

(1) FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—At the determination of the Comptroller General of the United States (referred to in this section as the “Comptroller General”), to facilitate the preparation of the reports from the Comptroller General under paragraph (2), the head of each Federal department and agency shall submit to the Comptroller General data and other relevant information that describes the amounts expended or disbursed (including through loans, loan guarantees, grants, or any other financing mechanism) by the department or agency as a direct result of any provision of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (including any regulation promulgated pursuant to that Act) during—

(i) with respect to the first report under paragraph (2), the 3 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report; and

(ii) with respect to the second report under paragraph (2), the 2 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report.

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—Data and other relevant information submitted under subparagraph (A) shall describe, with respect to the applicable amounts—

(i) the programmatic office of the department or agency on behalf of which each amount was expended or disbursed;

(ii) the provision of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (or regulation promulgated pursuant to that Act) pursuant to which each amount was expended or disbursed; and

(iii) the project or activity carried out using each amount, in detail sufficient to reflect the breadth, scope, and purpose of the project or activity.

(2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years and 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations, Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that describes—

(A) the aggregate amount expended or disbursed by all Federal departments and agencies as a direct result of any provision of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (including any regulation promulgated pursuant to that Act) during—

(i) with respect to the first report, the 3 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report; and

(ii) with respect to the second report, the 2 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report;

(B) the provision of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (or regulation promulgated pursuant to that Act) pursuant to which each such amount was expended or disbursed; and

(C) with respect to each relevant department or agency—

(i) the total amount expended or disbursed by the department or agency as described in subparagraph (A); and

(ii) the information described in clauses (i) through (iii) of paragraph (1)(B).

(b) REPORT ON CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES.—

(1) FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—At the determination of the Comptroller General, to facilitate the preparation of the report under paragraph (2), the head of each Federal department and agency shall submit to the Comptroller General data and other relevant information that describes the conservation activities by the Federal department or agency as a direct result of any provision of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (including any regulation promulgated pursuant to that Act) during—

(A) with respect to the first report under paragraph (2), the 3 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report; and

(B) with respect to the second report under paragraph (2), the 2 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report.

(2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years and 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that—

(A) describes the conservation activities by all Federal departments and agencies for species listed as a threatened species or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), as reported under paragraph (1), during—

(i) with respect to the first report, the 3 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report; and

(ii) with respect to the second report, the 2 fiscal years preceding the date of submission of the report;

(B) is organized into categories with respect to whether a recovery plan for a species has been established;

(C) includes conservation outcomes associated with the conservation activities; and

(D) as applicable, describes the conservation activities that required interaction between Federal agencies and between Federal agencies and State and Tribal agencies and units of local government pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

SEC. 404. USE OF VALUE OF LAND FOR COST SHARING.

The Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 13 as section 14; and

(2) by inserting after section 12 the following:

“SEC. 13. VALUE OF LAND.

“Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any institution eligible to receive Federal funds under the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601 et seq.) shall be allowed to use the value of any land owned by the institution as an in-kind match to satisfy any cost sharing requirement under this Act.”.

Mr. PORTMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn; that the Barrasso substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to; and that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 2656), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to, as follows:

(The amendment is printed in today’s RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 3051), as amended, was passed.

Mr. PORTMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 698, S. Res. 699, and S. Res. 700.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. PORTMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:45 a.m., Thursday, September 17; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day and morning business be closed; finally, following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Valderrama nomination under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of our Democratic colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

WILDFIRES

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, the West is on fire. At this very moment, historic wildfires are raging across our Western States. Communities have been devastated. Homes have been destroyed. Businesses have been turned to rubble. In the wake of these disasters, many families have been left with absolutely nothing.

Nevadans are no strangers to seeing wildfires wreak havoc in our State. Just this year, Nevada has seen over 650 fires. Yet what is happening now is something different. These are some of the largest fires the West has ever seen. Already, in 2020, over 4.7 million acres of land have been burned across

our Nation, and we have already seen billions of dollars in economic losses and damage.

Despite what you might hear from our President, these disasters are not blue State issues. That kind of partisan sentiment is just unconscionable. We must take a nonpartisan approach to saving lives and protecting property from fires that know no partisan affiliation. It doesn't matter that these fires are in the State of California or in the State of Oregon or in the State of Idaho. These disasters are happening in our United States. These fires are impacting our communities, and in this time of crisis, we have a responsibility to really help one another—to help our communities and to help our friends and our neighbors.

People have died in these disasters, and some people are still missing. Over 30,000 courageous men and women are risking their lives to fight these fires and to save those families and save those properties. I am really proud to say that Nevada's firefighters have been deployed to assist in combating many of these disasters. I am so proud of them.

As a result of these fires, the air quality in some of our communities is so poor and so unhealthy that it is exceeding 20-year records. This toxic haze has already impacted air quality in my own State of Nevada, and it is not just in Western States. This harmful smoke is spreading. It has been measured as far away as the east coast—in places like New York City and right here in Washington, DC. These fires put our collective health—all of ours—in jeopardy, especially now, during the pandemic.

