

Public Law 105-281
105th Congress

An Act

To provide for a demonstration project in the Stanislaus National Forest, California, under which a private contractor will perform multiple resource management activities for that unit of the National Forest System.

Oct. 26, 1998

[H.R. 2886]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Granite Watershed Enhancement and Protection Act of 1998”.

Granite
Watershed
Enhancement
and Protection
Act of 1998.

SEC. 2. DEMONSTRATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT, STANISLAUS NATIONAL FOREST, CALIFORNIA, TO ENHANCE AND PROTECT THE GRANITE WATERSHED.

(a) **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary of Agriculture may enter into a contract with a single private contractor to perform multiple resource management activities on Federal lands within the Stanislaus National Forest in the State of California for the purpose of demonstrating enhanced ecosystem health and water quality, and significantly reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, in the Granite watershed at a reduced cost to the Government. The contract shall be for a term of 5 years.

(b) **AUTHORIZED MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.**—The types of resource management activities performed under the contract shall include the following:

(1) Reduction of forest fuel loads through the use of precommercial and commercial thinning and prescribed burns in the Granite watershed.

(2) Monitoring of ecosystem health and water quality in the Granite watershed.

(3) Monitoring of the presence of wildlife in the area in which management activities are performed and the effect of the activities on wildlife presence.

(4) Such other resource management activities as the Secretary considers appropriate to demonstrate enhanced ecosystem health and water quality in the Granite watershed.

(c) **COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW AND SPOTTED OWL GUIDELINES.**—All resource management activities performed under the contract shall be performed in a manner consistent with applicable Federal law and the standards and guidelines for the conservation of the California spotted owl (as set forth in the California Spotted Owl Sierran Province Interim Guidelines or the subsequently issued final guidelines, whichever is in effect).

(d) **FUNDING.**—

(1) **SOURCES OF FUNDS.**—To provide funds for the resource management activities to be performed under the contract, the Secretary may use—

(A) funds appropriated to carry out this section;

(B) funds specifically provided to the Forest Service to implement projects to demonstrate enhanced water quality and protect aquatic and upland resources;

(C) excess funds that are allocated for the administration and management of the Stanislaus National Forest, California;

(D) hazardous fuels reduction funds allocated for Region 5 of the Forest Service; and

(E) a contract provision allowing the cost of performing authorized management activities described in subsection (b) to be offset by the values owed to the United States for any forest products removed by the contractor.

(2) **PROHIBITION ON USE OF CERTAIN FUNDS.**—Except as provided in paragraph (1), the Secretary may not carry out the contract using funds appropriated for any other unit of the National Forest System.

(3) **CONDITIONS ON FUNDS TRANSFERS.**—Any transfer of funds under paragraph (1) may be made only in accordance with the procedures concerning notice to, and review by, the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate that are applied by the Secretary in the case of a transfer of funds between appropriations.

(e) **ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF STATE FUNDS.**—The Secretary may accept and use funds provided by the State of California to assist in the implementation of the contract under this section.

(f) **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—Not later than February 28 of each year during the term of the contract, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing—

(1) the resource management activities performed under the contract during the period covered by the report;

(2) the source and amount of funds used under subsection (d) to carry out the contract; and

(3) the resource management activities to be performed under the contract during the calendar year in which the report is submitted.

(g) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS.—Nothing in this section exempts the contract, or resource management activities to be performed under the contract, from any Federal environmental law.

Approved October 26, 1998.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 2886:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 105-527 (Comm. on Resources).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 105-292 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 144 (1998):

May 12, considered and passed House.

Oct. 2, considered and passed Senate, amended.

Oct. 10, House concurred in Senate amendment.