

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 482

To improve Federal activities relating to wildfires, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 24, 2023

Mr. NEGUSE (for himself, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. HORSFORD, and Ms. MATSUI) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Armed Services, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To improve Federal activities relating to wildfires, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Western Wildfire Support Act of 2023”.

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
7 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—PREPARATION

- Sec. 101. Firefighting accounts.
 Sec. 102. Reimbursement for wildfires caused by military training.
 Sec. 103. Strategic wildland fire management planning.
 Sec. 104. Accounts to assist communities in planning and preparing for wildfires.
 Sec. 105. Community support during disaster response.

TITLE II—WILDFIRE DETECTION AND SUPPRESSION SUPPORT

- Sec. 201. Wildfire detection equipment.
 Sec. 202. Grant program for slip-on tank units.
 Sec. 203. Assistance to States for operation of air tankers.
 Sec. 204. Research and development of unmanned aircraft system fire applications.
 Sec. 205. Study on effects of drone incursions on wildfire suppression.
 Sec. 206. Study on wildfire detection equipment and integration of artificial intelligence technologies.

TITLE III—POST-FIRE RECOVERY SUPPORT

- Sec. 301. Funding for online guides for post-fire assistance.
 Sec. 302. Long-Term Burned Area Recovery account.
 Sec. 303. Prize for wildfire-related invasive species reduction.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term
 4 “congressional committees” means—

5 (A) the Committee on Energy and Natural
 6 Resources and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and
 7

8 (B) the Committee on Natural Resources
 9 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
 10 House of Representatives.

11 (2) FEDERAL LAND.—The term “Federal land”
 12 means—

1 (A) public lands (as defined in section 103
2 of the Federal Land Policy and Management
3 Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702));

4 (B) units of the National Park System;

5 (C) units of the National Wildlife Refuge
6 System;

7 (D) land held in trust by the United States
8 for the benefit of Indian Tribes or members of
9 an Indian Tribe; and

10 (E) land in the National Forest System.

11 (3) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “National
13 Forest System” has the meaning given the term
14 in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland
15 Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16
16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

17 (B) EXCLUSION.—The term “National
18 Forest System” does not include—

19 (i) the national grasslands and land
20 utilization projects administered under title
21 III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant
22 Act (7 U.S.C. 1010 et seq.); or

23 (ii) National Forest System land east
24 of the 100th meridian.

1 (4) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
2 means—

3 (A) the Secretary of the Interior; and

4 (B) the Secretary of Agriculture.

5 (5) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Sec-
6 retary concerned” means—

7 (A) the Secretary of the Interior, in the
8 case of Federal land under the jurisdiction of
9 the Secretary of the Interior; and

10 (B) the Secretary of Agriculture, in the
11 case of Federal land under the jurisdiction of
12 the Secretary of Agriculture.

13 **TITLE I—PREPARATION**

14 **SEC. 101. FIREFIGHTING ACCOUNTS.**

15 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCOUNTS.—There are es-
16 tablished in the Treasury of the United States the fol-
17 lowing accounts:

18 (1) The Firefighting Operations account for the
19 Department of Agriculture.

20 (2) The Firefighting Operations account for the
21 Department of the Interior.

22 (b) BUDGET ACTIVITIES WITHIN ACCOUNTS.—The
23 following activities shall be specified for funding within
24 each Firefighting Operations account established by sub-
25 section (a):

1 (1) Ground-based firefighting operations.

2 (2) Aircraft use in firefighting operations.

3 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

4 (1) GROUND-BASED FIREFIGHTING OPER-
5 ATIONS.—

6 (A) DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—

7 There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal
8 year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter to the
9 account established by subsection (a)(1) not
10 more than \$3,000,000,000 for ground-based
11 firefighting operations.

12 (B) DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.—

13 There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal
14 year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter to the
15 account established by subsection (a)(2) not
16 more than \$1,000,000,000 for ground-based
17 firefighting operations.

18 (2) AIRCRAFT USE IN FIREFIGHTING OPER-
19 ATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for
20 fiscal year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter to
21 the accounts established by subsection (a), a total
22 amount of not more than \$500,000,000 for aircraft
23 use in firefighting operations.

24 (d) PRESIDENTIAL BUDGET REQUESTS.—For fiscal
25 year 2025 and each fiscal year thereafter, each Secretary

1 concerned shall submit through the budget request of the
2 President and in accordance with subsection (c), a request
3 for amounts in the Wildland Fire Management appropria-
4 tion account of the Secretary concerned to carry out the
5 activities described in subsection (e).

