



Senate Passes Feinstein-Pombo Tribal Forest Protection Act  
June 25, 2004

**Washington, DC** – Today the U.S Senate passed H.R. 3846, the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004. Senator Dianne Feinstein (*D-Calif.*) and House Resources Committee Chairman Richard W. Pombo (*R-Calif.*) introduced the legislation in both the Senate and House, respectively, in February of this year. The House unanimously approved the Act on June 21st.

**"California Tribes have suffered from devastating wildfires in recent years,"** Senator Feinstein said. **"Passage of this Act is an important step forward in preventing more of these tragedies on Tribal lands. By involving Tribes in brush-clearing projects on federal lands near their reservations, this legislation will give Native American Tribes across the country the chance to protect their ancestral lands from catastrophic fires."**

In the summer of 2003, nearly 20 Indian reservations were devastated by wildfire that came from adjacent federal lands. Over half occurred in Southern California where more than 30,000 acres and 130 homes were consumed, killing 10 people. Two of the reservations were burned entirely to the ground.

H.R. 3846 establishes a process for tribes to work with federal agencies to perform hazardous fuel reduction and forest health projects on federal lands adjacent to tribal lands in order to prevent catastrophic wildfire.

**"As another devastating fire season begins in the West, the Congress has acted again to protect Americans and their lands from the threat of catastrophic wildfire,"** Chairman Pombo said. **"The Healthy Forests Restoration Act focused needed attention and assistance on serious problems concerning forest health, particularly the explosive build-up of hazardous fuels in federal forests. We emphasized community participation and protection in that bill, and that is exactly what we are doing for Native American tribes in this new legislation."**

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