wildlife habitat, prevent damage to watersheds and infrastructure, remove dead trees and improve forests and grassland health.

Encourages Quick Restoration after Catastrophic Events and Speeds Habitat Improvement

Streamlines environmental reviews of projects for the removal of dead trees to pay for reforestation after large wildfires. Requires a reforestation project's Environmental Assessment be completed within two months and that 75 percent of the area impacted be reforested within five years. Encourages and speeds wildlife habitat improvement for wild turkey, ruffed grouse, elk, deer and other "early seral" forest-dependent species.

Addresses Obstructionist Litigation

Promotes the quick resolution of litigation against forest management projects. Requires courts to balance the effects of a forest management activity versus the costs of inaction. Creates an arbitration pilot program requiring litigants opposing a forest management activity to propose an alternative rather than just saying "no."

Bolsters Tribal Participation in Forest Health Projects and Excess Fuels Utilization

Expands authorities for tribes to manage adjacent national forests to reduce the risk of wildfire, insects, and disease. Creates a Tribal Biochar Demonstration Project that mirrors a similar successful biomass demonstration project in order to further expand innovative utilization of excess fuels from proper forest management.

Supports Local Governments and Modernizes Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act

Authorizes revenue sharing with counties for stewardship contracting projects and provides additional flexibility in how local governments can utilize Title II funds. Streamlines the process of appointing USFS and BLM Resource Advisory Committee (RACs) members and ensures local representation on the committees.

Incentivizes and Rewards Collaboration and Local Partnerships

Supports collaborative efforts that bring together local governments, land managers and diverse groups of local stakeholders to develop forest management projects. Allows expedited environmental review for collaborative projects up to 30,000 acres in size. Enhances and permanently reauthorizes the Good Neighbor Authority.

Streamlines Cumbersome Consultation and Analysis Requirements

Removes burdensome requirements to increase the pace, scale, and cost efficiency of forest management projects without sacrificing environmental protections. Includes reforms addressing litigation from the *Cottonwood* decision.

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