

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3363

To implement reforms to the Federal land management agency fire programs in order to address the complexities of 21st century wildfires in a more cost-effective and efficient manner.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 29, 2015

Mr. LAMALFA (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. STEWART, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. DEGETTE, and Ms. SINEMA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

A BILL

To implement reforms to the Federal land management agency fire programs in order to address the complexities of 21st century wildfires in a more cost-effective and efficient manner.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Federal Wildland Fire-
5 fighter Recognition Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 For the purposes of this Act—

1 (1) the term “wildland firefighter” means an
2 employee of a Federal land management agency, the
3 duties of whose position are primarily to perform
4 work directly related to the prevention, control, sup-
5 pression, and management of wildfires, including an
6 employee who is transferred to a supervisory or ad-
7 ministrative position from a position of wildland fire-
8 fighter (as defined by the preceding provisions of
9 this paragraph);

10 (2) the term “Federal land management agen-
11 cy” means—

12 (A) within the Department of the Interior:
13 the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau
14 of Indian Affairs, the National Park Service,
15 and the Fish and Wildlife Service; and

16 (B) within the Department of Agriculture:
17 the Forest Service; and

18 (3) the term “employee” has the meaning given
19 such term by section 2105 of title 5, United States
20 Code.

21 **SEC. 3. CLASSIFICATION OF WILDLAND FIREFIGHTERS.**

22 (a) REQUIREMENTS.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—Within 30 days after the
24 date of the enactment of this Act, the Office of Per-
25 sonnel Management in the administration of chapter

1 51 of title 5, United States Code, and in cooperation
2 with the Federal land management agencies, shall
3 commence development of a separate and distinct
4 Wildland Firefighter occupational series that will
5 more accurately reflect the variety of duties per-
6 formed by wildland firefighters.

7 (2) DESIGNATION.—The Office of Personnel
8 Management shall ensure that the official title as-
9 signed to any occupational series established pursu-
10 ant to paragraph (1) shall include “wildland fire-
11 fighter”, with appropriate subtitles such as hand
12 crew, hotshot, smokejumper, battalion chief,
13 helitack, fuels, and engine module.

14 (3) POSITIONS DESCRIBED.—Paragraph (1) ap-
15 plies with respect to any class or other category of
16 positions that consists primarily or exclusively of for-
17 estry technician positions, range technician posi-
18 tions, or any other positions the duties and respon-
19 sibilities of which include—

20 (A) significant wildfire preparedness, sup-
21 pression, and hazardous fuels reduction activi-
22 ties; or

23 (B) activities necessary to meet any other
24 emergency incident to which such employee may
25 be assigned.

1 (4) REQUIREMENTS.—Section 5545(d)(1) of
2 title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking
3 all after “except” and inserting an em dash and the
4 following:

5 “(A) an employee in an occupational series
6 covering positions for which the primary duties
7 are wildland firefighting, as determined by the
8 Office; and

9 “(B) in such other circumstances as the
10 Office may by regulation prescribe; and”.

11 (b) EMPLOYEES CURRENTLY IN THE 401 FIRE MAN-
12 AGEMENT SPECIALIST SERIES.—Any individual who, as of
13 the date of the enactment of this Act, holds a position
14 of wildland firefighter shall have the option of either re-
15 maining in the 401 series (as in effect on such date under
16 chapter 51 of title 5, United States Code) or being in-
17 cluded in the new wildland firefighter series, as established
18 pursuant to subsection (a).

19 (c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act
20 shall be considered to require any change in the pay, bene-
21 fits, or other terms or conditions of employment that apply
22 with respect to any category of employees or positions de-
23 scribed herein. Furthermore, nothing in this Act shall pre-
24 clude a Federal wildland firefighter who attains age 57
25 (the maximum age for Federal firefighters to continue

1 serving) from cross-training into another occupational se-
2 ries not subject to mandatory retirement limitations to
3 maintain employment with any Federal land management
4 agency.

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