

Subcommittee Chair Joe Neguse (CO-02)
NPFPL Legislative Hearing
H.R. 3211, the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021
July 13, 2021

I urge strong bipartisan support for my legislation included in today's Subcommittee hearing H.R. 3211, the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021, introduced in May of this year with Representatives Spanberger and Armstrong as original cosponsors.

Senators Bennet and Hoven have introduced companion legislation in the Senate.

H.R. 3211 would authorize the Joint Chiefs Partnership between the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service and the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service at \$90 million annually– double the current funding level.

By authorizing the program through 2030, we could enhance support and provide certainty for ongoing public-private landscape-scale restoration projects, while improving program outreach and accountability.

Programs like the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) and Joint Chiefs Partnership have successfully brought diverse stakeholders together to achieve landscape-scale conservation and restoration work.

While the success of CFLRP has been recognized by Congress through programmatic authorizations and increases in annual funding, the Joint Chiefs Partnership has continued to operate without similar bipartisan recognition here in Congress.

Since USDA launched Joint Chiefs in 2014, the initiative has supported 93 projects, including two in Colorado, and treated 300,000 acres of hazardous fuels, restored 29,000 acres in priority watersheds, and enhanced 200,000 acres of wildlife habitat.

Restoration projects across ownership boundaries help improve the resilience of an entire landscape, prioritize treatment areas, and protect communities and their water supplies.

Colorado has received over \$3 million through two Joint Chiefs projects: the San Juan Project and the Northern Front Range Collaboration Watershed Resilience Project.

To add to the Administration's perspective, we'll also hear from the Ft. Collins Conservation District's Forest Program Director to further illuminate how this program has benefited the Front Range and supported healthy watersheds and more resilient forests and grasslands.

I'm looking forward to testimony and question on H.R. 3211.

I urge bipartisan support and welcome cosponsorship by my colleagues.