

**AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 115-**

**36**

**OFFERED BY MR. PEARCE OF NEW MEXICO**

Page 75, after line 5, insert the following new section:

1 **SEC. 910A. PILOT PROJECT FOR FOREST HEALTH, WATER-**  
2 **SHED IMPROVEMENT, AND HABITAT RES-**  
3 **TORATION IN NEW MEXICO.**

4 (a) PILOT PROJECT ESTABLISHED.—The Secretary  
5 of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest  
6 Service, shall conduct a pilot project within the Lincoln  
7 National Forest, Cibola National Forest, and Gila Na-  
8 tional Forest in the State of New Mexico to analyze and  
9 demonstrate the effectiveness of various tools and tech-  
10 niques to address the following natural resource concerns:

11 (1) Thinning for forest health.

12 (2) Watershed improvement.

13 (3) Habitat restoration.

14 (b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of Ag-  
15 riculture in carrying out the pilot project established  
16 under subsection (a) may conduct applied silvicultural in-  
17 vestigations and treatments, including—

1           (1) silvicultural investigations conducted for the  
2           purposes of information gathering and research re-  
3           lating to the natural resource concerns described in  
4           subsection (a); and

5           (2) mechanical thinning.

6           (c) **OBJECTIONS TO SILVICULTURAL INVESTIGATION**  
7 **OR TREATMENT.**— The Secretary may not carry out a sil-  
8 vicultural investigation or treatment under this section if  
9 a county in which such investigation or treatment would  
10 be conducted objects to such investigation or treatment.

11          (d) **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT UNDER THE NA-**  
12 **TIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT.**—Forest manage-  
13 ment activities carried out by the Secretary of Agriculture  
14 under this section are a category of actions hereby des-  
15 ignated as being categorically excluded from the prepara-  
16 tion of an environmental assessment or an environmental  
17 impact statement under section 102 of the National Envi-  
18 ronmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332).

19          (e) **CONSULTATION UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPE-**  
20 **CIES ACT.**—Forest management activities carried out by  
21 the Secretary of Agriculture under this section shall be  
22 subject to section 123, including subsection (b) of such  
23 section.

24          (f) **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**—The Secretary shall en-  
25 courage meaningful public participation during prepara-

1 tion of a silvicultural investigation or treatment under this  
2 section.

3 (g) ARBITRATION PILOT PROGRAM RESOLUTION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—An objection or protest to a  
5 forest management activity carried out pursuant to  
6 this section shall be addressed through the arbitra-  
7 tion program established under section 311.

8 (2) LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF ARBITRA-  
9 TIONS.—An arbitration described in paragraph (1)  
10 shall not be counted towards the limitation on num-  
11 ber of arbitrations under section 311(a)(3).

12 (h) TERMINATION.—The authority to carry out this  
13 section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after  
14 the date of the enactment of this section.

