



Senate Approves Wyden-Feinstein Amendment Giving Budget Authority to Fully Fund the Healthy Forests Restoration Act  
March 11, 2004

**Washington, DC** – The U.S. Senate today approved an amendment sponsored by Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) that gives budget authority to fully fund the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA). The amendment was cosponsored by Senators Tom Daschle (D-S.D.), Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.) and Tim Johnson (D-S.D.).

Specifically, the amendment increases the Budget Authority for hazardous fuels projects and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act by \$343 million to reach the \$760 million authorization of Title I in HFRA; currently, the Bush Administration budget slashes funds from other vital Forest Service programs and moves those dollar amounts into HFRA without providing real new funds for the law.

**“We have worked very hard for the past several years to achieve common ground on fire and forest health problems faced by our national forests,”** Senator Feinstein said. **“The healthy forest legislation that we enacted with overwhelming bipartisan support at the end of 2003 could protect thousands of communities and many millions of acres of forest land, but the effectiveness of that law will depend largely on achieving the necessary level of funding to address countless threats to communities and forests across the country. I am pleased that this amendment passed, and I hope that this increased budget authority will remain in conference.”**

In a letter to the president earlier this year, Wyden, Feinstein, Johnson and U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) requested that the president’s FY 2005 budget include the full \$760 million authorized for hazardous fuels reduction under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, noting that the figure authorized by HFRA reflects data collected by the National Association of State Foresters based on the funding level necessary to treat all at-risk federal lands.

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act protects our forests from catastrophic fire by expediting the thinning of hazardous fuels and at the same time provides the first legal protection for old-growth trees in our nation’s history.

The Wyden-Feinstein amendment does not represent additional spending in the budget, but is fully offset.

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