6 (e) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall use
8 amounts provided to the respective accounts estab-
9 lished under subsection (a) as follows:

10 (A) The Secretary of Agriculture shall use
11 amounts appropriated under subsection
12 (c)(1)(A) to carry out management activities for
13 active wildfires through the Forest Service, ex-
14 cept that none of the amounts may be used for
15 the operation of aircraft.

16 (B) The Secretary of the Interior shall use
17 amounts appropriated under subsection
18 (c)(1)(B) to carry out management activities
19 for active wildfires, except that none of the
20 amounts may be used for the operation of air-
21 craft.

22 (C) The Secretary concerned shall use
23 amounts appropriated under subsection (c)(2)
24 to acquire, by contract or purchase, and use

1 aircraft, including unmanned aerial systems, for
2 operations relating to wildland fires.

3 (2) LIMITATION.—The Secretary concerned
4 shall not use to carry out any activity authorized by
5 paragraph (1)(C) amounts appropriated to accounts
6 of the Secretary concerned other than amounts in
7 the accounts established by subsection (a) specified
8 for activities described in subsection (b)(2).

9 (f) ACCOUNTING REPORTS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each Secretary concerned
11 shall submit to the congressional committees month-
12 ly accounting reports regarding the amounts that
13 have been obligated and expended under this section
14 during the preceding month of the applicable fiscal
15 year.

16 (2) INCLUSIONS.—Each report under para-
17 graph (1) shall include a description of, with respect
18 to the period covered by the report—

19 (A) Federal ground-based equipment costs;

20 (B) Federal aircraft use costs;

21 (C) Federal personnel costs;

22 (D) on-incident and off-incident support
23 costs; and

1 (E) funding allocated from the Wildland
2 Fire Management account of the Secretary con-
3 cerned to pay for administrative costs.

4 (3) REQUIREMENTS.—Each report under para-
5 graph (1) shall be prepared in accordance with ap-
6 plicable national fire plan reporting procedures.

7 **SEC. 102. REIMBURSEMENT FOR WILDFIRES CAUSED BY**
8 **MILITARY TRAINING.**

9 (a) REIMBURSEMENT REQUIRED.—The Secretary of
10 Defense shall, on application by a State or Federal agency,
11 reimburse the State or Federal agency for the reasonable
12 costs of the State or Federal agency for services provided
13 in connection with fire suppression as a result of a fire
14 caused by military training or other actions carried out
15 by the Armed Forces or employees of the Department of
16 Defense.

17 (b) LIMITATION.—Services reimbursable under sub-
18 section (a) shall be limited to services proximately related
19 to the fire for which reimbursement is sought.

20 (c) APPLICATION.—Each application from a State or
21 Federal agency for reimbursement for costs under sub-
22 section (a) shall provide an itemized request of the services
23 covered by the application, including the costs of the serv-
24 ices.

1 (d) FUNDS.—Reimbursements under subsection (a)
2 shall be made from amounts authorized to be appropriated
3 to the Department of Defense for operation and mainte-
4 nance.

5 **SEC. 103. STRATEGIC WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN-**
6 **NING.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30,
8 2026, the Secretary concerned shall, in accordance with
9 this section, establish a series of spatial fire management
10 plans.

11 (b) USE OF EXISTING PLANS.—To comply with this
12 section, the Secretary concerned may use a fire manage-
13 ment plan in existence on the date of enactment of this
14 Act.

15 (c) UPDATES.—To be valid, a spatial fire manage-
16 ment plan established under this section shall not be in
17 use for longer than the 10-year period beginning on the
18 date on which the plan is established.

19 (d) SUBUNIT PLANS.—The Secretary concerned shall
20 establish a spatial fire management plan for each unit of
21 Federal land with more than 10 acres of burnable vegeta-
22 tion under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned.

