

SECTION-BY-SECTION
Wildland Fires Act of 2017

Sec. 1, 2, and 3. Short Title, Purpose, and Definitions. The purpose of this Act is to help further the National Cohesive Fire Strategy by directing Federal agencies to treat their most at-risk forests to better protect at-risk communities and to reestablish natural fire regimes.

Sec. 4. Additional accountability. Requires a cost review of every wildfire over 100,000 acres; e.g., reviewing the effectiveness of decisions and comparing cost to comparable wildfires.

Sec. 5. Incentive for cost savings. Authorizes the Secretaries to re-purpose unused wildfire suppression funds to conduct wildfire risk reduction projects.

Sec. 6 and 7. At-risk communities and community preparing assistance. Directs the Forest Service (FS) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) to publish a list of communities that are at-risk to wildfires, update the national map of the wildland-urban interface, and provide funding to these communities for planning and preparing for wildfires.

Sec. 8. Accelerated restoration program for ponderosa pine forests. Establishes a pilot program that directs the FS and DOI to treat the top 1% most-at-risk, least-controversial lands over the next 10 years by reducing wildfire risk in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) and conducting prescribed fires outside of the WUI.

- Treatment generally includes removing small and medium-sized trees and slash.
- A categorical exclusion is available for projects in the pilot program if they meet a number of requirements, including being supported by a *certified* collaborative.
- An advisory group will advise on the pilot's implementation and, when complete, make recommendations about if and how the program should be modified or expanded.

Sec. 9. Increasing certainty for the local workforce and infrastructure. Authorizes the use of 10-year contracts for prescribed fire companies and of up to ten 20-year contracts for restoration projects or fuels reduction projects on Federal land (and provides a preference to entities that will use the resulting forest products to manufacture mass timber, e.g., cross-laminated timber.)

Sec. 10. National Forest foundation. Directs the National Forest Foundation to establish a certification program for collaborative groups working to increase projects on Federal land.

Sec. 11. Termination of authority. The authorities in this Act terminate in 10 years.