



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

To: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Members
From: Federal Lands Subcommittee, Aniela Butler – Aniela@mail.house.gov, Brandon Miller – Brandon.Miller@mail.house.gov X67736
Date: Friday, August 11, 2023
Subject: Field Oversight Hearing on “*Conservation in a Crown Jewel: A Discussion About Wildfires and Forest Health*”

The Committee on Natural Resources will hold a field oversight hearing on “*Conservation in a Crown Jewel: A Discussion About Wildfires and Forest Health*” on **Friday, August 11, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. PST at the Curry Village in Yosemite National Park.**

Member offices are requested to notify Colen Morrow (Colen.Morrow@mail.house.gov) by 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 9, if their Member intends to participate in the hearing.

I. KEY MESSAGES

- The health of our nation’s forests has deteriorated so severely that Yosemite National Park, a crown jewel of America’s National Park System, is in the epicenter of a catastrophic wildfire crisis that is devastating California and the West.
- Yosemite provides the perfect backdrop to hear from everyday people that are impacted by catastrophic wildfires. From charred communities, to degraded air and water quality and lost access, their stories will highlight the desperate need to increase the pace and scale of active forest management now.
- Committee Republicans remain firmly committed to finding innovative solutions that will restore true conservation to Yosemite and all our federal lands by cutting red tape, reducing frivolous litigation, and giving land managers the tools and resources they need to expedite forest management projects.

II. WITNESSES

- **The Honorable Miles Menetrey**, Supervisor, Mariposa County, California
- **The Honorable George Turnboo**, Supervisor, El Dorado County, California
- **Mr. Bill Tripp**, Director of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy, Karuk Tribe, Orleans, California
- **Dr. Dave Daley**, California Cattlemen’s Association, Butte County, California
- **Mr. Johnnie White**, Board Member, California Farm Bureau, Sebastopol, California
- **Mr. Matthew Bloom**, Owner, Kennedy Meadows Resort and Pack Station, Pinecrest, California

III. BACKGROUND

Yosemite and the Catastrophic Wildfire Crisis

Overview



The Meadow Fire burning near Half Dome in Yosemite National Park. **Source:** Time, 2014.

House Committee on Natural Resources Republicans will hold the Committee’s sixth field hearing of the year in an indisputable crown jewel of the National Park System, Yosemite National Park (Yosemite). First protected by President Abraham Lincoln in the midst of the Civil War in 1864, Yosemite has inspired conservationists for centuries and is considered by many to be the birthplace of the idea of the National Park Service.¹ President Teddy Roosevelt, often considered the “conservationist President,” famously likened camping in the iconic Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias in Yosemite to “lying in a great solemn cathedral, far vaster and more beautiful than any built by the hand of man.”² Unfortunately, that natural cathedral, like many federally managed forests, is squarely in the epicenter of the forest health and catastrophic wildfire crisis ravaging California and the West. A century of fire suppression and decades of mismanagement have resulted in a perfect storm of overstocked and unhealthy forests left susceptible to wildfires, insects and disease, drought, and rising temperatures. Federal land management agencies have now identified a combined 117 million acres of federal land at high

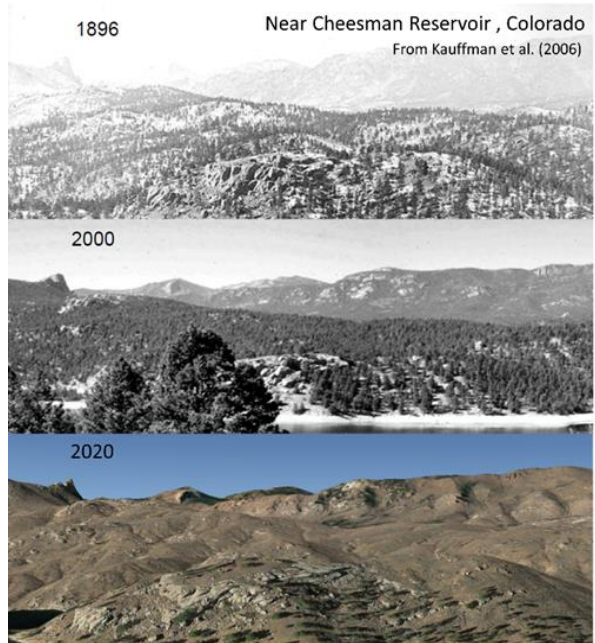
¹ Glass, Andrew, “President Lincoln creates Yosemite Park, June 30, 1864,” Politico, June 30, 2016,

<https://www.politico.com/story/2016/06/president-lincoln-creates-yosemite-park-june-30-1864-224818>.

² National Park Service, “Theodore Roosevelt Quotes”, <https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/historyculture/theodore-roosevelt-quotes.htm#:~:text=TR%2C%20after%20camping%20in%20Yosemite.by%20the%20hand%20of%20man.%22>.

or very high risk for wildfire, representing nearly one-fifth of the overall land overseen by the agencies.³ Across the country, there are now more than one billion acres at risk of wildland fire.⁴

Many U.S. forests are overloaded with dangerous dry fuels that have been allowed to accumulate through a lack of thinning, prescribed burns, and mechanical treatments.⁵ Overstocking makes forests less resilient by increasing competition among trees for the water, minerals, and sunlight necessary to sustain a healthy forest. California, which had over 4 million acres burn in 2020 and a record-breaking “gigafire,”⁶ exemplifies this situation well. Before European settlement, California forests had roughly 64 trees per acre. Those same forests now have



Historic forests experienced frequent, low severity wildfire that maintained the open, parklike forest

Fire exclusion, beginning in the late 1800's, has allowed infilling of trees and increased fuels on the landscape

Hayman Fire 2002 burned at a high severity, removing the majority of forests, potentially altering future ecosystems

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2021.

over 300 trees per acre.⁷ As a result, over 173 million trees have now died across the state in the past 20 years due to increased competition for resources, higher susceptibility to insects and disease, and intense hazardous fuel loads that have ignited dangerous wildfires.⁸ Last year, U.S. Forest Service (USFS) researchers estimated 36.3 million trees died in California in 2022 alone, a 282 percent increase from the year prior.⁹ In Mariposa County, the location of the field hearing, nearly 1 million trees died last year.¹⁰

This forest health crisis has fueled an unprecedented rise in the likelihood and severity of catastrophic wildfires. Over 72 million acres (approximately 112,500 square miles) have burned in the last decade.¹¹ To put this in context, only 6 U.S. states are larger than 72 million acres.¹²

³ Hoover, Katie, “Federal Wildfire Management: Ten-Year Funding Trends and Issues (FY2011-FY2020),” October 28, 2020, CRS, R46583.