23 (e) CONTENTS.—For each spatial fire management
24 plan established under this section, the Secretary con-
25 cerned shall—

1 (1) base the plans on a landscape-scale risk as-
2 assessment that includes—

3 (A) risks to firefighters;

4 (B) risks to communities;

5 (C) risks to highly valuable resources; and

6 (D) other relevant considerations deter-
7 mined by the Secretary concerned;

8 (2) include direction, represented in spatial
9 form, from land management plans and resource
10 management plans;

11 (3) in coordination with States, delineate poten-
12 tial wildland fire operational delineations that—

13 (A) identify potential control locations; and

14 (B) specify the places in which firefighters
15 will not be sent because of the presence of un-
16 acceptable risk, including areas determined by
17 the Secretary concerned as—

18 (i) exceeding a certain slope;

19 (ii) containing too high of a volume of
20 hazardous fuels, under certain weather
21 conditions; or

22 (iii) containing other known hazards;

23 (4) include a determination of average severe
24 fire weather for the plan area;

25 (5) include prefire planning provisions;

1 (6) include a plan for postfire activities that—

2 (A) would better enable a Burned Area
3 Emergency Response Team working on a large
4 fire incident to address emergency stabilization
5 and erosion quickly; and

6 (B) specifies ways in which the Burned
7 Area Emergency Response Team would seek to
8 prevent the proliferation of invasive species in
9 working on the large fire incident; and

10 (7) include, at a minimum, any other require-
11 ment determined to be necessary by the Secretary
12 concerned.

13 (f) CONSISTENCY WITH MANAGEMENT PLANS.—The
14 spatial fire management plans established under this sec-
15 tion shall be consistent with the fire management objec-
16 tives and land management objectives in the applicable
17 land management plan or resource management plan.

18 (g) REVISIONS TO LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS AND
19 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS.—A revision to a land
20 management plan or resource management plan shall con-
21 sider fire ecology and fire management in a manner that
22 facilitates the issuance of direction for an incident re-
23 sponse.

24 (h) ENGAGEMENT DURING LAND MANAGEMENT
25 PLANNING.—A supervisory employee of the Department

1 of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture that is
2 funded through a Firefighting Operations account estab-
3 lished under section 101 shall participate directly in the
4 creation or revision of an applicable land management
5 plan or resource management plan to incorporate an as-
6 sessment, protocol, or plan developed under this Act into
7 the planning process.

8 **SEC. 104. ACCOUNTS TO ASSIST COMMUNITIES IN PLAN-**
9 **NING AND PREPARING FOR WILDFIRES.**

10 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCOUNTS.—There are es-
11 tablished in the Treasury of the United States the fol-
12 lowing accounts:

13 (1) The Community-Supported Land-Use Plan-
14 ning Assistance account for the Department of Agri-
15 culture.

16 (2) The Community-Supported Land-Use Plan-
17 ning Assistance account for the Department of the
18 Interior.

19 (b) BUDGET ACTIVITIES WITHIN ACCOUNTS.—The
20 following activities shall be specified for funding within
21 each Community-Supported Land-Use Planning Assist-
22 ance account established by subsection (a):

23 (1) The Firewise Program operated by the Na-
24 tional Fire Protection Association.

25 (2) Community wildfire protection programs.

1 (3) The Fire-Adapted Communities Learning
2 Network.

3 (4) Vegetation management by communities.

4 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 are authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2024 and
6 each fiscal year thereafter for the accounts established by
7 subsection (a) such sums as are necessary to carry out
8 this section, not to exceed \$200,000,000.

9 (d) PRESIDENTIAL BUDGET REQUESTS.—For fiscal
10 year 2025 and each fiscal year thereafter, each Secretary
11 concerned shall submit through the budget request of the
12 President and in accordance with subsection (c), a request
13 for amounts in the Wildland Fire Management appropria-
14 tion account of the Secretary concerned to carry out the
15 activities described in subsection (b).

16 (e) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary con-
17 cerned shall use amounts in the accounts established by
18 subsection (a) as follows:

19 (1) With respect to amounts appropriated for
20 the activity described in subsection (b)(1), the Sec-
21 retary concerned may—

22 (A) cosponsor the Firewise Program; and

23 (B) support the expansion of the Firewise
24 Communities/USA Recognition Program to ad-
25 ditional at-risk communities.

1 (2) With respect to amounts appropriated for
2 the activity described in subsection (b)(2), the Sec-
3 retary concerned may provide assistance to at-risk
4 communities to establish and revise—

5 (A) a community wildfire protection plan
6 (as defined in section 101 of the Healthy For-
7 ests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C.
8 6511)); or

9 (B) a community evacuation plan.

