

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT

119-22

OFFERED BY MR. MIN OF CALIFORNIA

Add at the end of title VIII the following:

1 **SEC. 8 ____ . SHRUBLAND WILDFIRE MITIGATION STUDY.**

2 (a) STUDY.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
4 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
5 shall conduct a study to evaluate the effectiveness of
6 wildfire mitigation methods available to the Forest
7 Service as a means of reducing the risk of wildfire
8 in covered ecosystems and the severity of damages
9 from such wildfire in communities within or adjacent
10 to covered ecosystems.

11 (2) ELEMENTS.—In carrying out the study
12 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall, with re-
13 spect to covered ecosystems—

14 (A) evaluate the effectiveness and longevity
15 of—

16 (i) hazardous fuels management ac-
17 tivities, including fuel modification through
18 the use of strategic fuel breaks; and

1 (ii) practices for maintaining the
2 health of native ecosystems, including—

3 (I) mitigating the development
4 and spread of invasive species, includ-
5 ing invasive weeds, grasses, and other
6 vegetation; or

7 (II) improving the establishment
8 of native shrub and associated species
9 on lands affected by wildfire;

10 (B) evaluate the effectiveness of policies
11 and protocols of the Forest Service with respect
12 to limiting unintentional ember ignitions attrib-
13 utable to the public or man-made structures, in-
14 cluding electrical infrastructure;

15 (C) study the conditions (including weath-
16 er, seasonality, and topography) under which
17 each wildfire mitigation method evaluated under
18 the study is most and least effective in reducing
19 the risk of wildland fire;

20 (D) identify administrative, operational,
21 and budgetary factors that impede the ability of
22 wildland fire managers and wildland firefighters
23 to implement wildfire mitigation methods evalu-
24 ated under the study; and

1 (E) evaluate the effectiveness of partner-
2 ships between the Forest Service and non-Fed-
3 eral entities in reducing the vulnerability of
4 homes, roadways, and other high-risk structures
5 to ember ignition.

6 (3) COORDINATION; CONSULTATION.—

7 (A) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—In
8 carrying out the study under paragraph (1), the
9 Secretary shall, to the extent practicable and to
10 avoid the duplication of research activities of
11 the Federal Government, act in coordination
12 with—

13 (i) entities within the Forest Service
14 with expertise in wildfire risk reduction
15 and ecology in covered ecosystems, includ-
16 ing the Shrub Sciences Laboratory and the
17 Maintaining Resilient Dryland Ecosystems
18 program; and

19 (ii) the heads of Federal agencies con-
20 ducting wildfire mitigation methods or haz-
21 ardous fuels management activities in cov-
22 ered ecosystems, including the Secretary of
23 the Interior.

24 (B) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the
25 study under paragraph (1), the Secretary may,

1 and is encouraged to, solicit consultation from
2 non-Federal public and private entities with rel-
3 evant expertise in wildfire mitigation methods
4 in covered ecosystems, as determined by the
5 Secretary.

6 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date
7 on which the study under subsection (a)(1) is complete,
8 the Secretary shall submit to the relevant Congressional
9 committees, and make publicly available, a report that in-
10 cludes—

11 (1) a summary of the results of the study;

12 (2) based on the results of the study, identifica-
13 tion by the Secretary of—

14 (A) best practices for land managers in re-
15 ducing the risk of wildfire in covered eco-
16 systems; and

17 (B) any areas implicated by the study that
18 merit further research;

19 (3) a comparison of the policies and protocols of
20 the Forest Service with respect to reducing the risk
21 of wildfire in covered ecosystems and the best prac-
22 tices identified under paragraph (2)(A); and

23 (4) an evaluation by the Secretary of opportuni-
24 ties to improve coordination between the Forest
25 Service and non-Federal entities on activities to im-

1 prove wildfire resilience in covered ecosystems and
2 reduce risks of harm from wildfire to the built envi-
3 ronment, particularly in the wildland-urban inter-
4 face.

5 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) COVERED ECOSYSTEMS.—The term “cov-
7 ered ecosystems” means shrubland ecosystems, in-
8 cluding—

9 (A) chaparral;

10 (B) coastal sage scrub;

11 (C) sagebrush;

12 (D) shrub-steppe;

13 (E) xeric shrubland; and

14 (F) any other dryland shrub ecosystem in
15 which wildfire management presents a signifi-
16 cant challenge, as determined by the Secretary.

17 (2) HAZARDOUS FUELS MANAGEMENT ACTIV-
18 ITY.—The term “hazardous fuels management activ-
19 ity” means an activity to manage vegetation to re-
20 duce the risk of wildfire.

21 (3) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
22 TEES.—The term “relevant Congressional commit-
23 tees” means—

1 (A) the committees on Appropriations,
2 Natural Resources, and Agriculture of the
3 House of Representatives; and

4 (B) the committees on Appropriations, En-
5 ergy and Natural Resources, and Agriculture,
6 Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

7 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
8 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
9 Chief of the Forest Service.

10 (5) WILDFIRE MITIGATION METHOD.—The
11 term “wildfire mitigation method” means an activ-
12 ity, including a hazardous fuels management activ-
13 ity, undertaken to prevent the ignition of a wildfire
14 or reduce the severity and negative effects of a wild-
15 fire.

16 (6) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—The term
17 “wildland-urban interface” has the meaning given
18 such term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests
19 Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).