⁴ Testimony of Christopher French, Deputy Chief, U.S. Forest Service, before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, June 24, 2021, <https://www.energy.senate.gov/services/files/AAF7DF40-2A47-4951-ADA4-4B124AD3894F>.

⁵ Ingram, Robert G. “Robert G. Ingram: Forest Fuel Management - the Ugly Truth.” *TheUnion.com*, October 9, 2020, www.theunion.com/opinion/columns/robert-g-ingram-forest-fuel-management-the-ugly-truth/.

⁶ CNN, “California fire is now a 'gigafire,' a rare designation for a blaze that burns at least a million acres, 10/6/20, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/06/us/gigafire-california-august-complex-trnd/index.html>.

⁷ Data provided by the Forest Service.

⁸ Fehely, Devin, “California drought leading to tens of millions of trees dying in state,” CBS News, July 25, 2022, <https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/california-drought-leading-to-tens-of-millions-of-trees-dying-in-state/>.

⁹ CNN, “Drought and disease in California forests leaves behind an estimated 36 million dead trees, survey finds,” 2/10/2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/02/10/us/california-drought-millions-trees-dead/index.html>.

¹⁰ U.S. Forest Service, “Aerial Detection Survey: 2022 Summary Report,” https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd1088611.pdf.

¹¹ National Interagency Fire Center, “Wildfires and Acres,” <https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information/statistics/wildfires>.

¹² United States Census Bureau, “State Area Measurements and Internal Point Coordinates,” <https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-files/2010/geo/state-area.html>.



Dead trees in the Sierra National Forest, which abuts Yosemite National Park.

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2016.

Before 2015, wildfire losses had never topped 10 million acres in a single year, a benchmark that has since been surpassed 3 times (2015, 2017, 2020).¹³ States like California have seen a sharp uptick in the number and intensity of wildfires. Over the past 5 years, California wildfires

burned 8.7 million acres, roughly 22 percent of the total acreage burned nationwide.¹⁴ Since 2000, California has suffered through 18 of the top 20 worst wildfires in state history, with five of these fires occurring in 2020 alone.¹⁵ Over the 2012-2021 period, wildfires in California burned nearly one-quarter of all of the state's forests (7.9 million acres), compared to just 6.6 percent burning the previous decade (2.1 million acres).¹⁶ While these statistics are sobering, they pale in comparison to the real world effects of catastrophic wildfires felt by the millions of Americans in the Western United States.

The Real World Consequences of Catastrophic Wildfires and Forest Mismanagement

Loss of Lives and Property

One of the most heart wrenching consequences of the current catastrophic wildfire crisis is the devastation to life and property. Since 2005, over 89,000 structures have been destroyed by wildfires, leading to an untold number of deaths and enormous personal losses.¹⁷ In the last four years alone, 27,556 structures have been destroyed, including homes, businesses, and entire

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Value Penguin, "Wildfire Statistics: Damage, Fatalities and Insurance Rates, Lindsay Bishop, July 7, 2023, <https://www.valuepenguin.com/homeowners-insurance/wildfire-statistics>

¹⁵ Environmental Pollution, "California's greenhouse gas reductions could be wiped out by 2020 wildfires", Michael Jerrett, Amir S. Jina, and Miriam E. Marlier, October 1, 2022, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0269749122011022#bib1>.

¹⁶ Schmidt, Jim, "California forests hit hard by wildfires in the last decade," Wildfire Today, <https://wildfiretoday.com/2022/09/05/california-forests-hit-hard-by-wildfires-in-the-last-decade/>.

¹⁷ Barrett, Kimiko. "Wildfires Destroy Thousands of Structures Each Year." *Headwaters Economics*, 4 Dec. 2020, www.headwaterseconomics.org/natural-hazards/structures-destroyed-by-wildfire/.



A home pictured before and after the Carr Fire in California. **Source:** HuffPost, 2018.

neighborhoods.¹⁸ Entire communities in the path of uncontrollable megafires have been leveled. In 2018, the Camp Fire in California became the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California's history. The megafire destroyed over 18,000 structures and 85 people tragically lost their lives.¹⁹ The towns of Paradise and Concow were both essentially destroyed, losing over 95 percent of all structures.²⁰ Just two years ago, the town of Grizzly Flats, which is less than 100 miles from Yosemite,

was completely leveled by the Caldor Fire that burned 221,835 acres and destroyed over 1,000 buildings.²¹ In 2017, one wildfire (the Tubbs Fire) was so destructive it wiped out 5 percent of the town of Santa Rosa, California's housing stock. 34 people also lost their lives in the Tubbs

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ Associated Press, "List of Missing in Camp Fire Down to 1." *FOX40*, FOX40, 2 Aug. 2019, <https://fox40.com/news/california-connection/one-still-missing-in-camp-fire/>.

²⁰ "Paradise Lost: Inside California's Camp Fire." *CBS News*, CBS Interactive, www.cbsnews.com/news/paradise-lost-inside-california-camp-fire-60-minutes/. <https://news.sky.com/story/california-wildfires-before-and-after-images-of-the-devastation-in-malibu-and-paradise-11552392>.

²¹ KCRA, "Caldor Fire, One Year Later: A look back at the destructive blaze that burned into Lake Tahoe Basin", Greta Serrin, August 14, 2022, <https://www.kcra.com/article/caldor-fire-one-year-later/40874998#>.

Fire.²² The North Complex Fire in California destroyed 2,352 structures, killed 15 people, and virtually wiped the communities of Berry Creek and Feather Falls from the map.²³ Tragically, between 2015 and 2021, there were 845 civilian wildfire fatalities nationwide.²⁴

Unfortunately, these extreme scenarios of destruction will continue absent a paradigm shift in the way federal forests are managed. According to the latest Forest Service firehatched mapping, 71 percent of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands and 89 percent of USFS lands “have the potential for wildfires to ignite and spread to communities.”²⁵ Forest Service researchers, through cutting-edge firehatched simulation modeling, have identified hundreds of western communities with higher predicted fire risk than horrific tragedy that occurred at Paradise in 2018.^{26, 27} In fact, extremes like Paradise could frighteningly become the norm, as 1,812 communities in the Western United States could be significantly impacted by future wildfires that will expose an estimated 4,000 structures to wildfires on average annually.²⁸ Sobering fire models have even predicted plausible extreme fire scenarios in the near future, where almost 500,000 buildings could be lost to wildfire in a single fire season.²⁹ Other scenarios have identified the probability of wildfires igniting on National Forest System lands and burning over 1.5 million acres in Southern California, destroying 100,000 structures and putting thousands of lives at risk.³⁰

Catastrophic wildfires have become so destructive, homeowners in the wildland-urban interface are facing a new challenge entirely: the inability to acquire property insurance. The average amount of structures destroyed for every four square miles (1,000 hectares) increased by 246 percent in the past decade, from 1.3 structures destroyed over the 1999-2009 period to 3.4 structures destroyed on average over the 2010-2020 period.³¹ As structure damage has increased exponentially, so have the damages paid out by insurance companies. Four of the top five

²² Nelson, Laura J. et al., “Death toll from Northern California fires jumps to at least 34; 5,700 structures destroyed,” LA Times, October 13, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-fires-20171013-story.html>.

