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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Megan Taylor](mailto:Megan_Taylor@heller.senate.gov) |
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**Heller Introduces Bill to Help Prevent Wildfires in Nevada**

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) with the support of Senators Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and James Risch (R-ID) today introduced the Emergency Fuel Reduction Act, S. XXX. The proposal helps prevent wildfires by expediting the review process for prevention projects when risks on public lands pose a threat to critical infrastructure, private land holders, and endangered species habitats.

Heller’s legislation arrives as Nevada and other Western states continue to battle a number of intense wildfires during the summer season. In just the first seven months of this year, a total of 444 fires have burned almost one million acres in the state. Most recently a fire broke out in northern Nevada last week, quickly spreading 5,353 acres. Given that approximately 85 percent of Nevada’s land is owned by the U.S. government, most wildfires start and end on federal land.

“Over the past several months, catastrophic wildfires have devastated homes, businesses, and rural communities in Nevada and that threat continues to grow year after year,” **said Heller**. “The Emergency Fuel Reduction Act will allow Nevada to better prepare before disaster strikes by speeding up the review process for critical wildfire prevention projects. Furthermore, our commonsense bill will mitigate the threat of wildfires on public lands and strengthen protections for communities in Nevada and across the West.

Specifically, Heller’s legislation amends the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, a law aimed at reducing the threat of wildfires by adding a new categorical exclusion for authorized fuel management projects. Such projects would include the removal of insect-infected or dead trees and lands containing critical habitat for endangered or threatened species.  
  
Since coming to the U.S. Senate, Heller has worked to protect Nevada from destructive blazes and aid the state in recovery efforts. Recently, he announced a key fire management assistance grant for Douglas County to help the state recover from the Preacher Fire. In the 113th Congress, Heller introduced a similar version of the Emergency Fuel Reduction Act and has also supported legislation to improve the ability of the government to collaborate with non-federal partners for important land-management projects, including those that can reduce the risk of wildfire.

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