10 (3) With respect to amounts appropriated for
11 the activity described in subsection (b)(3), the Sec-
12 retary concerned shall establish a small grant pro-
13 gram to address local hazard reduction on Federal,
14 State, or private land, subject to the conditions
15 that—

16 (A) a grant provided under the program—

17 (i) may be awarded to an organization
18 in an at-risk community to address, in a
19 sole instance, a hazardous fuel in a specific
20 location, including piling and burning, and
21 implementing a prescribed fire on private
22 land;

23 (ii) shall not exceed \$20,000; and

1 (iii) shall require cost-sharing assist-
2 ance in an amount equal to not less than
3 10 percent of the amount of the grant;

4 (B) the work identified for funding under
5 the grant shall be accomplished by a team com-
6 posed of, at a minimum—

7 (i) a private citizen;

8 (ii) a representative of a nonprofit or-
9 ganization; and

10 (iii) a local fire department, including
11 a volunteer fire department;

12 (C) to be eligible for a grant under the
13 program, a strategic plan outlining the means
14 by which the applicant will address a hazardous
15 fuel shall be submitted to the Secretary con-
16 cerned; and

17 (D) on completion of a grant project, the
18 grant recipient shall—

19 (i) submit to the Secretary concerned
20 a report; and

21 (ii) participate in training another
22 grant recipient during the following fiscal
23 year.

24 (4) With respect to amounts appropriated for
25 the activity described in subsection (b)(4), the Sec-

1 (B) operate continuously under the direc-
2 tion of the designee while providing assistance
3 on a wildland fire.

4 (c) CERTIFICATION.—

5 (1) CRITERIA.—

6 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall
7 certify volunteers to provide assistance for each
8 category of service established under subsection
9 (b).

10 (B) ESTABLISHMENT OF CRITERIA.—The
11 Secretaries shall establish criteria for a volun-
12 teer to be certified for each category of service.

13 (C) ATTENDANCE.—Attendance at training
14 conducted under paragraph (2) shall be 1 of the
15 criteria established under subparagraph (B).

16 (D) ASSESSMENT.—The Secretaries shall
17 assess the knowledge, skills, or abilities, of a
18 person prior to certifying a person to become a
19 volunteer.

20 (2) TRAINING.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall
22 regularly conduct training for citizens who de-
23 sire to be certified as volunteers.

24 (B) CONTENT.—The training shall include,
25 at a minimum, a safety component in an effort

1 to minimize inherent threats to volunteers and
2 maximize the safety of a volunteer, to the max-
3 imum extent practicable, as a volunteer pro-
4 vides assistance on a wildland fire.

5 (C) FREQUENCY.—The Secretaries shall
6 offer, at a minimum, 1 training session in each
7 State with significant wildfire risk, not less
8 than every 2 years.

9 (3) IDENTIFICATION.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—On the certification of
11 a volunteer, the Secretary concerned shall pro-
12 vide to the volunteer a means of identification
13 as a volunteer.

14 (B) DISPLAY.—A volunteer certified under
15 this section shall display, continuously while as-
16 sisting in a wildland fire, the means of identi-
17 fication.

18 **TITLE II—WILDFIRE DETECTION** 19 **AND SUPPRESSION SUPPORT**

20 **SEC. 201. WILDFIRE DETECTION EQUIPMENT.**

21 To the extent practicable, the Secretary concerned
22 shall—

23 (1) expedite the placement of wildfire detection
24 equipment, such as sensors, cameras, and other rel-
25 evant equipment, in areas at risk of wildfire;

1 (2) expand the use of satellite data to assist
2 wildfire response; and

3 (3) expedite any permitting required by the
4 Secretary concerned for the installation, mainte-
5 nance, or removal of wildfire detection equipment.

6 **SEC. 202. GRANT PROGRAM FOR SLIP-ON TANK UNITS.**

7 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretaries shall establish a
8 program to award to an eligible State or unit of local gov-
9 ernment each year grants to acquire slip-on tank and
10 pump units (referred to in this section as “slip-on units”)
11 for a surge capacity of resources for fire suppression.

12 (b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—

13 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—To be eligible to receive a
14 grant under this section, a State or unit of local gov-
15 ernment shall—

16 (A) submit an application at such time, in
17 such manner, and containing such information
18 as the Secretaries may require; and

19 (B) contribute non-Federal funds in ac-
20 cordance with paragraph (2).

21 (2) **COST-SHARE REQUIREMENTS.**—The non-
22 Federal share of the cost of acquiring slip-on units
23 using a grant under this section shall be not less
24 than 25 percent.