²³ CALFIRE, “Top 20 Deadliest California Wildfires”, https://www.fire.ca.gov/media/lbfd0m2f/top20_deadliest.pdf. Deadline, “Tiny California Town Leveled by “Massive Wall of Fire”; 10 Dead, 16 Missing, Trapped Fire Crew Barely Escapes Blazes”, Tom Tapp, September 10, 2020, <https://deadline.com/2020/09/california-town-berry-creek-destroyed-wildfire-north-complex-bear-fire-10-dead-16-missing-1234575145/>.

²⁴ USA Facts, “Civilian deaths from fires”, <https://usafacts.org/data/topics/security-safety/fire-and-disaster/fires-and-firefighters/civilian-deaths-from-fires/>.

²⁵ A firehatched is a landscape-scale area that faces similar wildfire threats where a fire management strategy could affect fire outcomes. Alan Ager, et al. “Development and Application of the Firehatched Registry,” USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region, May 2021.

²⁶ Ager AA, Palaiologou P, Evers C, Day MA, Ringo C, Short KC. Wildfire exposure to the wildland urban interface in the western US. *Applied Geography*, 2019; 111:102059. DOI: 10.1016/j.apgeog.2019.102059.

²⁷ USDA Forest Service. Wildfire risk to communities. USDA Forest Service. 2020. Available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/wildfirerisk>.

²⁸ Alan Ager, et al. “Cross-Boundary Wildfire and Community Exposure: A Framework and Application in the Western U.S.,” USDA Forest Service, May 2019.

²⁹ Finney MA, McHugh CW, Grenfell IC, Riley KL, Short KC. A simulation of probabilistic wildfire risk components for the continental United States. *Stochastic Environmental Research and Risk Assessment*, 2011; 25:973–1000. Short KC, Finney MA, Vogler K, Scott JH, Gilbertson-Day JW, Julie W, Grenfell IC. Spatial datasets of probabilistic wildfire risk components for the United States (270m) 2020. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2737/RDS-2016-0034>.

³⁰ Eliza Barclay, “This is a worst-possible wildfire scenario for Southern California,” Vox, <https://www.vox.com/2019/9/10/20804560/climate-change-california-wildfire-2019>.

³¹ Philip Higuera, “Western wildfires destroyed 246% more homes and buildings over the past decade,” February 1, 2023, Colorado Arts and Sciences Magazine, <https://www.colorado.edu/asmagazine/2023/02/01/western-wildfires-destroyed-246-more-homes-and-buildings-over-past-decade>.

costliest wildfires in the world all occurred in California between 2017 and 2020.³² Those four fires resulted in insurance companies paying out a total of \$35.9 billion in losses.³³ From 2018 to 2022, California had the highest amount of wildfire-related property damages in the country, surpassing the next closest state, Colorado, by more than 9 times.³⁴ Estimates now suggest that California has approximately 1.3 million homes exposed to wildfire, the highest in the nation.³⁵

These property losses, combined with “rapidly growing catastrophe exposure,” led several home insurance companies to recently announce their withdrawal from the California insurance market.³⁶ So far, State Farm and Allstate have both stopped accepting new applications for home insurance, while AIG has announced plans to withdraw from the state entirely.³⁷ This is significant, as State Farm alone insures roughly 1 in 5 California homeowners.³⁸ In



A homeowner, who lives just outside of Yosemite National Park, standing in front of her home. In July of this year, Allstate stopped covering her home insurance after more than three decades, despite home hardening measures put in place.

Source: NPR, 2023.

2019, it was estimated that “350,000 California home and business owners are unable to get property and casualty insurance” due to wildfire risk.³⁹ This announcement means that hundreds of thousands of additional California homeowners could soon be unable to obtain insurance. This will have far-reaching implications, because without insurance many people will be unable to

³² Camp Fire, 2018 (\$16.5 billion in economic losses); LNU Complex Fires, 2017 (\$15 billion); 2020 Wildfires (\$12.5 billion), Woolsey Fire, 2018 (\$5.6 billion). Munich RE, “Wildfires and bushfires,” <https://www.munichre.com/en/risks/natural-disasters/wildfires.html>.

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ Value Penguin, “Wildfire Statistics: Damage, Fatalities and Insurance Rates, Lindsay Bishop, July 7, 2023, <https://www.valuepenguin.com/homeowners-insurance/wildfire-statistics>

³⁵ Insurance Information Institute, “Facts + Statistics: Wildfires,” <https://www.iii.org/fact-statistic/facts-statistics-wildfires>.

³⁶ NYT, “Climate Shocks Are Making Parts of America Uninsurable. It Just Got Worse.,” 5/31/23, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/31/climate/climate-change-insurance-wildfires-california.html>.

³⁷ DS News, Wildfire Impacts on California Property Values, July 24, 2023, <https://dsnews.com/news/07-24-2023/wildfires-and-their>.

³⁸ Deppisch, Breanne, “Home insurers pull out of California thanks to wildfires and state regulations,” Washington Examiner, June 1, 2023, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/energy-environment/insurers-pull-out-california-wildfires-regulations>.

