

GRAZING FOR WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION ACT

JANUARY 8, 2026.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. WESTERMAN, from the Committee on Natural Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 1110]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1110) to require the Secretary of Agriculture to develop and implement a strategy to increase opportunities to utilize livestock grazing as a means of wildfire risk reduction, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendments are as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Grazing for Wildfire Risk Reduction Act”.

SEC. 2. UTILIZING GRAZING FOR WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned, in coordination with holders of permits to graze livestock on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned and in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, shall develop and implement a strategy to utilize livestock grazing as wildfire risk reduction tool consistent with the laws applicable to the Secretary concerned. The strategy shall include—

(1) the completion of reviews (as required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)) to allow permitted grazing on vacant grazing allotments during instances of drought, wildfire or other natural disasters that disrupt grazing on allotments already permitted;

(2) the use of targeted grazing to reduce hazardous fuels;

(3) an increased use of temporary permits to promote targeted fuels reduction and reduction of invasive annual grasses;

(4) an increased use of grazing—

(A) to eradicate invasive annual grasses; or

(B) as a postfire recovery and restoration strategy, where appropriate;

(5) an integrated use of advanced technologies to dynamically adjust livestock placement;

- (6) an increased use of any authorities applicable to livestock grazing, including modifications to grazing permits or leases to allow variances;
 - (7) the utilization of grazing on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned in a manner that avoids conflicts with other uses of such Federal land and is consistent with any applicable land management plan; and
 - (8) the use of any other means determined to be appropriate by the Secretary concerned.
- (b) EFFECT ON EXISTING GRAZING PROGRAMS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any livestock grazing program being carried out as of the date of enactment of this Act by the Secretary concerned.
- (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:
- (1) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term “National Forest System” has the meaning given the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609).
 - (2) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term “public lands” has the meaning given that term in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702), except that the term includes Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands and Oregon and California Railroad Grant lands.
 - (3) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Secretary concerned” means—
 - (A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest System lands; and
 - (B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to public lands.

Amend the title so as to read:

A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to develop and implement a strategy to utilize livestock grazing as a means of wildfire risk reduction.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 1110, as ordered reported, is to require the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to develop and implement a strategy to utilize livestock grazing as a means of wildfire risk reduction.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Grazing on public lands provides important conservation, ecosystemic, and economic benefits to the American people and federal land management agencies, alike. This is especially true in the Western states, where roughly half the land is federally owned.¹ The majority of grazing on federal land occurs on parcels managed by either the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Both agencies operate under multiple-use and sustained-yield mandates which explicitly acknowledge livestock grazing as an approved activity.² BLM administers roughly 18,000 grazing permits and leases on nearly 155 million acres of public land in almost 22,000 grazing allotments.³ Similarly, more than 95 million of the total 193 million acres managed by USFS are available for grazing, and nearly 6,000 permits for livestock and horses cover USFS land.⁴ In total, roughly 92 percent of the available

¹ Carol Hardy Vincent, “Federal Land Ownership: Overview and Data,” Congressional Research Service, February 21, 2020, <https://www.crs.gov/Reports/R42346>.

² Carol Hardy Vincent, “Federal Lands and Related Resources: Overview and Selected Issues for the 118th Congress,” Congressional Research Service, February 24, 2023, <https://www.crs.gov/Reports/R43429>.

³ FY 2025 Bureau of Land Management Greenbook, U.S. Department of the Interior, accessed November 11, 2024, <https://www.doi.gov/media/document/fy-2025-bureau-land-management-greenbook>.

⁴ Carol Hardy Vincent, “Grazing Fees: Overview and Issues,” Congressional Research Service, March 4, 2019, <https://crs.gov/Reports/RS21232>. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Justification, United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, accessed November 12, 2024, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs-fy25-congressional-budget-justification.pdf>.

grazing land managed by these agencies is utilized to graze livestock.⁵

Science continues to demonstrate that grazing is not only compatible with rangeland management but also is vital to rangeland health. Livestock grazing can modify the range to make it more fire resilient and the presence of livestock on federal land decreases fire probability and severity.⁶ In 2024, for example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released a study showing livestock grazing can limit both wildfire risk and invasive annual grasses.⁷ USFS consistently recognizes grazing as an effective tool for wildfire management and has listed grazing as a key aspect of the agency’s Wildfire Crisis Strategy.⁸ Targeted grazing is a proven method of reducing hazardous fuels and decreasing the speed and severity with which wildfire would otherwise rip through our forests and put vulnerable communities at risk.