25 (c) **USE OF FUNDS.**—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Grants awarded under this
2 section shall be used only for the acquisition of not
3 fewer than 30 slip-on units.

4 (2) RESTRICTIONS.—A recipient of a grant
5 under this section—

6 (A) shall be responsible for the cost of the
7 maintenance and use of the slip-on units; and

8 (B) may not use grant funds for a cost de-
9 scribed in subparagraph (A).

10 (d) REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATION OF SLIP-ON
11 UNITS.—A recipient of a grant under this section shall—

12 (1) in maintaining and storing the slip-on
13 units—

14 (A) store and mount a slip-on unit on a ve-
15 hicle only during—

16 (i) a period of extreme fire danger; or

17 (ii) an active wildland fire;

18 (B) designate a vehicle and personnel to be
19 used with each slip-on unit;

20 (C) make any necessary modification to a
21 designated vehicle to ensure compatibility with
22 the use of the slip-on unit;

23 (D) train designated personnel to use the
24 slip-on unit;

1 (E) ensure designated personnel possess el-
2 ementary wildland fire management skills, in-
3 cluding post-fire-front structure-protection tac-
4 tics; and

5 (F) maintain each slip-on unit in good, us-
6 able condition for a period of not fewer than 20
7 years;

8 (2) during a large, active wildland fire—

9 (A) staff each designated vehicle equipped
10 with a slip-on unit with—

11 (i) a person designated under para-
12 graph (1)(B); and

13 (ii) a trained firefighter, regardless of
14 whether the trained firefighter is paid, vol-
15 unteer, or off-duty but paid;

16 (B) organize each designated vehicle
17 equipped with a slip-on unit into a team with
18 other designated vehicles under the direction of
19 a qualified task force leader; and

20 (C) use each designated vehicle equipped
21 with a slip-on unit primarily for the purpose of
22 following behind the wildland fire front—

23 (i) to prevent homes from igniting;

24 and

- 1 (ii) to alert fire engines of structures
2 that have ignited; and
3 (3) comply with any other requirements deter-
4 mined to be necessary by the Secretaries, including
5 any minimum requirements for a slip-on unit and
6 any additional required equipment.

7 **SEC. 203. ASSISTANCE TO STATES FOR OPERATION OF AIR**
8 **TANKERS.**

9 The Secretary concerned may provide funding to
10 States to enable States to operate not more than 50 sin-
11 gle-engine air tankers if—

12 (1) the single-engine air tanker is government-
13 owned and contractor-operated or government-owned
14 and government-operated;

15 (2) a State receiving funding for a single-engine
16 air tanker under this section shares the cost with
17 the Secretary of the acquisition and operation of the
18 aircraft; and

19 (3) the single-engine air tanker—

20 (A) shall be used for initial attack; and

21 (B) shall not be used for large fire aviation
22 support.

23 **SEC. 204. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF UNMANNED**
24 **AIRCRAFT SYSTEM FIRE APPLICATIONS.**

25 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) COVERED UNMANNED AIRCRAFT TEST
2 RANGE.—The term “covered unmanned aircraft test
3 range” means a test range that is approved of or
4 designated by the Administrator of the Federal
5 Aviation Administration for the testing of unmanned
6 aircraft systems, as required under section 44803 of
7 title 49, United States Code.

8 (2) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The term
9 “unmanned aircraft system” means an unmanned
10 aircraft and associated elements (including commu-
11 nication links and the components that control the
12 unmanned aircraft) that are required for the oper-
13 ator to operate safely and efficiently in the national
14 airspace system of the Federal Aviation Administra-
15 tion.

16 (b) JOINT FIRE SCIENCE PROGRAM.—The Secretary
17 of the Interior shall, acting through the Joint Fire Science
18 Program, work with covered unmanned aircraft test
19 ranges to carry out research and development of un-
20 manned aircraft system fire applications.

21 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
22 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the
23 Interior such sums as are necessary to carry out this sec-
24 tion.

1 **SEC. 205. STUDY ON EFFECTS OF DRONE INCURSIONS ON**
2 **WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION.**

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) DRONE.—The term “drone” means an un-
5 manned aircraft system owned by a private indi-
6 vidual or entity.

7 (2) DRONE INCURSION.—The term “drone in-
8 cursion” means the operation of a drone within any
9 airspace for which the Administrator of the Federal
10 Aviation Administration has issued a temporary
11 flight restriction because of a wildfire.

12 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
13 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
14 rector of the Bureau of Land Management.