³⁹ CBS News, “After wildfires, hundreds of thousands of Californians can't get insurance,” 8/30/2019, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/wildfires-california-homeowners-insurance-hard-to-find-due-to-magnitude-of-massive-wildfires/>.

obtain a mortgage to purchase a home or even be able to repair a home damaged by wildfire. This will compound issues like inflation, which is already making it more expensive than ever to purchase and rebuild homes.⁴⁰

Skyrocketing Costs and Economic Losses

According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), estimates of losses due to wildfire range from \$37 billion to \$88 billion annually.⁴¹ This includes “the value of structures damaged or destroyed, the lost value of timber, forgone tax revenues, the impact on housing prices, and the costs to evacuate.” It is important to note that these estimates are likely conservative as they do not account for “business interruptions, damage to infrastructure and public utilities, and disruptions to the supply of goods and services.”⁴² To highlight this, one study estimated that the economic impact of the 2018 wildfires in California alone was \$149 billion.⁴³ The most impacted sectors included the service industry (\$44.4 billion in damages) and the manufacturing sector (\$22.3 billion).⁴⁴ Butte County, the location of the Camp Fire, lost an astonishing “\$5.6 billion, or 47.4% of its own GDP.”⁴⁵ Another study that examined 2003 wildfires in San Diego, California, that burned more than 3,200 homes, estimated the fires had a total economic impact of \$2.5 billion.⁴⁶ However, once again, these studies also fail to capture the long-term economic effects of lower home prices, higher insurance rates, and businesses and families that choose to leave the area. Local labor forces often feel the brunt of these impacts, as wildfires can “decrease labor income, employment, and labor force participation.”⁴⁷ Between 2007 and 2019, wildfires reduced earning by an average of \$125 billion per year, with earning losses disproportionately affecting “counties whose populations have an above-median proportion of Black residents.”⁴⁸

While many industries are negatively affected by wildfires, small businesses that rely on well managed public lands are hit especially hard. In 2007, a wildfire destroyed the main lodge at Kennedy Meadows Resort & Packstation near Yosemite, which had been there for nearly 100 years, along with several cabins.⁴⁹ Wildfires during the 2020 and 2021 fire seasons burned approximately 35 percent of all active grazing allotments on USFS lands in California.⁵⁰ In Oregon, 480,846 acres of USFS grazing allotments burned in 2021.⁵¹ These losses are significant, as over 216 million acres of federal lands (139 million acres of BLM land and 77 million acres of USFS land) are actively grazed, creating an annual economic impact of more

⁴⁰ Copley, Michael, “How climate change could cause a home insurance meltdown,” NPR, July 22, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2023/07/22/1186540332/how-climate-change-could-cause-a-home-insurance-meltdown>.

⁴¹ CBO, “Wildfires,” <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files?file=2022-06/57970-Wildfires.pdf>.

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ *Id.*

⁴⁴ Wang, et al., “Economic footprint of California wildfires in 2018,” *Nature Sustainability* volume 4, pages 252–260 (2021).

⁴⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, “Wildfires reveal the large toll of air pollution on labor market outcomes,” <https://siepr.stanford.edu/publications/policy-brief/wildfires-reveal-large-toll-air-pollution-labor-market-outcomes>.

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ Los Angeles Times, “Historic Lodge Reduced to Ashes”, Eric Bailey, October 2, 2007, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2007-oct-02-me-kennedy2-story.html>

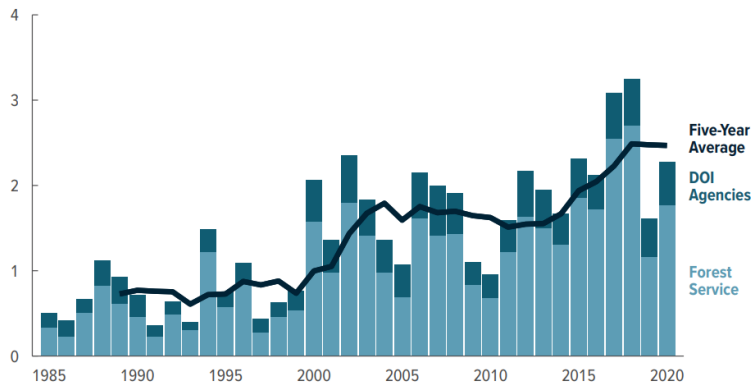
⁵⁰ Capital Press, “Wildfire-damaged ranges mean less public land for Western cattle to graze”, Sierra Dawn McClain, April 5, 2022, https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/livestock/wildfire-damaged-ranges-mean-less-public-land-for-western-cattle-to-graze/article_5595105c-b1e5-11ec-a58c-77b5493aca69.html.

⁵¹ *Id.*

than \$1 billion.⁵² Similarly, wildfires can burn agricultural lands or destroy crops through degraded air or water quality. For example, the 2020 wildfire season cost the wine industry an estimated \$3.7 billion due to loss of property, wine inventory, and grapes tainted by smoke.⁵³ Over 1,200 buildings were destroyed, including 30 wineries, and many vintners chose not to produce some or all of the wine they had planned to bottle.⁵⁴

Spending on Wildfire Suppression by the U.S. Forest Service and Department of the Interior

Billions of 2020 Dollars



The Forest Service and several DOI agencies are responsible for managing wildfires on federal lands. In 2020, those lands accounted for 70 percent of the acres burned in wildfires. Between 1989 and 2020, the five-year moving average for federal spending on wildfire suppression more than tripled in inflation-adjusted terms.

Fighting these catastrophic fires instead of actively managing our lands to prevent them has had an enormous cost. Wildland fire suppression costs averaged \$2.9 billion over the past five years, with 2021 (\$4.4 billion) and 2022

Source: CBO, 2022.

(\$3.5 billion) being the most expensive years on record.⁵⁵ These costs have risen exponentially, as the federal government only spent \$728 million on average fighting fires between 1985-1989.⁵⁶ This problem is particularly acute in California, which accounted for 82 percent of total fire suppression costs among nine Western states over the 2005-2015 period.⁵⁷ These fire suppression costs also do not account for the \$5 billion in disaster relief assistance provided between 2016-2020.⁵⁸ The Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon Fire alone accounted for \$3.95 billion in federal disaster relief, as a result of USFS igniting these fires through prescribed burn operations.⁵⁹

Degraded Air Quality, Increased Carbon Emissions, and Smoke-Related Health Impacts

While wildfire smoke blanketing the Eastern United States has captured national attention this year, this smoke-filled reality is sadly a norm in the Western United States. Wildfires contribute

⁵² Farm Bureau, “Public Lands Grazing Vital to the Rural West”, Daniel Munch, July 5, 2023, <https://www.fb.org/market-intel/public-lands-grazing-vital-to-the-rural-west>.

⁵³ San Francisco Chronicle, “The 2020 wildfires could cost California’s wine industry \$3.7 billion – but it doesn’t have to be that way”, Ether Mobley, 2021, January 21, 2021, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/wine/article/The-2020-wildfires-may-cost-California-s-wine-15885706.php>.