Federal agencies must be equipped with all available tools to reduce wildfire risk, improve forest health, and minimize the vulnerability of communities in the wildland-urban interface. To ensure this, H.R. 1110 would direct USFS and BLM to expand the use of proactive, targeted grazing in fuels management programs to lower wildfire risk. Specifically, the bill would direct USFS and BLM to coordinate with grazing permittees to develop wildfire risk-reduction strategies, including proactive fuels reduction to prevent wildfire and the use of grazing as a post-fire recovery strategy. A similar provision was included in the House-passed “Fix Our Forests Act.”⁹

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 1110 was introduced on February 7, 2025, by Representative Doug LaMalfa (R–CA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources. The bill was also referred to the Committee on Agriculture. On February 12, 2025, the Committee on Natural Resources met to consider the bill. Representative Doug LaMalfa (R–CA) offered an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute designated LaMalfa ANS. The Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute was agreed to by unanimous consent. The bill, as amended, was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hearing in the 118th Congress by the Subcommittee on Federal Lands held on November 19, 2024.

⁵ Anna T. Maher et al., “An economic valuation of federal and private grazing land ecosystem services supported by beef cattle ranching in the United States,” <https://doi.org/10.1093/tas/txab054>.

⁶ Id.

⁷ Kirk W. Davies et al., “Ecological benefits of strategically applied livestock grazing in sagebrush communities,” *Ecosphere*; May 22, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1002/ecs2.4859>.

⁸ Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Justification, United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, accessed November 12, 2024, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs-fy25-congressional-budget-justification.pdf>.

⁹ Sec. 117 of H.R. 471; <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/471>.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

Section 1 names the bill the “Grazing for Wildfire Risk Reduction Act.”

Section 2. Utilizing grazing for wildfire risk reduction

Section 2 directs the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to develop and implement a strategy to utilize livestock grazing as wildfire risk reduction tool, in consultation with grazing permittees. Such strategy will include: 1) timely completion of environmental reviews to allow permitted grazing, specifically during instances of drought, wildfire or other natural disasters; 2) the increased use of targeted grazing; 3) increased use of temporary permits to target fuels reduction and invasive grasses; 4) the utilization of grazing to target invasive species and post-fire recovery; 5) integrated use of technology to adjust livestock placement; 6) increased use of authorities applicable to grazing; 7) utilization of grazing in a manner that avoids conflicts with other uses; and 8) use of grazing in other appropriate ways as determined by the Secretary concerned. Section 2 clarifies that nothing in the section should affect any current livestock grazing programs.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* Pursuant to clause 3(c)(2) of House rule XIII and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, and pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of House rule XIII and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has requested but not received from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office a budgetary analysis and a cost estimate of this bill.

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill, as ordered reported, is to require the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to develop and implement a strategy to utilize livestock grazing as a means of wildfire risk reduction.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

An estimate of federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act was not made available to the Committee in time for the filing of this report. The Chair of the Committee shall cause such estimate to be printed in the Congressional Record upon its receipt by the Committee, if such estimate is not publicly available on the Congressional Budget Office website.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Directed Rule Making. This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169) as relating to other programs.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill's purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

As ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources, H.R. 1110 would make no changes in existing law.

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

H.R. 1110, as introduced, would direct the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to develop a strategy to utilize livestock grazing as a wildfire mitigation strategy on all federal land.

Specifically, USFS would be directed to complete relevant environmental reviews pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and prioritize the authorization of grazing on vacant allotments when grazing on permitted lots is disrupted by drought, wildfire, or other natural disasters. The strategy will also emphasize the use of grazing for fuels reduction and invasive annual grasses by implementing targeted grazing, increasing the use of temporary grazing permits, and using grazing as a postfire recovery and restoration tool.

At markup, the Committee adopted an amendment filed by Representative LaMalfa that expands the bill to include the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The amendment also incorporates language to ensure all activity is consistent with all applicable laws, in compliance with any applicable land management plan, and avoids conflicts with other uses of federal land.

These are welcome improvements, and I am encouraged by the majority's willingness to incorporate feedback provided by Committee Democrats.

However, the bill could use additional guardrails to safeguard sensitive landscapes and protected public lands including wilderness areas and national conservation lands. Overgrazing and improper grazing practices can adversely harm public lands; this is especially true in post-fire landscape. In fact, although there was not a hearing on this bill in the 119th Congress, the BLM proposed requiring a temporary post-fire rest period from grazing before incorporating livestock grazing into a fire recovery strategy.¹ This is an important consideration that should be incorporated into the bill going forward.

Managing wildfire risk and promoting climate resilience across large landscapes requires a comprehensive approach. This may include grazing where appropriate but should also include science-based management that emphasizes ecological health and habitat integrity.

JARED HUFFMAN,
Ranking Member.

¹The Department of the Interior, *Statement of Nada Wolff Culver, Principal Deputy Director, Bureau of Land Management before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on S. 2867*, (Oct. 2023). Available online at: <https://www.energy.senate.gov/services/files/B18178D4-3BE1-4953-09A04F-17BE65F1BCFE>.