15 (b) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Secretary, in consulta-
16 tion with the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
17 Chief of the Forest Service, shall conduct a study on the
18 effects of drone incursions on wildfire suppression with re-
19 spect to land managed by the Department of the Interior
20 or the Department of Agriculture.

21 (c) STUDY CONTENTS.—In conducting the study re-
22 quired under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

23 (1) determine, for each of the 5 most recent
24 calendar years—

1 (A) the number of occurrences in which a
2 drone incursion interfered with wildfire suppres-
3 sion; and

4 (B) the effect of each occurrence described
5 in subparagraph (A) on—

6 (i) the length of time required to
7 achieve complete suppression;

8 (ii) the effectiveness of aerial fire-
9 fighting responses; and

10 (iii) the amounts expended by the
11 Federal Government; and

12 (2) evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of
13 various actions to prevent drone incursions, includ-
14 ing—

15 (A) the use of reasonable force to disable,
16 damage, or destroy a drone;

17 (B) the seizure of a drone, including sei-
18 zure with a net device; and

19 (C) the dissemination of educational mate-
20 rials relating to the effects of drone incursions
21 on wildfire suppression.

22 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the
23 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
24 to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of

1 the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of
2 the House of Representatives a report describing—

3 (1) the findings of the study required under
4 subsection (b); and

5 (2) any recommendations of the Secretary relat-
6 ing to those findings.

7 **SEC. 206. STUDY ON WILDFIRE DETECTION EQUIPMENT**
8 **AND INTEGRATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTEL-**
9 **LIGENCE TECHNOLOGIES.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall conduct a
11 study on—

12 (1) the effectiveness and limitations on the de-
13 ployment and application of each wildfire detection
14 equipment technology with respect to detection, con-
15 firmation, geolocation, predictability of wildfire
16 spread, suppression resource management, post-fire
17 forensics, and surface rehabilitation;

18 (2) how each technology described in paragraph
19 (1), with proper and timely deployment and use, can
20 provide for the most effective and efficient means of
21 dealing with the threat and the reality of wildland
22 fires;

23 (3) the integration of artificial intelligence with
24 real-time imagery and weather data provided by
25 wildfire detection equipment technology; and

1 (4) how the integration of artificial intelligence
2 described in paragraph (3) can enhance the value of
3 each wildfire detection equipment technology, indi-
4 vidually and collectively.

5 (b) SUBMISSION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Not
6 later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act,
7 the Secretaries shall submit to the congressional commit-
8 tees and make publicly available the results of the study
9 conducted under subsection (a).

10 **TITLE III—POST-FIRE RECOVERY** 11 **SUPPORT**

12 **SEC. 301. FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR POST-FIRE** 13 **ASSISTANCE.**

14 (a) USE OF SERVICES OF OTHER AGENCIES.—Sec-
15 tion 201(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
16 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131(a)) is amend-
17 ed—

18 (1) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at
19 the end and inserting “; and”; and

20 (2) by adding at the end the following:

21 “(8) post-disaster assistance.”.

22 (b) FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR ASSIST-
23 ANCE.—Section 201 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
24 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131)
25 is amended by adding at the end the following:

1 “(e) FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR ASSIST-
2 ANCE.—

3 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
4 Federal Emergency Management Agency may enter
5 into a cooperative agreement to provide funding to
6 a State agency established under subsection (c) to
7 establish and operate a website to provide informa-
8 tion relating to post-fire recovery funding and re-
9 sources to a community or an individual impacted by
10 a wildland fire.

11 “(2) MANAGEMENT.—A website created under
12 this subsection shall be—

13 “(A) managed by the State agency; and

14 “(B) suitable for the residents of the State
15 of the State agency.

16 “(3) CONTENT.—The Administrator may enter
17 into a cooperative agreement to establish a website
18 under this subsection only to provide 1 or more of
19 the following:

20 “(A) A list of Federal, State, and local
21 sources of post-fire recovery funding or assist-
22 ance that may be available to a community
23 after a wildfire.

24 “(B) A list of Federal, State, and local
25 sources of post-fire recovery funding or assist-

1 ance that may be available to an individual im-
2 pacted by a wildfire.

3 “(C) A technical guide that lists and ex-
4 plains the costs and benefits of alternatives
5 available to a community to mitigate the im-
6 pacts of wildfire and prepare for potential flood-
7 ing.