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ National Interagency Fire Center, “Suppression Costs”, <https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information/statistics/suppression-costs>. CBO, “Wildfires,” <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files?file=2022-06/57970-Wildfires.pdf>.

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ MacDonald, et al., “Drivers of California’s changing wildfires: a state-of-the-knowledge synthesis,” *International Journal of Wildland Fire* 32(7) 1039-1058, 22 May 2023.

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ FEMA, “Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office Frequently Asked Questions,” <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hermits-peak/frequently-asked-questions>.

to poorer air quality by turning Western forests into carbon sources instead of carbon sinks.⁶⁰ In 2021, wildfires in the West emitted 130 million metric tons of carbon, the equivalent of driving 28.3 million passenger cars for an entire year.⁶¹ This included 75 million metric tons from California and 17 million tons from Oregon released in just three months.⁶² The year prior, wildfires in California emitted roughly 112 million metric tons of carbon dioxide (equivalent to the emissions of 24.2 million passenger cars).⁶³ To further put this amount into context, a recent study from the University of Chicago and UCLA found that the 2020 wildfires in California wiped out nearly two-decades worth of efforts by Californians to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.⁶⁴ The study found that California reduced 65 million metric tons of emissions since 2003, roughly half of the amount emitted by wildfires over the course of a few short months.⁶⁵

These emissions have far-reaching consequences for people across the nation. In recent years, wildfire smoke from Western fires reached all the way to the East Coast, thousands of miles away, bringing with it poor air quality.⁶⁶ While the long-term effects of smoke exposure due to wildfires needs further research, studies suggest that prolonged exposure can lead to “increased risk of heart attack, stroke, lung cancer, and a decline in cognitive function.”⁶⁷



Source: San Francisco Chronicle, 2020.

In addition to air quality, wildfires cause short- and long-term damage to watersheds by contaminating the areas with burning ash and debris, making the ecosystems more susceptible to flooding and erosion. This can have significant health impacts, as over 65 percent of fresh water supply in Western states comes from forested watersheds.⁶⁸ Nationwide, “80 percent of the

⁶⁰ Murphy, Zoëann, and Chris Mooney. “Montana’s Forests Have Swung from Pulling Carbon Dioxide out of the Air to Putting It Back Again.” *The Washington Post*. January 29, 2019. Accessed January 31, 2019.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/national/gone-in-a-generation/forest-climate-change.html?utm_term=.8d7a6e691000.

⁶¹ New York Times, “California’s Wildfires Had an Invisible Impact: High Carbon Dioxide Emissions,” September 27, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/21/climate/wildfire-emissions-climate-change.html>.

⁶² *Id.*

⁶³ Bloomberg Law, “California’s 2020 Wildfire Emissions Akin to 24 Million Cars.”

⁶⁴ Environmental Pollution, “California’s greenhouse gas reductions could be wiped out by 2020 wildfires”, Michael Jerrett, Amir S. Jina, and Miriam E. Marlier, October 1, 2022,

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0269749122011022#bib1>

⁶⁵ *Id.*

⁶⁶ NPR, “The Western Wildfires Are Affecting People 3,000 Miles Away”, Josie Fischels, July 21, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/07/21/1018865569/the-western-wildfires-are-affecting-people-3-000-miles-away>

⁶⁷ MacMillan, Carrie, “How Bad Is Wildfire Smoke for Your Health?,” *Yale Medicine*, June 28, 2023, <https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/how-bad-is-wildfire-smoke-for-your-health#:~:text=In%20addition%20to%20respiratory%20problems.Redlich%20says>.

⁶⁸ EPA, “Wildfires: How Do They Affect Our Water Supplies?,” 8/13/19, <https://www.epa.gov/sciencematters/wildfires-how-do-they-affect-our-water-supplies>.

freshwater resources in the U.S. originate on forested land, and more than 3,400 public drinking-water systems are located in watersheds containing national forest lands.”⁶⁹

Destruction of Wildlife Habitat



Wildlife during a fire in the Bitterroot National Forest. Source: John McColgan, 2000.

While actively managed forests can provide abundant wildlife habitat for a variety of species, overgrown and fire-prone forests can turn these forests into powder kegs. Catastrophic wildfires not only kill wildlife species, they turn once vibrant habitats into permanent moonscapes. As an example of this, in 2020, Oregon wildfires pushed Northern Spotted Owls (NSOs) into an “extinction vortex,” according to

USFS’s top scientist on NSOs.⁷⁰ These fires burned 360,000 acres of suitable nesting and roosting habitat, of which approximately 194,000 acres are no longer considered viable for the birds.⁷¹ According to USFS scientists, there are “so few animals right now that a big loss from these fires could become destabilizing on the population as a whole.”⁷² A recent study of megafire impacts on spotted owls in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California also suggested that forest restoration efforts such as prescribed fire, managed wildfire and tree thinning that reduce megafires could benefit spotted owls.⁷³

Unfortunately, this phenomenon extends further than owls. In California, the 2020 Bobcat Fire turned one of the most abundant wildlife habitats with “lush canyons and [a] mixture of rare and endangered species” into an “apocalypse” that looked like “ground zero after a nuclear explosion.”⁷⁴ Experts believed this fire would “reverse decades of conservation efforts” for species like the Santa Ana sucker fish and Southern California mountain yellow-legged frog.⁷⁵ Catastrophic wildfires also forced the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to

⁶⁹ USGS, “Water Quality After A Wildfire,” <https://ca.water.usgs.gov/wildfires/wildfires-water-quality.html>.

⁷⁰ USA Today, “Spotted owls pushed closer to ‘extinction vortex’ by Oregon wildfires,” Zach Urness, Salem Statesman Journal, Dec. 1, 2020, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/12/01/northern-spotted-owl-habitat-threatened-oregon-fires/6462923002/>.

⁷¹ *Id.*

⁷² *Id.*

⁷³ Animal Conservation, “Megafire causes persistent loss of an old-forest species,” G.M. Jones, et al., April 26, 2021, https://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs_journals/2021/rmrs_2021_jones_g002.pdf.

⁷⁴ Sahagun, Louis, “Bobcat fire aftermath threatens endangered species in San Gabriel Mountains,” LA Times, October 14, 2016, <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2020-10-14/fire-stripped-slopes-and-winter-storms-point-to-a-bleak-scenario-for-wildlife-in-the-san-gabriel-mountains>.

