

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

TITLE VIII - FORESTRY

The Senate Republican Farm Bill Framework for Title VIII improves essential forest management tools while enhancing economic opportunities in rural communities by bolstering the forest products value chain. The framework increases the pace and scale of active management to mitigate the frequency and intensity of catastrophic wildfires by expanding partnerships with States, Counties and Tribes to manage landscapes, not jurisdictions. The Republican framework brings the Forest Service's data resources into the 21st Century, encourages responsible land stewardship through sustainable timber production, further incentivizes the use of wood, mass timber and other carbon-neutral forest products in the built environment and improves U.S. Forest Service's workforce recruitment and development for the next generation of wildland firefighting and land management experts.

- Modernizes the **Forest Inventory Analysis** program to improve data collection and transparency, and develops **mapping capabilities** on management activities, fuel breaks and other management projects to help inform wildfire risk and improve community wildfire resiliency.
- Authorizes **new and expanded categorical exclusions** to expedite hazardous fuel reduction projects, mitigate insect and diseases, protect critical infrastructure and ensure public health and safety.
- Rectifies misguided "**Cottonwood**" decision the Obama Administration sought to overturn.
- Enhances Forest Service's **prescribed fire training center and activities**.
- Increases **Stewardship Contracting** term limits to **20 years**.
- Updates **Good Neighbor Authority (GNA)** to allow counties and tribes to retain revenue generated under GNA projects and authorizes GNA projects to treat landscapes, not just jurisdictions.
- Bolsters the **Water Source Protection Program** and **Watershed Condition Framework** and expands eligible criteria for **Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration projects**.
- Establishes a **Conservation Finance Program pilot** to leverage public-private partnerships related to infrastructure, watersheds and other essential activities.
- Extends the **Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Program**.
- Codifies long-term **Burned Area Recovery authority** to address post-fire needs more effectively and efficiently.
- Bolsters **Community Wood Facilities Program** and **Wood Innovation Program** to accelerate the adoption of wood in the built environment and identify opportunities for mass timber in federal facilities.
- Establishes a **Rural Forest Markets Investment Program** to facilitate private forestland owners' participation in new and evolving markets.
- **Streamlines permitting activities** to allow for multiple-uses on Forest System lands, including grazing, radio infrastructure, broadband and recreation.
- Provides the Forest Service **direct hire authority** for Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers graduates and refocuses Job Corps curriculum to train the next generation of land management experts and wildland firefighting personnel.