8 “(4) COOPERATION.—A State agency that en-
9 ters into a cooperative agreement under this sub-
10 section shall cooperate with the Secretary of the In-
11 terior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Admin-
12 istrator of the Federal Emergency Management
13 Agency in developing a website under this sub-
14 section.

15 “(5) UPDATES.—A State agency that receives
16 funding to establish a website under this subsection
17 shall update the website not less than once every 6
18 years.”.

19 **SEC. 302. LONG-TERM BURNED AREA RECOVERY ACCOUNT.**

20 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCOUNT.—There is estab-
21 lished in the Treasury of the United States the Long-
22 Term Burned Area Recovery account for the Department
23 of Agriculture.

24 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
25 are authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2024 and

1 each fiscal year thereafter for the account established by
2 subsection (a) such sums as are necessary to carry out
3 the activities described in subsection (d), not to exceed
4 \$100,000,000.

5 (c) PRESIDENTIAL BUDGET REQUESTS.—For fiscal
6 year 2025 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary
7 of Agriculture shall submit through the budget request of
8 the President and in accordance with subsection (b), a re-
9 quest for amounts in the Wildland Fire Management ap-
10 propriation account to carry out the activities described
11 in subsection (d).

12 (d) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of Ag-
13 riculture shall use amounts in the account established by
14 subsection (a) for rehabilitation projects—

15 (1) that begin not earlier than 1 year after the
16 date on which the wildfire was contained;

17 (2) that are—

18 (A) scheduled to be completed not later
19 than 3 years after the date on which the wild-
20 fire was contained; and

21 (B) located at sites impacted by wildfire on
22 non-Federal or Federal land;

23 (3) that restore the functions of an ecosystem
24 or protect life or property; and

1 (4) not less than 10 percent of the total costs
2 of which are paid for with non-Federal funds.

3 (e) **PRIORITIZATION OF FUNDING.**—The Secretary of
4 Agriculture shall prioritize, on a nationwide basis, projects
5 for which funding requests are submitted under this sec-
6 tion, based on—

- 7 (1) downstream effects on water resources; and
8 (2) public safety.

9 **SEC. 303. PRIZE FOR WILDFIRE-RELATED INVASIVE SPE-**
10 **CIES REDUCTION.**

11 Section 7001(d) of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Con-
12 servation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C.
13 742b note; Public Law 116–9) is amended—

14 (1) by striking “paragraph (8)(A)” each place
15 it appears and inserting “paragraph (9)(A)”;

16 (2) by striking “paragraph (8)(B)” each place
17 it appears and inserting “paragraph (9)(B)”;

18 (3) by redesignating paragraph (8) as para-
19 graph (9);

20 (4) by inserting after paragraph (7) the fol-
21 lowing:

22 “(8) **THEODORE ROOSEVELT GENIUS PRIZE**
23 **FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDFIRE-RELATED INVASIVE**
24 **SPECIES.**—

25 “(A) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this paragraph:

1 “(i) BOARD.—The term ‘Board’
2 means the Management of Wildfire-Related
3 Invasive Species Technology Advisory
4 Board established by subparagraph (C)(i).

5 “(ii) PRIZE COMPETITION.—The term
6 ‘prize competition’ means the Theodore
7 Roosevelt Genius Prize for the manage-
8 ment of wildfire-related invasive species es-
9 tablished under subparagraph (B).

10 “(B) AUTHORITY.—Not later than 180
11 days after the date of enactment of the Western
12 Wildfire Support Act of 2023, the Secretary
13 shall establish under section 24 of the Steven-
14 son-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980
15 (15 U.S.C. 3719) a prize competition, to be
16 known as the ‘Theodore Roosevelt Genius Prize
17 for the management of wildfire-related invasive
18 species’—

19 “(i) to encourage technological innova-
20 tion with the potential to advance the mis-
21 sion of the National Invasive Species
22 Council with respect to the management of
23 wildfire-related invasive species; and

1 “(ii) to award 1 or more prizes annu-
2 ally for a technological advancement that
3 manages wildfire-related invasive species.

4 “(C) ADVISORY BOARD.—

5 “(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is es-
6 tablished an advisory board, to be known
7 as the ‘Management of Wildfire-Related
8 Invasive Species Technology Advisory
9 Board’.