⁷⁵ *Id.*

recommend moving the Greater Sage Grouse from threatened to endangered status in the state.⁷⁶ These wildfires also killed nearly half of the state’s endangered pygmy rabbit population. A Seattle Times report stated: “The rabbits had asphyxiated as the fire in its fury devoured oxygen from the atmosphere. ‘There was nothing but ash and dust,’ ... ‘No movement, no footprints. There was no chance anything survived.’”⁷⁷

Destruction of Tribal Forests



Members of the Tule River Tribe in California survey a cultural site destroyed by wildfire. **Source:** KCET, 2022.

Tribes have a rich history in forest management, dating back centuries. Tribes manage their forests for economic development, spiritual and cultural values, medicinal uses, wildlife habitat diversity, air and water quality, and to protect sacred landscapes. However, for the past century, Tribes have been largely banned from practicing cultural burning in the West, including the area around Yosemite, leading to more overstocked forests.⁷⁸ As a result, Tribes are now “three times more concentrated” in areas of California at the

highest risk of wildland fire.⁷⁹ Their historic lands, once properly stewarded by their ancestors, go virtually untended by federal land managers. In 2020, the Slater Fire in the Klamath National Forest in Northern California burned over 157,000 acres, tore through the historic land of the Karuk Tribe, and destroyed almost 200 homes.⁸⁰ The following year, the Dixie Fire destroyed the Mountain Maidu’s Greenville Rancheria office and health facilities.⁸¹ Just two years later, the McKinney Fire killed four civilians, destroyed a building storing Karuk tribal archives, and resulted in a huge die-off of fish in the Klamath River, an important tribal resource.⁸² In

⁷⁶ Mapes, Lynda, “2020 wildfires left precious endangered species habitat in Central Washington ‘nothing but ash and dust,’” The Seattle Times, June 7, 2021, <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/2020-wildfires-left-precious-endangered-species-habitat-in-central-washington-nothing-but-ash-and-dust/>.

⁷⁷ *Id.*

⁷⁸ Wigglesworth, Alex, “This tribe was barred from cultural burning for decades — then a fire hit their community,” May 7, 2023, LA Times, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2023-05-07/native-tribe-faces-displacement-after-california-wildfire>.

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ U.S. Forest Service, “Slater/Devil Fires 2020”, November 24, 2020, https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2021-05/SlaterFire_FINAL%20202.pdf. The Guardian, “Fire tore through Karuk tribe’s homeland. Many won’t be able to rebuild” Vivial Ho, October 23, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/oct/23/karuk-tribe-california-slater-fire-insurance>.

⁸¹ *Id.*

⁸² Los Angeles Times, “The tribe was barred from cultural burning for decades-then a fire hit their community”, Alex Wigglesworth, May 7th, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2023-05-07/native-tribe-faces-displacement-after-california-wildfire#>.

Mariposa County, California, the location of the field hearing, “multiple members of the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation were displaced by the Oak Fire, which destroyed more than 100 homes in Mariposa County.”⁸³ The Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation Members, whose ancestral homeland is the Yosemite Valley, had “a lot of people left with nothing,” further stating that “some people weren’t even able to make it home to try to get stuff so they have the car they were driving and the clothes on their back — that’s it.”⁸⁴ Due to the fact that some of these Tribal members were uninsured, coupled with overly inflated home prices near Yosemite, many Tribal members will be displaced due to this fire “for many years to come.”⁸⁵

Impacted Outdoor Recreation

Peak tourism season to our national parks and public lands often overlaps with the height of the wildfire year. Yosemite, one of the most popular national parks in the United States, offers the perfect backdrop to discuss how wildfires impact families and visitors looking to enjoy our national parks. Yosemite is one of the most naturally beautiful areas in the nation with unmatched waterfalls, iconic Giant Sequoias, unusual rock formations and active glaciers within the nearly 1,200 mile valley.⁸⁶ Last year, over 3.67 million people visited Yosemite to enjoy its world class climbing, hiking, camping and many other outdoor recreation activities.⁸⁷ Several recent fires have negatively affected visitor experiences and outdoor recreation. In 2018, the Ferguson Fire burned more than 96,000 acres and forced the Yosemite Valley to close during the height of tourist season.⁸⁸ Last year, the Washburn Fire threatened the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias located in the southern portion of Yosemite, closing one of the most prominent locations in the park.⁸⁹



The view of Yosemite Valley during a wildfire versus a clear day.
Source (Left): Smithsonian Magazine, 2018. **Source (Right):** Travel Yosemite, 2018.

⁸³ *Id.*

⁸⁴ *Id.*

⁸⁵ *Id.*

⁸⁶ PBS News Hour, 150 years ago, Abraham Lincoln signed the Yosemite Grant Act” June 30, 2014, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/yosemite-turns-150#:~:text=June%2030%20is%20an%20important,Grove%20as%20protected%20wilderness%20areas.>

⁸⁷ CNN, “The top 10 most visited US National Park sites are...” Forrest Brown, May 26, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/most-visited-us-national-park-sites-2022/index.html>.

⁸⁸ Smithsonian Magazine, “Fire Closes Yosemite Valley Indefinitely”, Jason Daley, August 9, 2018, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/fire-closes-yosemite-valley-indefinitely-180969958/>

⁸⁹ InciWeb, “Washburn Fire”, <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/caynp-washburn-fire>.

Broadly, wildfires have a significant impact on outdoor recreation. In Western communities, hazy conditions can negatively impact popular outdoor destinations that drive tourism in gateway communities. For example, in 2021, “travelers rolling up to storied mountain ranges in their campers [found] peaks shrouded in haze from fires and record-setting temperatures” and charred vistas with restrictions on where it was safe to hike.⁹⁰ Between 2020 and 2021, 1,029 USFS recreation sites were damaged by wildfires, costing \$126 million.⁹¹ Over the past five years, wildfires impacted 23,750 trail miles; 1,360 climbing sites; and 1,708 miles of whitewater paddling runs.⁹² Many trails and campgrounds can be closed for years after a wildfire, as land managers struggle to expeditiously remove hazard trees and restore recreation areas for public use. The threat of wildfires also consistently leads to closures at national forests, national parks, and other federal lands.⁹³ In California, all national forests have gone through closures due to wildfire threats in recent years.⁹⁴ Last year, all five national forests in New Mexico also closed due to fires.⁹⁵ This is not simply an inconvenience to Americans looking to recreate outdoors during summer months, it is a fundamental impairment to full access to our public lands and a detriment to the estimated 40,000 small businesses that provide guide and outfitter services that rely on federal lands.⁹⁶ Research suggests that wildfires reduce visitation to national parks by 700,000 visits per year and that 1 million campground visitor-days are impacted by wildfire smoke.⁹⁷ In 2012, one study estimated the economic impact of forgone non-resident spending due to wildfires around the Greater Yellowstone Area to be \$159 million.⁹⁸ Prolonged closures and reduced recreation visits put small businesses, and the rural communities that rely upon them, in jeopardy.

