To amend the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to promote timely emergency rehabilitation and restoration of Federal forest land impacted by catastrophic events, to redirect for a 5-year period funding normally made available for land acquisition to mechanical forest treatment and salvage operations due to catastrophic events, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. EMERGENCY FOREST REHABILITATION AND RESTORATION.

Title VI of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 602. EMERGENCY FOREST REHABILITATION AND RESTORATION.

“(a) DEFINITION.—In this section:

“(1) CATASTROPHIC EVENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘catastrophic event’ means any natural disaster or any fire, flood, or explosion, regardless of cause, that the Secretary determines has caused or has the potential to cause damage of significant severity and magnitude to Federal land.

“(B) NATURAL DISASTER.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), a natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary, may include a hurricane, tornado, windstorm, snow or ice storm, rain storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, drought, or insect or disease outbreak.

“(2) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ has the meaning given the term in section 101.

“(b) MECHANICAL FOREST TREATMENT.—
“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall implement such procedures as are necessary to ensure that not less than 600,000 acres of Federal land each fiscal year are treated with mechanical treatments intended to produce merchantable wood.

“(2) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall use to carry out paragraph (1)—

“(A) funds described in subsection (f)(3); and

“(B) any other funds made available for the purposes described in paragraph (1).

“(c) EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

“(A) declare that emergency circumstances exist for all Federal land subject to the effects of a catastrophic event, including on Federal land outside urban interface areas; and

“(B) as soon as practicable, take all actions necessary for the rehabilitation or restoration of the Federal land, with highest priority given to Federal land impacted by large-scale beetle infestations.

“(2) EMERGENCY ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.—In accordance with section 220.4 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations and section
1506.11 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), for any Federal land for which the Secretary declares the existence of emergency circumstances under paragraph (1), the Secretary may use emergency alternative arrangements to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

“(3) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no administrative appeal shall be allowed for any action classified as an emergency alternative arrangement under paragraph (2) or a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) due to emergency circumstances declared under paragraph (1).

“(d) CATASTROPHIC EVENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable during but not later than 30 days after the conclusion of a catastrophic event, the Secretary shall initiate timely salvage activities on the Federal land affected by the catastrophic event so as to prevent significant deterioration of timber values, development of significant fire hazard, or other forest mortality that would prevent the Federal land from regenerating to forest within 5 years.
“(2) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall use to carry out paragraph (1)—

“(A) funds described in subsection (f)(3);

and

“(B) any other funds made available for the purposes described in paragraph (1).

“(e) EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAND.—

This section shall not apply to—

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

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

“(3) a wilderness study area.

“(f) LIMITATION ON ACQUISITION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in paragraph (2), beginning on the date of enactment of this section and during each of the subsequent 5 full fiscal years, none of the funds made available to the Secretary under any law may be used—

“(A) to survey land for future acquisition as Federal land; or
“(B) to enter into discussions with non-Federal landowners to identify land for acquisition as Federal land.

“(2) Exception.—Paragraph (1) does not apply to the use of funds—

“(A) to complete land transactions underway on the date of enactment of this section;

“(B) to exchange Federal land for non-Federal land; or

“(C) to accept donations of non-Federal land as Federal land.

“(3) Use of Funds.—The Secretary shall use funds that would otherwise have been used for purchase of non-Federal land by the Forest Service to carry out—

“(A) mechanical forest treatments described in subsection (b); and

“(B) salvage activities described in subsection (d).”.