

(2) prevent epidemics, such as the American chestnut blight in the first half of the twentieth century, that could be environmentally and economically devastating to forests.

**(d) Authorization of appropriations**

There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2004 through 2008.

(Pub. L. 108-148, title VI, § 601, Dec. 3, 2003, 117 Stat. 1914.)

**§ 6591a. Designation of treatment areas**

**(a) Definition of declining forest health**

In this section, the term “declining forest health” means a forest that is experiencing—

- (1) substantially increased tree mortality due to insect or disease infestation; or
- (2) dieback due to infestation or defoliation by insects or disease.

**(b) Designation of treatment areas**

**(1) Initial areas**

Not later than 60 days after February 7, 2014, the Secretary shall, if requested by the Governor of the State, designate as part of an insect and disease treatment program 1 or more landscape-scale areas, such as subwatersheds (sixth-level hydrologic units, according to the System of Hydrologic Unit Codes of the United States Geological Survey), in at least 1 national forest in each State that is experiencing an insect or disease epidemic.

**(2) Additional areas**

After the end of the 60-day period described in paragraph (1), the Secretary may designate additional landscape-scale areas under this section as needed to address insect or disease threats.

**(c) Requirements**

To be designated a landscape-scale area under subsection (b), the area shall be—

- (1) experiencing declining forest health, based on annual forest health surveys conducted by the Secretary;
- (2) at risk of experiencing substantially increased tree mortality over the next 15 years due to insect or disease infestation, based on the most recent National Insect and Disease Risk Map published by the Forest Service; or
- (3) in an area in which the risk of hazard trees poses an imminent risk to public infrastructure, health, or safety.

**(d) Treatment of areas**

**(1) In general**

The Secretary may carry out priority projects on Federal land in the areas designated under subsection (b)—

- (A) to reduce the risk or extent of, or increase the resilience to, insect or disease infestation; or
- (B) to reduce hazardous fuels.

**(2) Authority**

Any project under paragraph (1) for which a public notice to initiate scoping is issued on or before September 30, 2023, may be carried out in accordance with subsections (b), (c), and (d)

of section 6512 of this title, and sections 6514, 6515, and 6516 of this title.

**(3) Effect**

Projects carried out under this subsection shall be considered authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects for purposes of the authorities described in paragraph (2).

**(4) Report**

**(A) In general**

In accordance with the schedule described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall issue 2 reports on actions taken to carry out this subsection, including—

- (i) an evaluation of the progress towards project goals; and
- (ii) recommendations for modifications to the projects and management treatments.

**(B) Schedule**

The Secretary shall—

- (i) not earlier than September 30, 2018, issue the initial report under subparagraph (A); and
- (ii) not earlier than September 30, 2024, issue the second report under that subparagraph.

**(e) Tree retention**

The Secretary shall carry out projects under subsection (d) in a manner that maximizes the retention of old-growth and large trees, as appropriate for the forest type, to the extent that the trees promote stands that are resilient to insects and disease.

(Pub. L. 108-148, title VI, § 602, as added Pub. L. 113-79, title VIII, § 8204, Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 915; amended Pub. L. 115-334, title VIII, §§ 8407(b), 8408, Dec. 20, 2018, 132 Stat. 4846, 4847.)

**Editorial Notes**

AMENDMENTS

2018—Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 115-334, § 8407(b)(1), substituted “subsection (b)—” and subpars. (A) and (B) for “subsection (b) to reduce the risk or extent of, or increase the resilience to, insect or disease infestation in the areas.”

Subsec. (d)(2). Pub. L. 115-334, § 8407(b)(2), substituted “2023” for “2018”.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 115-334, § 8408, struck out subsec. (f). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$200,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2024.”

**§ 6591b. Administrative review**

**(a) In general**

Except as provided in subsection (d), a project described in subsection (b) that is conducted in accordance with section 6591a(d) of this title may be—

- (1) considered an action categorically excluded from the requirements of Public Law 91-190 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and
- (2) exempt from the special administrative review process under section 6515 of this title.

**(b) Collaborative restoration project**

**(1) In general**

A project referred to in subsection (a) is a project to carry out forest restoration treatments that—

(A) maximizes the retention of old-growth and large trees, as appropriate for the forest type, to the extent that the trees promote stands that are resilient to insects and disease;

(B) considers the best available scientific information to maintain or restore the ecological integrity, including maintaining or restoring structure, function, composition, and connectivity; and

(C) is developed and implemented through a collaborative process that—

(i) includes multiple interested persons representing diverse interests; and

(ii)(I) is transparent and nonexclusive; or

(II) meets the requirements for a resource advisory committee under subsections (c) through (f) of section 7125 of this title.

**(2) Inclusion**

A project under this subsection may carry out part of a proposal that complies with the eligibility requirements of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program under section 7303(b) of this title.

**(c) Limitations**

**(1) Project size**

A project under this section may not exceed 3000 acres.

**(2) Location**

A project under this section shall be limited to areas—

(A) in the wildland-urban interface; or

(B) Condition Classes 2 or 3 in Fire Regime Groups I, II, or III, outside the wildland-urban interface.

**(3) Roads**

**(A) Permanent roads**

**(i) Prohibition on establishment**

A project under this section shall not include the establishment of permanent roads.

**(ii) Existing roads**

The Secretary may carry out necessary maintenance and repairs on existing permanent roads for the purposes of this section.

**(B) Temporary roads**

The Secretary shall decommission any temporary road constructed under a project under this section not later than 3 years after the date on which the project is completed.

**(d) Exclusions**

This section does not apply to—

(1) a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System;

(2) any Federal land on which, by Act of Congress or Presidential proclamation, the removal of vegetation is restricted or prohibited;

(3) a congressionally designated wilderness study area; or

(4) an area in which activities under subsection (a) would be inconsistent with the applicable land and resource management plan.

**(e) Forest management plans**

All projects and activities carried out under this section shall be consistent with the land and resource management plan established under section 1604 of this title for the unit of the National Forest System containing the projects and activities.

**(f) Public notice and scoping**

The Secretary shall conduct public notice and scoping for any project or action proposed in accordance with this section.

**(g) Accountability**

**(1) In general**

The Secretary shall prepare an annual report on the use of categorical exclusions under this section that includes a description of all acres (or other appropriate unit) treated through projects carried out under this section.

**(2) Submission**

Not later than 1 year after February 7, 2014, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit the reports required under paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives;

(D) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(E) the Government Accountability Office.

(Pub. L. 108-148, title VI, §603, as added Pub. L. 113-79, title VIII, §8204, Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 916.)

**Editorial Notes**

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Public Law 91-190, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), is Pub. L. 91-190, Jan. 1, 1970, 83 Stat. 852, known as the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, which is classified generally to chapter 55 (§4321 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 4321 of Title 42 and Tables.

**§ 6591c. Stewardship end result contracting projects**

**(a) Definitions**

In this section:

**(1) Chief**

The term “Chief” means the Chief of the Forest Service.

**(2) Director**

The term “Director” means the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

**(b) Projects**

The Chief and the Director, via agreement or contract as appropriate, may enter into stewardship contracting projects with private persons or other public or private entities to perform services to achieve land management goals for the national forests and the public lands that meet local and rural community needs.