Loss of Irreplaceable American Giants

There is perhaps no better place than Yosemite, home to the famed Mariposa Grove, to talk about one of the most potentially devastating consequences of the catastrophic wildfire crisis: the loss of iconic Giant Sequoias. Giant Sequoias, which can live for more than 3,000 years, are among the most fire-resilient tree species on the planet. Yet, in the last few years, catastrophic wildfires have decimated nearly one-fifth of the world’s mature Giant Sequoias.⁹⁹ While only 17 percent of groves burned over a 116-year period ending in 2014, six fires in the past six years

⁹⁰ Rowland, Christopher, “National park crowds across the West are braving intense heat and hazy skies,” The Washington Post, July 18, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/07/18/national-parks-heat-fires/>.

⁹¹ Outdoor Alliance, “Wildfire and Outdoor Recreation in the West,” July 2023, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54aabb14e4b01142027654ee/t/649dcd388c9dbf73648c777d/1688063291777/WildfireAndRecreation-WhitePaper-OutdoorAlliance-Digital.pdf>.

⁹² *Id.*

⁹³ *Id.*

⁹⁴ Mammoth Times, “All CA National Forests Close Aug. 31, Including Inyo”, August 31, 2021, https://www.mammothtimes.com/news/all-ca-national-forests-close-aug-31-including-inyo/article_2787f8ee-09f9-11ec-8341-136de779b7fa.html.

⁹⁵ *Id.*

⁹⁶ Congressional Research Service, “Guides and Outfitters on Federal Lands: Issues for Congress”, Mark K. DeSantis, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R46381.pdf>.

⁹⁷ *Id.* Gellman, et al., “Wildfire, smoke, and outdoor recreation in the western United States,” Forest Policy and Economics, Volume 134, January 2022, 102619.

⁹⁸ Duffield, et al., “Effects of wildfire on national park visitation and the regional economy: a natural experiment in the Northern Rockies,” International Journal of Wildland Fire 2013, 22, 1155–1166.

⁹⁹ National Park Service, “Wildfires Kill Unprecedented Numbers of Large Sequoia Trees,” February 25, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/wildfires-kill-unprecedented-numbers-of-large-sequoia-trees.htm>.

have burned over 85 percent of Giant Sequoia groves.¹⁰⁰ Unlike low-severity fires of the previous millennia, these fires had a higher severity and were incredibly deadly to Giant Sequoias. Giant Sequoias are now facing an unprecedented and existential threat that could push the species to extinction in the next 25 years.¹⁰¹ This is historically unprecedented, as the last recorded evidence of Giant Sequoia mortality due to wildfires occurred in the year 1297 A.D.¹⁰² Giant Sequoias are irreplaceable, and their loss has already had profound scientific, ecological, cultural, and economic impacts.

Two weeks after the introduction of the bipartisan “Save Our Sequoias (SOS) Act” in 2022, one of the primary organizations opposed to the bill announced they had successfully litigated to block a forest management project in Yosemite National Park designed to protect the Giant Sequoias. *Two days later*, the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias in Yosemite, the same grove that President Roosevelt referred to as a “great solemn cathedral,” caught on fire.¹⁰³ Wildland firefighters protected the Mariposa Grove by taking emergency actions to clear hazardous fuels from the Giant Sequoia trees, the exact same authorities the SOS Act would allow land managers to use *proactively* before a fire starts. These actions, along with prior fuels treatment work, are credited with saving the Mariposa Grove. Garrett Dickman, a firefighter and biologist at Yosemite National Park, stated that firefighters were able to save the grove “because those fuel reduction treatments have proven to be so effective.”¹⁰⁴



A firefighter fighting the Washburn Fire in the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias in Yosemite National Park. **Source:** LA Times, 2022.

One month after the 2022 introduction of the SOS Act, the USFS announced it would take emergency actions, identical to those first proposed by the legislation, to protect Giant Sequoias.¹⁰⁵ Less than one month ago, on July 13, the same environmental group that sued to stop the Yosemite projects sued to stop USFS’s emergency actions in the Nelder Grove in the Sierra National Forest, less than two hours away

¹⁰⁰ *Id.* (The six-year period referred to is 2015-2021).

¹⁰¹ Mariposa County Resource Conservation District, “Last of the Monarchs,” <https://vimeo.com/685657372/c526d9ece1>.

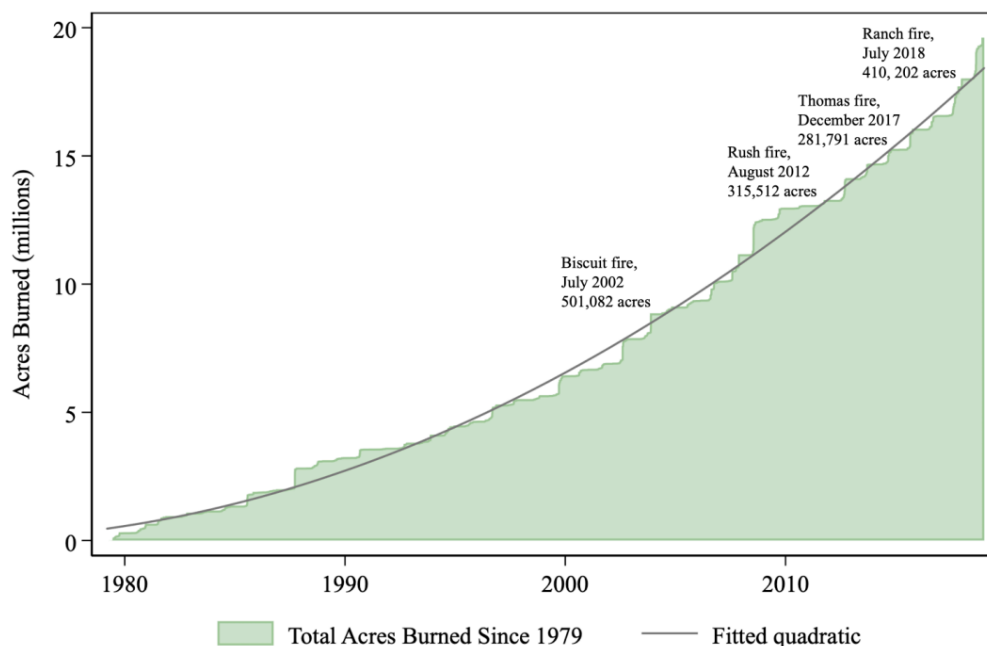
¹⁰² Boxall, *supra* note 8.

