

Service and the Bureau of Land Management undertake through contract services. I am pleased to be introducing this legislation with Senator BINGAMAN. His persistence in working on this legislation is a testament to his interest in sound forest management that is good for the environment, as well as good for thousands of small rural communities.

Senator BINGAMAN and I both understand that we have fundamental problems with the management of many of our public lands. We both have seen the devastation that catastrophic fires are imposing on our Western forests. Two years ago as a result of the Cerro Grande Fire that consumed portions of Los Alamos, New Mexico, many Americans had to face up to the deplorable forest health conditions and the devastating impacts of these catastrophic fires. The recent fires in Colorado, New Mexico and now Eastern Arizona are re-enforcing the message that we simply cannot stand back and ignore the deplorable health conditions in our public forests.

While many in the West, including Senator BINGAMAN and myself, have long understood the challenge of poor forest health followed by these conflagrations, nothing focuses your attention like a community in your State consumed in a raging forest fire. As a result of this watershed event, Congress put together the funding for the National Fire Plan.

Having grown up near Cascade, ID, I know that large forest fires are not new to our community. But when in the space of three years a third of two national forests were consumed in large intense fires, such as those that occurred on the Boise and Payette National Forest in 1994 and 1996, you are forced to conclude something has gone haywire with our public land's management.

For a number of years I watched the implementation of the Pacific Northwest Forest Plan. I watched to see if the community assistance funding would trickle down to the small communities and to the workers that were displaced as a result of the plan. Sadly, the evidence is that in the smaller more rural communities many of the displaced workers did not benefit from those programs.

In 2000, with the help of Senator BINGAMAN, Senator WYDEN and I introduced and passed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. This legislation includes provisions to empower rural communities to work with the federal land managers to undertake consensus-based projects designed to help meet the resource needs of the agency and to develop projects that will generate the economic activity so desperately needed in many of our small rural communities. In spite of our success Senator BINGAMAN and I knew that more had to be done.

We understood that we needed to construct more opportunities for our Federal land managers to work cooperatively with the people living in these rural communities. We understood that we needed to change dynamics so the knowledge, logic and wisdom harbored within the citizen of these small rural communities could be tapped to improve our public lands.

The legislation that we are introducing today will authorize the establishment of Restoration and Value-Added Centers designed to help small communities and business be better prepared to help our Federal land managers complete the forest management work that our forests so desperately need.

When Congress directed the Forest Service, BLM and other land management agencies to develop the National Fire Management Plan, and then increased funding for fire prevention, suppression, and restoration activities, many of the proponents expected much of the work would be funneled to smaller communities to take advantage of the expertise that exists in these communities, as well as to help stabilize the economies of these areas. Sadly most of the Federal agency's funding and efforts have been consumed with fire fighting and by the looks of this fire season that is not going to improve any time soon. Very little restoration work to reduce the risk of intense fires before they occur has been undertaken. Thus, we have not seen sufficient efforts made to take advantage of the human resource located in these small rural communities.

I believe the legislation Senator BINGAMAN and I are introducing today will help the Federal land managers take advantage of the local and traditional knowledge as well as take advantage of the under utilized woods workforces that have been put out of work over the last decade. This legislation will help small community and consensus-based groups who are eager to undertake work designed to improve our public lands. It will help our federal land managers reestablish a close working relationship with these communities and it will be very good for the public land.

Like any new experimental program we have included a number of provisions that first are designed to phase into these new relationships and secondly, designed to ensure that the Restoration and Value-Added Centers will not become a long term financial burden to the American public. We have included provisions to shift away from federal financing and toward private funding sources five years after the opening of the centers. Additionally, we have included monitoring provisions so we can track these new programs and make corrections as needed.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not recognize the coalition who helped to form and clarify the thinking of Sen-

ator BINGAMAN and myself as we developed this proposal. We held lengthy hearings to which many in the coalition traveled long distances to participate. They have been inspirational in their willingness to think outside the box and to work with our staff to refine this proposal.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 289—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT A COMMEMORATIVE POSTAGE STAMP SHOULD BE ISSUED TO CELEBRATE THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. BREAUX) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs:

S. RES. 289

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT A COMMEMORATIVE POSTAGE STAMP SHOULD BE ISSUED TO CELEBRATE THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) The Bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase occurs in 2003, 200 years after the United States, under the Presidency of Thomas Jefferson and after approval by Congress, paid \$15,000,000 to acquire the 800,000 square mile territory stretching from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

(2) The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States and still remains the largest peaceful land transaction in history.

(3) The Louisiana Purchase, following exploration by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, allowed an unprecedented age of settlement and achievement by the people of the United States in the Nation's heartland.

(4) The land acquired in the Louisiana Purchase comprised all or part of the States of Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.

(5) Commemoration of the Louisiana Purchase and the subsequent opening of the American heartland through the issuance of a United States postage stamp would—

(A) heighten public awareness of the impact of the Louisiana Purchase on the American society through the expansion and development of the West; and

(B) benefit the American public by providing a lesson for continued democratic governance in the United States.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee should recommend to the Postmaster General that a commemorative postage stamp be issued in 2003 to celebrate the Bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase.

SEC. 2. TRANSMITTAL TO CITIZENS' STAMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy of this resolution to the chairperson of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee.