

February 2004 Surf Alert

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Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003

Link to PDF version of bill

http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=108_cong_bills&docid=f:h1904enr.txt.pdf

"An Act To improve the capacity of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to conduct hazardous fuels reduction projects on National Forest System lands and Bureau of Land Management lands aimed at protecting communities, watersheds, and certain other at-risk lands from catastrophic wildfire, to enhance efforts to protect watersheds and address threats to forest and rangeland health, including catastrophic wildfire, across the landscape, and for other purposes."

Healthy Forests Initiative

PDF format: http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/documents/HealthyForests_Pres_Policy%20A6_v2.pdf

HTML format: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/healthyforests/toc.html>

"The Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI) focuses on reducing the risk of catastrophic fire by thinning dense undergrowth and brush in priority locations on a collaborative basis with selected Federal, state, tribal, and local officials and communities. The initiative also provides for more timely responses to disease and insect infestations that threaten to devastate forests. The Healthy Forests Initiative will implement core components of the National Fire Plan's 10-year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan. This historic plan officials, calls for more active forest and rangeland management. It establishes a framework for protecting communities and the environment through local collaboration on thinning, planned burns and forest restoration projects."

Categorical Exclusions for Limited Timber Harvest

<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/lth/>

From the Federal Register, Tuesday, July 29, 2003: "The Forest Service gives notice of revised procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations. These revised procedures are being issued by Interim Directive (ID) 1909.15–2003–2 to Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30, Section 31.2, which describes categorical exclusions, *i.e.*, categories of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and therefore normally do not require further analysis in either an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. This ID adds three such categories of actions to the agency's NEPA procedures that are applicable to smalltimber harvesting projects: Category 12 allows harvest of live trees not to exceed 70 acres with no more than 1/2 mile of temporary road construction; Category 13 allows the salvage of dead and/or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres with no more than 1/2 mile of temporary roadconstruction; and Category 14 allows commercial and non-commercial felling and removal of any trees necessary to control the spread of insects and disease on no more than 250 acres with no more than 1/2 mile of temporary road construction."

Forest Service and Department of the Interior Joint Categorical Exclusions for Hazardous Fuels Reduction and for Fire Rehabilitation

<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/hfi/>

From the Federal Register, June 5, 2003: "The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and the Department of the Interior give notice of revised procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations...The revision adds two such categories of actions to the agencies' NEPA procedures: (1) Hazardous fuels reduction activities; and (2) rehabilitation activities for lands and infrastructure impacted by fires or fire suppression...These two categorical exclusions will facilitate scientifically sound, efficient, and timely planning and decisionmaking for the treatment of hazardous fuels and rehabilitation of areas so as to reduce risks to communities and the environment caused by severe fires."

Healthy Forests Initiative - Communication Materials

<http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/hfi/materials.shtml>

Links to brochures, videos, and posters.

The White House – Healthy Forests

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/healthyforests/>

Links to speeches, news releases, and other documents related to the Initiative and the Act.

National Fire Plan

<http://www.fireplan.gov/content/home/>

"The National Fire Plan is a long-term investment that will help protect communities and natural resources, and most importantly, the lives of firefighters and the public. It is a long-term commitment based on cooperation and communication among federal agencies, states, local governments, tribes and interested publics. The federal wildland fire management agencies worked closely with these partners to prepare a 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy, completed in August 2001. An implementation plan was developed in 2002, to provide consistent and standard direction to implement the common purposes articulated in the Strategy and the National Fire Plan."

National Fire Plan – Related Reports

<http://www.fireplan.gov/content/reports/?LanguageID=1>

This page provides links to a number of Memoranda, performance reports, presentations, policies, and summaries related to the National Fire Plan.

Forest Service Directives

<http://www.fs.fed.us/im/directives/>

"The Forest Service Directive System consists of the Forest Service Manual and Handbooks, which codify the agency's policy, practice, and procedure. The system serves as the primary basis for the internal management and control of all programs and the primary source of administrative direction to Forest Service employees."