¹⁰³ Inciweb, “Washburn Fire,” <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/map/8209/0/131450>. Accessed on July 11, 2022.

¹⁰⁴ Harrell, Ashley, “Yosemite’s Mariposa Grove will survive Washburn Fire, says park’s forest ecologist,” SF Gate, July 11, 2022, <https://www.sfgate.com/california-wildfires/article/mariposa-grove-will-survive-fire-17298114.php>.

¹⁰⁵ USDA, “Forest Service Taking Emergency Action to Protect Giant Sequoias,” July 22, 2023, <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2022/07/22/forest-service-taking-emergency-action-protect-giant-sequoias>.

from the location of the field hearing.¹⁰⁶ In October 2021, the Editorial Board of the Sacramento Bee had this to say about the organization in question: “By weaponizing federal protections — such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) — to obstruct or outright kill various wildfire prevention projects, environmentalists imperil the very ecosystems they wish to protect.”¹⁰⁷ This active litigation reaffirms the need to swiftly pass the SOS Act and ensure that this generation is not the one that lets Giant Sequoias go extinct.



Cumulative Acres Burned, 1979-2018, for all fires in California. Selected fires labeled for reference.
Source: emLab, no date.

Republican Solutions to Improve Forest Health and Prevent Catastrophic Wildfires

The need to increase the pace and scale of active forest management has never been more apparent. Despite the fearmongering of increasingly isolated, radical environmentalists, there is a scientific consensus among a broad array of stakeholders recognizing the importance of active forest management.¹⁰⁸ Active forest management encourages sustained healthy growth, while removing much of the dangerous fuels buildup that leads to catastrophic wildfires.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, land managers are still failing to truly confront the wildfire crisis in large part due to a mixture of bureaucratic red tape, onerous regulations, and frivolous litigation. These factors delay or cancel critical forest management projects by diverting agency time and resources from important management activities to endless analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, circular consultations with other agencies, and obstructionist lawsuits. According to a recent report from the Property and Environment Research Center (PERC), it takes an average of 3.6

¹⁰⁶ Lawsuit on file with the Committee.

¹⁰⁷ Sacramento Bee Editorial Board, “Rogue environmentalists put Californians in harm’s way by blocking forest thinning projects,” Sacramento Bee, October 21, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ American Forest Resource Council, “Solutions”, <https://amforest.org/solutions/>.

¹⁰⁹ *Id.*

years to begin mechanical treatments and 4.7 years to begin a prescribed burn.¹¹⁰ USFS, for instance, has only been able to carry out 2 million acres of treatments annually in recent decades.¹¹¹ At this paltry rate, it will take the agency more than 30 years to complete the necessary treatments to improve the health of its high-risk forests.

In the first months of the 118th Congress, Committee Republicans crafted innovative legislative solutions to expedite environmental analyses; reduce frivolous lawsuits; ensure wildland firefighters have the tools and support they need; improve State, Tribal and local collaboration; and promote landscape scale management to treat extremely high-risk areas and communities. A selection of bills already considered this year by the House Committee on Natural Resources include:

- **H.R. 188 (Rep. McClintock), “Proven Forest Management Act”:** Expands the use nationwide of a 10,000-acre categorical exclusion that has been successfully used in the Tahoe Basin of California.¹¹²
- **H.R. 200 (Rep. Rosendale), “Forest Information Reform (FIR) Act”:** Provides a permanent fix to the *Cottonwood* decision, which has been exploited by extreme environmental litigants to delay or cancel forest management and wildfire mitigation projects.¹¹³
- **H.R. 1450 (Rep. Fulcher), “Treating Tribes and Counties as Good Neighbors Act”:** Makes technical changes to Good Neighbor Authority to empower Tribes and counties to fully participate in this program, which encourages cross-boundary collaboration.¹¹⁴
- **H.R. 1567 (Rep. Tiffany), “Accurately Counting Risk Elimination Solutions (ACRES) Act”:** Ends the practice of the Forest Service overreporting its hazardous fuels reduction treatments by counting the same treated acre multiple times, increasing transparency in the fight to restore healthy forest conditions across the nation.¹¹⁵
- **H.R. 1586 (Rep. LaMalfa), “Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act”:** Protects the use of aerial fire retardant, which is currently under threat from a frivolous lawsuit, to protect firefighters and forests.¹¹⁶
- **H.R. 1747 (Rep. Issa), “Direct Hire to Fight Fires Act”:** Provides federal land management agencies with permanent direct hiring authority to fill critically important wildland firefighting positions and reduce the red tape required to hire wildland firefighters.¹¹⁷
- **H.R. 2989 (Rep. McCarthy), “Save Our Sequoias (SOS) Act”:** The SOS Act is bipartisan legislation that would declare a Congressional emergency for the Giant

¹¹⁰ PERC, “Does Environmental Review Worsen the Wildfire Crisis”, Eric Edwards, Sara Sutherland, June 14, 2022, <https://perc.org/2022/06/14/does-environmental-review-worsen-the-wildfire-crisis/>.

¹¹¹ *Id.*

¹¹² Proven Forest Management Act of 2022, H.R. 188, 118th, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/188?s=1&r=48>.

¹¹³ Forest Information Reform (FIR) Act, H.R. 200, 118th, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/200?s=1&r=15>.

¹¹⁴ Treating Tribes and Counties as Good Neighbors Act, H.R. 1450, 118th, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/1450>.

¹¹⁵ ACRES Act, H.R. 1567, 118th, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/1567>.

¹¹⁶ Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act, H.R. 1586, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/1586>.

¹¹⁷ Direct Hire to Fight Fires Act, H.R. 1747, 117th, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1747/text?r=15&s=1>.

Sequoias, giving federal, State, Tribal, and local land managers the expedited tools and resources they need to save this iconic species.¹¹⁸

- **H.R 3552 (Rep. Moore of UT), “FIRESHEDS Act”**: Streamlines landscape-scale forest management activities in the areas most at risk for wildfire across the nation.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Save Our Sequoias (SOS) Act, H.R. 2989, 118th, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/2989>.

¹¹⁹ Forest Improvements through Research and Emergency Stewardship for Healthy Ecosystem Development and Sustainability (FIRESHEDS) Act, H.R. 3522, 118th, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/3522>