As I have said before, these fires impact every single one of us. Do you know why? It is because this is an environmental issue; this is an economic issue; this is a public health issue; and it is absolutely a climate issue.

The science speaks for itself. Climate change and increased temperatures directly correlate to the growing intensity of these wildfires, and the longer we fail to address climate change, the more costly and more dangerous and deadly the impact is going to be for our friends, our neighbors, our States, and our communities.

September is wildfire preparedness month, and make no mistake: We need to get a handle on these disasters. We need to provide resources to our local communities, to our firefighters, and to our land management agencies immediately. This is why I cosponsored my colleague Senator HARRIS' Wildfire Defense Act, which is legislation that would provide FEMA resources so that our local communities can develop wildfire defense plans and allow all of us to respond more effectively.

We also need to address climate change, and we need to be proactive and practical, which is why, earlier this year, I cosponsored Senator CARPER's climate change resolution. This

resolution recognizes that climate change is real, that human activity is the primary cause, and that Congress must take immediate action to address one of the most pressing issues of our time.

We need to act. Lives are on the line, and we need to act now. Nevada, the West, and Americans across the country are counting on all of us. So we need to get to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

WILDFIRES

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, apocalypse, fire, fueled by wind coming over the top of the Cascade Mountains, turning into a blowtorch that races down the western slopes of those mountains, incinerating the towns in its path—that is what is happening in my home State of Oregon.

Imagine suddenly waking up at 4:30 in the morning to a house filled with smoke. You realize you have to clear the area before the situation gets a lot worse. You and your partner race to pack up some essentials, load them and your pets into the car in your garage, and then you can't get the garage door open because there is no power. The power lines have been taken down by the winds and by the power poles being burned and falling over. So you open the garage door by hand, and just as you are about to lift it, you look out a little window, and you see an inferno engulfing your neighbor's home. So you make a desperate dash in the other direction and out the backdoor—the fire at your heels. You race toward the river at the bottom of the hill, hoping—praying—there will be some kind of safety.

It is a terrifying scenario, but it is not out of some movie. For Larry Tripoli and Fran Howe, of Gates, OR, it was a reality just a few nights ago when the Beachie Creek fire roared through Santiam Canyon, incinerating homes, businesses, and entire neighborhoods. They got to the river, and they waded knee deep in the water as the trees burned around them on both banks.

Fran recalled: "I thought we were going to die."

Fortunately, help arrived late that night, just before 12 midnight. The firefighters and emergency workers risked their lives and safety to come and rescue those who were fleeing the fire. Many folks worked to help their neighbors get noticed even as the fire was descending on the town.

At this moment, all across Oregon, people are facing similarly terrifying experiences as historic wildfires have burned more than a million acres—more than twice those burned in a normal year. They burned in a small period of time—most of them over this past week. There are 10 citizens who have lost their lives, and dozens are missing. We are afraid there will be more bad news to come.

It is hard to imagine. I mean, I have seen the results of a fire near John Day that came down a valley, and there were widely spaced homes in the forest on both sides of the river, and I have seen that those homes were burned. But I have never seen anything like this—neighborhood after neighborhood, the commercial district, the apartment complexes, the mobile home housing parks, completely scorched—every building you can see.

When I toured this last Friday, the only thing I could compare it to were pictures I had seen of Hiroshima after the bomb; cities in Europe that had been firebombed, like Dresden—massive devastation, incinerating everything.

This is what has just happened in my home State. In one town of Phoenix, OR—this is a picture from Phoenix. The mayor estimated that perhaps 1,000 residences had been burned between the mobile homes, the manufactured homes, the apartment complexes, and the standalone houses—several thousand people with nothing to return to.

You know, I met with folks last Friday and Saturday as Senator WYDEN and I started in the north part of the State and went all the way down south. I traveled 600 miles by car. I was driving. I never got out of the smoke. I remember fires where we passed 20 miles through the smoke, 30 miles through the smoke. I drove over 600 miles. I was never out of that smoke.

Parts of the State glowed like the aftereffects of a bomb. This is our State capital with that orange, fire-infused sky behind it in Salem, OR, the result of the Santiam fire that comes down toward the city of Salem.

That smoke doesn't just hover and stay in one place. As the wind starts to blow, it spreads across the country. So here we are. This is the September 15 fire chart. These purple areas—an index of over 500 parts per million—incredibly unhealthy to breathe, and you can see the State of Oregon covered, on through Idaho and Montana, right on across the country—California.

Everyone is dealing with the smoke. I just got off a Zoom call just a little while ago, and the first three people who spoke were talking about how uncomfortable they were because of their asthma or breathing conditions affected by the smoke. The air quality in Portland has ranked as the worst among the world's major cities for the last 5 days in a row, and in smaller towns across the State, it has been far worse.

People saw all kinds of dramatic, powerful scenes of the approaching fires, the approaching bank of clouds. It was a week ago Monday that I decided to drive up to the Columbia Gorge. I didn't get 20 miles from my house, and I saw this wall of smoke. So I got off the freeway and took the old scenic highway up to Crown Point—a lookout point high in the cliffs where you can see way to the east and way to