

(Pub. L. 108–148, §2, Dec. 3, 2003, 117 Stat. 1888.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 108–148, Dec. 3, 2003, 117 Stat. 1887, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note below and Tables.

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 108–148, §1(a), Dec. 3, 2003, 117 Stat. 1887, provided that: “This Act [enacting this chapter and section 2103b of this title and amending sections 6601, 8606, and 8609 of Title 7, Agriculture] may be cited as the ‘Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.’”

WILDFIRE HAZARD SEVERITY MAPPING FOR COMMUNITIES

Pub. L. 115–141, div. O, title II, §210, Mar. 23, 2018, 132 Stat. 1067, provided that:

“(a) MAP REQUIRED.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section [Mar. 23, 2018], the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

“(1) develop and publish a geospatial map appropriate for community-level use that depicts wildfire hazard severity to inform at-risk communities that are—

“(A) adjacent to National Forest System lands; or
“(B) affected by wildland fire, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(2) disseminate the information under paragraph (1) in an appropriate, web-based format for use by such communities to—

“(A) improve understanding of their risk profile;
“(B) clarify thinking on the nature and effect of wildfire risks; and

“(C) develop plans to manage and mitigate those risks.

“(b) PURPOSES OF MAP.—The purposes of the map required under subsection (a) are as follows:

“(1) To inform evaluations of wildfire risk.

“(2) To prioritize fuels management needs.

“(3) To depict the relative potential for wildfire that could be difficult for suppression resources to contain and that could cause ignitions to structures.

“(c) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture and Chief of the Forest Service shall consult with—

“(1) the Secretary of the Interior;

“(2) the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

“(3) other appropriate Federal agencies;

“(4) States;

“(5) relevant colleges, universities, and institutions of higher education with relevant expertise; and

“(6) other entities, as appropriate.

“(d) AT-RISK COMMUNITY DEFINED.—The term ‘at-risk community’ has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).”

§ 6502. Definitions

In this chapter:

(1) Federal land

The term “Federal land” means—

(A) land of the National Forest System (as defined in section 1609(a) of this title) administered by the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service; and

(B) public lands (as defined in section 1702 of title 43), the surface of which is administered by the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) Indian tribe

The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 5304 of title 25.

(Pub. L. 108–148, §3, Dec. 3, 2003, 117 Stat. 1888.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 108–148, Dec. 3, 2003, 117 Stat. 1887, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 6501 of this title and Tables.

SUBCHAPTER I—HAZARDOUS FUEL REDUCTION ON FEDERAL LAND

§ 6511. Definitions

In this subchapter:

(1) At-risk community

The term “at-risk community” means an area—

(A) that is comprised of—

(i) an interface community as defined in the notice entitled “Wildland Urban Interface Communities Within the Vicinity of Federal Lands That Are at High Risk From Wildfire” issued by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with title IV of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (114 Stat. 1009) (66 Fed. Reg. 753, January 4, 2001); or

(ii) a group of homes and other structures with basic infrastructure and services (such as utilities and collectively maintained transportation routes) within or adjacent to Federal land;

(B) in which conditions are conducive to a large-scale wildland fire disturbance event; and

(C) for which a significant threat to human life or property exists as a result of a wildland fire disturbance event.

(2) Authorized hazardous fuel reduction project

(A) In general

The term “authorized hazardous fuel reduction project” means the measures and methods described in the definition of “appropriate tools” contained in the glossary of the Implementation Plan, on Federal land described in section 6512(a) of this title and conducted under sections 6513 and 6514 of this title.

(B) Inclusion

The term “authorized hazardous fuel reduction project” includes, using the measures and methods described in subparagraph (A), the installation of—

(i) a natural or manmade change in fuel characteristics that affects fire behavior such that a fire can be more readily controlled (commonly known as a “fuel break”); and

(ii) a natural or constructed barrier used to stop or check a fire or to provide a control line from which to work to stop or

check a fire (commonly known as a “firebreak”).

(3) Community wildfire protection plan

The term “community wildfire protection plan” means a plan for an at-risk community that—

(A) is developed within the context of the collaborative agreements and the guidance established by the Wildland Fire Leadership Council and agreed to by the applicable local government, local fire department, and State agency responsible for forest management, in consultation with interested parties and the Federal land management agencies managing land in the vicinity of the at-risk community;

(B) identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends the types and methods of treatment on Federal and non-Federal land that will protect 1 or more at-risk communities and essential infrastructure; and

(C) recommends measures to reduce structural ignitability throughout the at-risk community.

(4) Condition class 2

The term “condition class 2”, with respect to an area of Federal land, means the condition class description developed by the Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station in the general technical report entitled “Development of Coarse-Scale Spatial Data for Wildland Fire and Fuel Management” (RMRS-87), dated April 2000 (including any subsequent revision to the report), under which—

(A) fire regimes on the land have been moderately altered from historical ranges;

(B) there exists a moderate risk of losing key ecosystem components from fire;

(C) fire frequencies have increased or decreased from historical frequencies by 1 or more return intervals, resulting in moderate changes to—

(i) the size, frequency, intensity, or severity of fires; or

(ii) landscape patterns; and

(D) vegetation attributes have been moderately altered from the historical range of the attributes.

(5) Condition class 3

The term “condition class 3”, with respect to an area of Federal land, means the condition class description developed by the Rocky Mountain Research Station in the general technical report referred to in paragraph (4) (including any subsequent revision to the report), under which—

(A) fire regimes on land have been significantly altered from historical ranges;

(B) there exists a high risk of losing key ecosystem components from fire;

(C) fire frequencies have departed from historical frequencies by multiple return intervals, resulting in dramatic changes to—

(i) the size, frequency, intensity, or severity of fires; or

(ii) landscape patterns; and

(D) vegetation attributes have been significantly altered from the historical range of the attributes.