10 “(ii) COMPOSITION.—The Board shall
11 be composed of not fewer than 9 members
12 appointed by the Secretary, who shall pro-
13 vide expertise in—

14 “(I) invasive species;

15 “(II) biology;

16 “(III) technology development;

17 “(IV) engineering;

18 “(V) economics;

19 “(VI) business development and
20 management;

21 “(VII) wildfire; and

22 “(VIII) any other discipline, as
23 the Secretary determines to be nec-
24 essary to achieve the purposes of this
25 paragraph.

1 “(iii) DUTIES.—Subject to clause (iv),
2 with respect to the prize competition, the
3 Board shall—

4 “(I) select a topic;

5 “(II) issue a problem statement;

6 “(III) advise the Secretary re-
7 garding any opportunity for techno-
8 logical innovation to manage wildfire-
9 related invasive species; and

10 “(IV) advise winners of the prize
11 competition regarding opportunities to
12 pilot and implement winning tech-
13 nologies in relevant fields, including in
14 partnership with conservation organi-
15 zations, Federal or State agencies,
16 federally recognized Indian Tribes,
17 private entities, and research institu-
18 tions with expertise or interest relat-
19 ing to the management of wildfire-re-
20 lated invasive species.

21 “(iv) CONSULTATION.—In selecting a
22 topic and issuing a problem statement for
23 the prize competition, the Board shall con-
24 sult widely with Federal and non-Federal
25 stakeholders, including—

1 “(I) 1 or more Federal agencies
2 with jurisdiction over the management
3 of invasive species;

4 “(II) 1 or more Federal agencies
5 with jurisdiction over the management
6 of wildfire;

7 “(III) 1 or more State agencies
8 with jurisdiction over the management
9 of invasive species;

10 “(IV) 1 or more State agencies
11 with jurisdiction over the management
12 of wildfire;

13 “(V) 1 or more State, regional,
14 or local wildlife organizations, the
15 mission of which relates to the man-
16 agement of invasive species; and

17 “(VI) 1 or more wildlife con-
18 servation groups, technology compa-
19 nies, research institutions, institutions
20 of higher education, industry associa-
21 tions, or individual stakeholders with
22 an interest in the management of
23 wildfire-related invasive species.

1 “(v) REQUIREMENTS.—The Board
2 shall comply with all requirements under
3 paragraph (9)(A).

4 “(D) ADMINISTRATION BY THE NATIONAL
5 INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL.—The Secretary,
6 acting through the Director of the National
7 Invasive Species Council, shall administer the
8 prize competition.

9 “(E) JUDGES.—

10 “(i) APPOINTMENT.—The Secretary
11 shall appoint not fewer than 3 judges who
12 shall, except as provided in clause (ii), se-
13 lect the 1 or more annual winners of the
14 prize competition.

15 “(ii) DETERMINATION BY SEC-
16 RETARY.—The judges appointed under
17 clause (i) shall not select any annual win-
18 ner of the prize competition if the Sec-
19 retary makes a determination that, in any
20 fiscal year, none of the technological ad-
21 vancements entered into the prize competi-
22 tion merits an award.

23 “(F) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later
24 than 60 days after the date on which a cash
25 prize is awarded under this paragraph, the Sec-

1 retary shall submit to the Committee on Energy
2 and Natural Resources of the Senate and the
3 Committee on Natural Resources of the House
4 of Representatives a report on the prize com-
5 petition that includes—

6 “(i) a statement by the Board that
7 describes the activities carried out by the
8 Board relating to the duties described in
9 subparagraph (C)(iii);

10 “(ii) a description of the 1 or more
11 annual winners of the prize competition;
12 and

13 “(iii) a statement by 1 or more of the
14 judges appointed under subparagraph (E)
15 that explains the basis on which the 1 or
16 more winners of the prize competition was
17 selected.

18 “(G) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The
19 Board and all authority provided under this
20 paragraph shall terminate on December 31,
21 2028.”; and

22 (5) in paragraph (9) (as so redesignated)—

23 (A) in subparagraph (A), in the matter
24 preceding clause (i), by striking “or (7)(C)(i)”
25 and inserting “(7)(C)(i), or (8)(C)(i)”; and

- 1 (B) in subparagraph (B)—
- 2 (i) in the matter preceding clause (i),
- 3 by striking “or (7)(D)(i)” and inserting
- 4 “(7)(D)(i), or (8)(D)(i)”; and
- 5 (ii) in clause (i)(VII), by striking
- 6 “and (7)(E)” and inserting “(7)(E), and
- 7 (8)(E)”.

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