



The Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act of 2020 is a bold, bipartisan proposal that has broad support from timber, sportsmen, and conservation groups. This legislation is the result of reaching across the aisle and building consensus. 6.3 million acres are at high-risk of wildfire in Montana. If we don't manage our forests, our forests will manage us. The Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act of 2020:

- **Creates good paying jobs in the forestry sector.** Encourages active forest management on our National Forests, which in turn creates good-paying timber and conservation jobs. Reduces frivolous litigation, which would allow projects that have been delayed for years to finally go forth. Supports biomass facility development, creating new markets and job opportunities in rural communities. Creates a new workforce development grant for job training and education within the forestry sector. This is especially important for rural communities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Protects at-risk communities.** Mandates and streamlines landscape-level, state-led, collaborative forest projects in the West that reduce the risk of wildfire for at-risk communities. Accelerates fuel breaks. Provides the Forest Service the tools needed to expeditiously conduct restoration and salvage operations post-wildfire. Over 600,000 Montanans live in an area that is at high-risk for wildfire. This bill protects those communities.
- **Promotes healthier, more resilient forests.** A healthy, well-managed forest is critical for wildlife habitat and air and water quality. Accelerates much needed fuels management to reduce the risk of wildfires that have a negative impact on water and air quality, exacerbating the risk to public health during COVID-19. Expedites restoration and reforestation following a natural disaster to restore habitat and protect water resources.
- **Reduces frivolous litigation.** Addresses forest planning challenges stemming from the *Cottonwood* decision by establishing a science-based threshold for when 'new information' requires consultation and allows projects to go forth while consultation is ongoing. Provides injunction-relief for certain collaborative forest projects.
- **Provides safer conditions for our firefighters.** Encourages the use of wildfire detection equipment. Early detection can enable firefighters to manage wildfires before they become uncontrollable and catastrophic. Provides resources for undergrounding electric wires and micro-grids for critical facilities reducing the additional risk power lines pose to wildland firefighters. Encourages and expedites vegetation management projects creating safer and easier conditions to fire wildfires.