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**Heller and Senate Western Caucus Push for Robust Forest Management Reforms to Reduce Risk of Wildfires**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) along with Chairman of the U.S. Senate Western Caucus Chairman Steve Daines (R-MT) and Caucus Members U.S. Senators Cory Gardner (R-CO), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), John Barrasso (R-WY), Mike Lee (R-UT), Mike Enzi (R-WY), Mike Crapo (R-IN), Jim Risch (R-ID), Mike Rounds (R-SD), Orrin Hatch (R-UT), John Thune (R-SD), and Dan Sullivan (R-AK) today urged robust forest management reforms that will reduce the risk and severity of catastrophic wildfires in the final Farm Bill.

In a letter to members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate who are working to reconcile and produce a final Farm Bill, the senators specifically requested forestry reforms ranging from accelerating post-fire restoration and reforestation projects to facilitating the use of Good Neighbor Authority by expanding it to counties and tribes. The letter as well as the full list of provisions that the senators requested be included in the final bill is available [HERE](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/ae35d4bc-0228-4846-85df-8eb658522aa8/9.5.18%20SWC%20-%20Farm%20Bill%20Letter.pdf).

“*Wildfires have consumed more than six million acres thus far this year, which is substantially above the historical average for the same time period*,” **the senators wrote.** “*We implore you to include a robust forestry title in the Farm Bill conference report that cuts unnecessary red tape, addresses the challenges of chronic litigation, and further empowers state and local collaborative partners to help develop and carry out science-based forest management projects*.”

Heller has a long record of taking action aimed at advancing policies to protect Nevada against the threat of devastating wildfires and mitigate their damage to ranches and communities. Just last week, Heller urged the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to [hold a hearing to discuss the impact of Nevada’s blazes on property, cattle, and grazing allotments as well as to consider comprehensive forest management reform](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=CAABBEFC-6E38-4B4E-A86D-B88AF568D5A8). “As I travel across Nevada, I continue to see firsthand the need for serious forestry reform and opportunities to promote forest health that slow the speed and frequency of wildfires. Our land management agencies should not be expected to maneuver countless hours of paperwork and wait periods of time to remove invasive species that are prime conductors for wildfire throughout Nevada,” **said Heller.**

This past year, [Heller introduced the Emergency Fuel Reduction Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/8/heller-introduces-bill-to-help-prevent-wildfires-in-nevada), legislation that would speed up the timely federal permitting process for hazardous fuel reduction projects on public lands. Additionally, the U.S. Senate recently passed a provision that [Heller authored to increase funding for cross-boundary fire control by $5 million](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=D9F37E9F-A058-4EE5-B24F-F0DADAD7B3B5). Since the federal government manages approximately 85 percent of Nevada’s lands, Heller’s measure would help prevent and mitigate the damage of wildfires in the state that cross over jurisdictional boundaries. Heller is also a champion for innovative technologies, such as the [AlertTahoe Fire Monitoring and Early Detection Warning System](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=AEAA0B1D-7D1D-4ED3-9692-7B5767389320), which is used by firefighters to detect, monitor, and prevent fires in the Tahoe basin. In July, Heller [announced that he secured $226,000 to install new cameras as part of the AlertTahoe System](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/7/heller-secures-226-000-for-alerttahoe-to-help-prevent-wildfires).

The Federal Forest Resource Coalitions, a coalition of water resource organizations, and more than 20 wildlife and sportsmen groups have expressed support for forest management reforms in the final Farm bill to the conferees.

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