

House Natural Resources Federal Lands Hearing, 2/10/26

Witness Biography

Dr. David Lytle
Acting Deputy Chief, Fire and Aviation Management
Forest Service
United States Department of Agriculture

Dr. David Lytle (lye-tul) assumed his current role of Acting Deputy Chief of Fire and Aviation Management for the Forest Service on January 1, 2026.

Prior to assuming this role, Dr. Lytle served as the Forest Service's Deputy Chief of Research and Development since April 2023. As the agency's leading scientist, he directed coordinated, and integrated the vast network of all research activities, working with regions, stations, and others on a variety of activities, and helping to ensure the agency's data, scientific information, and innovation support forest and rangeland conservation and management.

Dr. Lytle is a seasoned senior executive with experience across a breadth of areas in the Forest Service and has been in federal service for more than 15 years. He began his federal service as a post-doctoral research ecologist at the North Central Research Station and spent a decade as a science center director for the U.S. Geological Survey, an agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior. Dr. Lytle also served as state forester and chief of the Division of Forestry with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. He also worked as a conservation scientist with The Nature Conservancy.

Dr. Lytle is a native of Sherburn, Minnesota. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a master's degree in Botany and Plant Pathology from the University of Maine. He has a doctorate in Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior from the University of Minnesota.