

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 40: Department of Forestry Community Wildfire Defense

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Frederick

The Natural Resources Subcommittee heard a request from the Department of Forestry on the Community Wildfire Defense grant program.

The U.S. Forest Service offers competitive funding through the Community Wildfire Defense grant program for projects intended to protect communities, infrastructure, and natural resources from wildfire. The Department of Forestry received legislative approval to apply for funding in October 2022. In late September 2025, the agency received notice of award for two projects totaling just under \$5 million. These projects will augment the agency's current fuels treatment work and wildland fuels mitigation programs in Lane and Josephine Counties. The Department requests 39 permanent seasonal positions (14.03 FTE) for grant delivery spanning three biennia. When grant funding is fully expended, the positions are anticipated to be phased out.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means include an increase of \$4,984,799 in Federal Funds expenditure limitation and authorize the establishment of 39 permanent seasonal positions (14.03 FTE) for the Department of Forestry in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session to implement the Community Wildfire Defense grant program.