

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1524

To authorize the continued use on public lands of the expedited processes successfully used for windstorm-damaged national forests and grasslands in Texas.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 22, 1999

Mrs. CHENOWETH (for herself, Mr. HERGER, and Mr. DOOLITTLE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

A BILL

To authorize the continued use on public lands of the expedited processes successfully used for windstorm-damaged national forests and grasslands in Texas.

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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Public Forests Emer-
5 gency Act of 1999”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Natural catastrophic events in February
9 1998 created potentially dangerous fire and insect

1 infestation conditions in areas of national forests
2 and national grasslands in Texas, and the removal
3 of “dead, down, and severely root-sprung trees
4 where mortality is expected” in these areas was ex-
5 pedited by the approval of alternative arrangements
6 for that removal.

7 (2) The Administration should be commended
8 for approving those alternative arrangements, which
9 helped prevent the wildfires and insect and disease
10 infestations often associated with dead and dying
11 trees on land, administered by the Secretary of the
12 Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture.

13 (3) Numerous catastrophic forest conditions
14 similar to, equal to, or worse than the conditions in
15 Texas described in paragraph (1) exist on public
16 lands, including National Forest System lands,
17 throughout the United States, and treatment equiva-
18 lent to that expedited under the alternative arrange-
19 ments is warranted and needed on these public
20 lands.

21 **SEC. 3. REQUEST FOR EXPEDITED TREATMENT OF DEAD,**
22 **DOWNED, AND SEVERELY ROOT-SPRUNG**
23 **TREES.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior or
25 the Secretary of Agriculture, as the case may be, shall re-

1 quest from the appropriate officials in the executive
2 branch the authority to remove dead, downed, or severely
3 root-sprung trees in the areas described in subsection (b)
4 in a manner similar to the alternative arrangements ap-
5 proved for national forests and national grasslands in
6 Texas in March 1998.

7 (b) AREAS DESCRIBED.—The areas referred to in
8 subsection (a) are the following:

9 (1) Approximately 3,900 acres of spruce beetle
10 infested lands administered by the Bureau of Land
11 Management within the Kenai Quadrangle in the
12 State of Alaska.

13 (2) Approximately 30,000 acres of spruce beetle
14 infested lands in the Chugach National Forest in the
15 State of Alaska.

16 (3) Approximately 100,000 acres of ice storm
17 damaged and Douglas Fir bark beetle infested lands
18 in the Colville National Forest in the State of Wash-
19 ington and the Idaho-Panhandle National Forests in
20 the State of Idaho.

21 (4) Approximately 50,000 acres of fire damaged
22 and spruce budworm infested lands in the Malheur
23 National Forest in the State of Oregon.

1 (5) Approximately 20,000 acres of mountain
2 pine beetle infested lands in the Black Hills National
3 Forest in the State of South Dakota.

4 (6) Approximately 20,000 acres of National
5 Forest System lands in the Tahoe Basin of Cali-
6 fornia with insect infestation and fuel-loading condi-
7 tions.

8 (7) Approximately 10,000 acres of gypsy moth
9 infested lands in the Allegheny National Forest in
10 the State of Pennsylvania.

11 (8) National Forest System lands in Region 8
12 of the Forest Service, including the following:

13 (A) Approximately 3,000 acres of wind
14 damaged lands in the Desoto, Homochito, and
15 Tombigbee National Forests in the State of
16 Mississippi.

17 (B) Approximately 500 acres of ice storm
18 damaged and gypsy moth infested lands in the
19 George Washington and Jefferson National
20 Forests in the State of Virginia.

21 (C) Approximately 3,000 acres of tornado
22 damaged lands in the Ouachita National Forest
23 in the State of Arkansas and the Kisatchie Na-
24 tional Forest in the State of Louisiana.

1 (D) Approximately 500 acres of southern
2 pine beetle infested lands in the Croatan Na-
3 tional Forest in the State of North Carolina.

4 (E) Approximately 3,500 acres of ice
5 storm and wind damaged lands in the Daniel
6 Boone National Forest in the State of Ken-
7 tucky.

8 (F) Approximately 1,500 acres of ice storm
9 damaged lands in the Bankhead National For-
10 est in the State of Alabama and the Cherokee
11 National Forest in the State of Tennessee.

12 (G) Approximately 1,000 acres of southern
13 pine beetle infested National Forest System
14 lands in Florida.

15 (c) CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS.—Upon receipt of
16 a request under subsection (a), the official in the executive
17 branch responsible for considering the request shall
18 promptly consider and either approve or disapprove the
19 request. Not later than 90 days after receiving each re-
20 quest, the responsible official shall submit to the Com-
21 mittee on Resources of the House of Representatives and
22 the Committee on Energy and National Resources in the
23 Senate a report describing the specific reasons for approv-
24 ing or disapproving the request.

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