

November 18, 2024

The Honorable Tom Tiffany
Chairman
House Natural Resources Subcommittee on
Federal Lands
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joe Neguse
Ranking Member
House Natural Resources Subcommittee on
Federal Lands
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Tiffany and Ranking Member Neguse:

As the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands prepares to consider several pieces of legislation, the American Farm Bureau Federation would like to comment on provisions important to our farming, ranching and forestry members. The American Farm Bureau Federation is the nation's largest general farm organization, working together to build a sustainable future of safe and abundant food, fiber, timber and renewable fuel for our nation and the world.

As a general matter, we support the multiple-use concept of federal lands, oppose expansion of designated wilderness areas and the addition of more rivers and adjoining land to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and support appropriate forest management and the reduction in size of currently designated national monuments and wilderness areas. Legislation that limits land and water use harms farmers and ranchers who rely on federal lands for economic and recreational opportunities. Livestock grazing on federal lands is critical to ranching operations across the United States, especially in the West. Ranchers, land users and surrounding communities have been devastated by wildfires and depend on a new focus towards appropriate and proactive forest management, including grazing, to reduce wildfire risk.

We appreciate the subcommittee's consideration of several bills to improve the management of public lands in the West through grazing. Farm Bureau supports H.R. 6441, the Ranching Without Red Tape Act of 2023, H.R. 7666, a bill to require the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to develop a strategy to increase opportunities to utilize livestock grazing as a means of wildfire risk reduction, and H.R. 9062, the Operational Flexibility Grazing Management Program Act. These bills would address the need for more timely approval of minor range improvements; focus on the use of vacant allotments during disasters in other areas and increase the use of grazing for wildfire risk reduction; and provide authority for expanding the existing Bureau of Land Management operational flexibility pilot program.

Farmers, ranchers and foresters play an integral role in managing our shared public lands, and we urge the committee to move legislation that ensures these spaces can be safely used and enjoyed for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Zippy Duvall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Zippy" written in a more compact, stylized manner and the last name "Duvall" written in a more extended, flowing script.

Zippy Duvall
President