

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3553

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out a study with respect to the effectiveness of available wildfire mitigation methods in reducing the risk of wildfire and the severity of damages from wildfire in communities within or adjacent to shrubland ecosystems, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2025

Mr. MIN (for himself, Mrs. KIM, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. RIVAS, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. WHITESIDES, Mr. HARDER of California, Ms. ANSARI, and Ms. JACOBS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out a study with respect to the effectiveness of available wildfire mitigation methods in reducing the risk of wildfire and the severity of damages from wildfire in communities within or adjacent to shrubland ecosystems, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Building Resiliency
3 and Understanding of Shrublands to Halt Fires Act” or
4 the “BRUSH Fires Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. SHRUBLAND WILDFIRE MITIGATION STUDY.**

6 (a) STUDY.—

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

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

18 (A) evaluate the effectiveness and longevity
19 of—

20 (i) hazardous fuels management ac-
21 tivities, including fuel modification through
22 the use of strategic fuel breaks; and

23 (ii) practices for maintaining the
24 health of native ecosystems, including—

25 (I) mitigating the development
26 and spread of invasive species, includ-

1 ing invasive weeds, grasses, and other
2 vegetation; or

3 (II) improving the resprouting of
4 native shrub species on lands affected
5 by wildfire;

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

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

16 (D) identify administrative, operational,
17 and budgetary factors that impede the ability of
18 wildland fire managers and wildland firefighters
19 to implement wildfire mitigation methods evalu-
20 ated under the study; and

21 (E) evaluate the effectiveness of partner-
22 ships between the Forest Service and non-Fed-
23 eral entities in reducing the vulnerability of
24 homes, roadways, and other high-risk structures
25 to ember ignition.

1 (3) COORDINATION; CONSULTATION.—

2 (A) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—In
3 carrying out the study under paragraph (1), the
4 Secretary shall, to the extent practicable and to
5 avoid the duplication of research activities of
6 the Federal Government, act in coordination
7 with—

8 (i) entities within the Forest Service
9 with expertise in wildfire risk reduction
10 and ecology in covered ecosystems, includ-
11 ing the Shrub Sciences Laboratory and the
12 Maintaining Resilient Dryland Ecosystems
13 program; and

14 (ii) the heads of Federal agencies con-
15 ducting wildfire mitigation activities or
16 hazardous fuels management activities in
17 covered ecosystems, including the Sec-
18 retary of the Interior.

19 (B) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the
20 study under paragraph (1), the Secretary may,
21 and is encouraged to, solicit consultation from
22 non-Federal public and private entities with rel-
23 evant expertise in wildfire mitigation in covered
24 ecosystems, as determined by the Secretary.

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

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

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

9 (A) best practices for land managers in re-
10 ducing the risk of wildfire in covered eco-
11 systems; and

12 (B) any areas implicated by the study that
13 merit further research;

14 (3) a comparison of the policies and protocols of
15 the Forest Service with respect to reducing the risk
16 of wildfire in covered ecosystems and the best prac-
17 tices identified under paragraph (2)(A); and

18 (4) an evaluation by the Secretary of opportuni-
19 ties to improve coordination between the Forest
20 Service and non-Federal entities on activities to im-
21 prove wildfire resilience in covered ecosystems and
22 reduce risks of harm from wildfire to the built envi-
23 ronment, particularly in the wildland-urban inter-
24 face.

25 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED ECOSYSTEMS.—The term “covered ecosystems” means shrubland ecosystems, including—

(A) chaparral;

(B) coastal sage scrub;

(C) sagebrush;

(D) shrub-steppe;

(E) xeric shrubland; and

(F) any other dryland shrub ecosystem in which wildfire management presents a significant challenge, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) HAZARDOUS FUELS MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY.—The term “hazardous fuels management activity” means an activity to manage vegetation to reduce the risk of wildfire.

(3) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “relevant Congressional committees” means—

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

(B) the committees on Appropriations, Energy and Mineral Resources, and Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

1 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
3 Chief of the Forest Service.

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

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