(6) Day

The term “day” means—

(A) a calendar day; or

(B) if a deadline imposed by this subchapter would expire on a nonbusiness day, the end of the next business day.

(7) Decision document

The term “decision document” means—

(A) a decision notice (as that term is used in the Forest Service Handbook);

(B) a decision record (as that term is used in the Bureau of Land Management Handbook); and

(C) a record of decision (as that term is used in applicable regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality).

(8) Fire regime I

The term “fire regime I” means an area—

(A) in which historically there have been low-severity fires with a frequency of 0 through 35 years; and

(B) that is located primarily in low elevation forests of pine, oak, or pinyon juniper.

(9) Fire regime II

The term “fire regime II” means an area—

(A) in which historically there are stand replacement severity fires with a frequency of 0 through 35 years; and

(B) that is located primarily in low- to mid-elevation rangeland, grassland, or shrubland.

(10) Fire regime III

The term “fire regime III” means an area—

(A) in which historically there are mixed severity fires with a frequency of 35 through 100 years; and

(B) that is located primarily in forests of mixed conifer, dry Douglas fir, or wet Ponderosa pine.

(11) Implementation Plan

The term “Implementation Plan” means the Implementation Plan for the Comprehensive Strategy for a Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment, dated May 2002, developed pursuant to the conference report to accompany the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (House Report No. 106-64) (and subsequent revisions).

(12) Municipal water supply system

The term “municipal water supply system” means the reservoirs, canals, ditches, flumes, laterals, pipes, pipelines, and other surface facilities and systems constructed or installed for the collection, impoundment, storage, transportation, or distribution of drinking water.

(13) Resource management plan

The term “resource management plan” means—

(A) a land and resource management plan prepared for 1 or more units of land of the

National Forest System described in section 6502(1)(A) of this title under section 1604 of this title; or

(B) a land use plan prepared for 1 or more units of the public land described in section 6502(1)(B) of this title under section 1712 of title 43.

(14) Secretary

The term “Secretary” means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to land of the National Forest System described in section 6502(1)(A) of this title; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to public lands described in section 6502(1)(B) of this title.

(15) Threatened and endangered species habitat

The term “threatened and endangered species habitat” means Federal land identified in—

(A) a determination that a species is an endangered species or a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

(B) a designation of critical habitat of the species under that Act; or

(C) a recovery plan prepared for the species under that Act.

(16) Wildland-urban interface

The term “wildland-urban interface” means—

(A) an area within or adjacent to an at-risk community that is identified in recommendations to the Secretary in a community wildfire protection plan; or

(B) in the case of any area for which a community wildfire protection plan is not in effect—

(i) an area extending ½-mile from the boundary of an at-risk community;

(ii) an area within 1½ miles of the boundary of an at-risk community, including any land that—

(I) has a sustained steep slope that creates the potential for wildfire behavior endangering the at-risk community;

(II) has a geographic feature that aids in creating an effective fire break, such as a road or ridge top; or

(III) is in condition class 3, as documented by the Secretary in the project-specific environmental analysis; and

(iii) an area that is adjacent to an evacuation route for an at-risk community that the Secretary determines, in cooperation with the at-risk community, requires hazardous fuel reduction to provide safer evacuation from the at-risk community.

(Pub. L. 108-148, title I, §101, Dec. 3, 2003, 117 Stat. 1889; Pub. L. 115-141, div. O, title II, §203, Mar. 23, 2018, 132 Stat. 1064.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, referred to in pars. (1)(A)(i) and (11), is Pub. L. 106-291, Oct. 11, 2000, 114 Stat. 922. Title IV of the act is not classified to the Code. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Tables.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, referred to in par. (15), is Pub. L. 93-205, Dec. 28, 1973, 87 Stat. 884, as amended, which is classified principally to chapter 35 (§1531 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1531 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2018—Par. (2). Pub. L. 115-141 designated existing provisions as subpar. (A), inserted heading, and added subpar. (B).

§ 6512. Authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects

(a) Authorized projects

As soon as practicable after December 3, 2003, the Secretary shall implement authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects, consistent with the Implementation Plan, on—

(1) Federal land in wildland-urban interface areas;

(2) condition class 3 Federal land, in such proximity to a municipal water supply system or a stream feeding such a system within a municipal watershed that a significant risk exists that a fire disturbance event would have adverse effects on the water quality of the municipal water supply or the maintenance of the system, including a risk to water quality posed by erosion following such a fire disturbance event;

(3) condition class 2 Federal land located within fire regime I, fire regime II, or fire regime III, in such proximity to a municipal water supply system or a stream feeding such a system within a municipal watershed that a significant risk exists that a fire disturbance event would have adverse effects on the water quality of the municipal water supply or the maintenance of the system, including a risk to water quality posed by erosion following such a fire disturbance event;

(4) Federal land on which windthrow or blowdown, ice storm damage, the existence of an epidemic of disease or insects, or the presence of such an epidemic on immediately adjacent land and the imminent risk it will spread, poses a significant threat to an ecosystem component, or forest or rangeland resource, on the Federal land or adjacent non-Federal land; and

(5) Federal land not covered by paragraphs (1) through (4) that contains threatened and endangered species habitat, if—

(A) natural fire regimes on that land are identified as being important for, or wildfire is identified as a threat to, an endangered species, a threatened species, or habitat of an endangered species or threatened species in a species recovery plan prepared under section 1533 of this title, or a notice published in the Federal Register determining a species to be an endangered species or a threatened species or designating critical habitat;

(B) the authorized hazardous fuel reduction project will provide enhanced protection from catastrophic wildfire for the endangered species, threatened species, or habitat of the endangered species or threatened species; and