

Summit County that the Buffalo fire threatened 1,400 homes. So 1,400 homes were evacuated as a result of this fire. The fire was 91 acres. It is about 95 percent containment, but this risk it posed was significant because there was a very densely populated area of the mountains, a community of homeowners. There were 1,400 homeowners who had to evacuate.

They had a lot of high-risk fuels, but what this community had done was something we should brag about all over the West. They actually had collaborative efforts with State and local governments in this area. They developed fuel treatments to help moderate fire activity.

This was a challenging fire. We have extreme fire behavior in Colorado this year, but because of the collaborative work they had done, that helped to reduce the risk, to thin forests, to reduce the fuel, and to create the fire breaks. They were able to keep this fire from reaching those homes. The fire treatment worked. This is an example of a process we ought to be spreading and looking at to help reduce hazardous fuels around the West to make sure we don't lose our communities when we have these devastating fires. This was just west of Silverthorne. These fuel reduction projects helped to create fire breaks, and they prescribed burns which contain a fire with extreme behavior that could have been devastating. This wasn't too far away from the Dillon Reservoir, a key source of water for Colorado.

I also want to talk about some of the language we have in the farm bill. We have language in the farm bill that addresses vegetation management. This picture shows what happened after a forest fire. This is a power line, obviously. You can see the power lines going through it.

We have risks to our forests, our communities, our homes, and risks to our watersheds. We also have risks to our power supply systems. You can see that this pole has been simply disintegrated as a result of the fire. This has cost at least one utility over \$10 million in the Basalt area, as a result of the fire.

We are working on language dealing with vegetation management. Senator BENNET and I sponsored language that would allow utilities to do work on their own dime outside of the rights of way to prevent this fire from impacting our electricity and energy system. The Lake Christine fire, which is near Basalt, put a lot of different types of electric infrastructure out of commission. This utility, as I mentioned, is estimating that it will be millions of dollars for them to repair. It makes sense for us to give tools to these utilities on their own dime to prevent this kind of damage, because they would be creating fire breaks. They would be creating more resilient systems that would allow our communities a little bit more security, I guess, in knowing that their electricity systems would be protected and safe.

These kinds of bills that we have been able to produce have had and will have great impact on how we can prevent and how we respond to catastrophic wildfires. Certainly, a \$10 million cost from one fire, as well as other costs, will increase rates. It has the potential to increase rates dramatically if we can't get a handle on the right kinds of policies.

Finally, I want to turn to another disturbing aspect of what we have seen in Colorado with these forest fires. We have seen an uptick of drones flying over active forest fires and firefighting areas. If you fly a drone and do that without interfering with the firefighter—following all the rules—then I don't think anybody has a problem with it. If you are flying a drone and violating the rules and you are flying it over an active fire, stop it. I talked to far too many incident commanders who had to call off air tankers because there was a drone in the area. There is a video on YouTube where you can see footage from the drone taking a picture of the forest, while you see the shadow of a tanker on the ground because the tanker went right over it.

The pilots of that tanker were asked: Did you see the drone?

They said: No.

What would have happened if that drone had hit that plane, perhaps causing an accident, perhaps costing lives, perhaps starting a new fire because the plane could have crashed as a result?

If you call off an air tanker already in the air, that tanker can't land with the slurry that it has onboard already. So the air tanker gets called off. It then has to dump the slurry somewhere else. That could be \$10,000 worth of slurry at a time wasted because they got called off because somebody decided they would rather fly their drone and get videos that they can post on YouTube, instead of allowing firefighters to do their job.

This is what the Forest Service put out: "If you fly, we can't."

You have a 110,000-acre fire in the Spring Creek fire right now. Over 200 homes are lost. An hour a day without supertankers—without air tankers—is a big problem for those communities and the men and women putting their lives at risk trying to defend and protect our forests and our communities. I hope people will use a little bit of common sense and not fly their drones over an active firefighting.

I introduced legislation with Senator BENNET and Congressman TIPTON to make it a felony to interfere with a firefighter operation over a forest fire if you are flying a drone illegally.

We met with individuals from Oregon and from all over the West when I visited the fire at the incident command center in Southern Colorado when we visited the Spring Creek fire. We talked to fire men and women who spent their Fourth of July not watching fireworks or picnicking with their family but defending and protecting our communities in Colorado. We

thank them for their work. We thank them for their tireless efforts and sacrifice.

It is dangerous. In fact, just last week, as we were at the fire on Friday, we commemorated and recognized the anniversary of the Storm King Mountain fire and the 14 persons who were killed near Glenwood Springs about 24 years before. This is a very serious fire season. Thankfully, we have serious policies in place that are addressing it. There is more work we can do.

I thank my colleagues.

#### RESTORE OUR PARKS ACT

Madam President, I come to the floor today also to talk about a bill called the Restore Our Parks Act and a committee hearing that we had yesterday before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. That legislation would provide billions of dollars to address the most pressing maintenance needs at our Nation's national park units. National parks and monuments are an important part of Colorado's history and heritage and of our Nation's shared love of our public lands system.

We know that in 2016, the year the National Park Service was celebrating its centennial, Colorado's 12 units managed by the National Park Service saw over 7.5 million visitors who spent around \$485 million visiting our national parks in Colorado. However, after years of increasing visitation popularity, national park units across the country are showing signs of stress and overuse for which programmatic funding has not kept up.

National park units in Colorado account for over \$238 million of the \$11.6 billion in maintenance needs our national parks now face.

Rocky Mountain National Park, which is one of the Nation's most visited parks in the country and boasts the highest altitude paved road in the continental United States, has \$84 million alone in deferred maintenance needs.

Mesa Verde, Colorado's oldest national park and the first established to protect the works of man, needs \$70 million to address its deferred maintenance backlog.

The list goes on for Dinosaur National Monument, the Great Sand Dunes, and even Bent's Old Fort.

I have been happy to join with a bipartisan group of colleagues—Senators ALEXANDER, PORTMAN, KING, and WARNER, among others—to craft and advance legislation that fulfills our promise to the public that the upkeep of our public lands is a priority.

I am also pleased that it is based on a funding model that has worked so successfully for the Land and Water Conservation Fund—one of the crown jewels of our Nation's conservation programs.

I would point out that just 20 days ago another group of bipartisan Senators was holding a press conference to highlight the need to reauthorize LWCF in the next 100 days before that

authorization lapses. I was a part of that group. We talked about the need to have this program reauthorized again before it expires. Now the deadline is just about 78 days away.

I must also mention that we have yet to fulfill our promise on funding for LWCF. We need to fully fund that program. It is something I hope we can do in the near future.

While I believe the structure of the Restore Our Parks bill is sufficient and that the same will not happen here, we need to ensure our full commitment to this new effort, so it doesn't suffer the same fate, by making sure we have the funding promised by Congress.

I urge my colleagues to find a bipartisan path forward to permanently authorize and to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund because access to the land we are trying to maintain is as important as the parks themselves.

I again thank my colleagues for coming together on the Restore Our Parks Act in recognition of the necessary, overdue fix to address our park unit's deferred maintenance backlog that has persisted for far too many years.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back the remainder of the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

All time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Ney nomination?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 70, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 154 Ex.]

YEAS—70

|           |           |            |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Alexander | Flake     | Murray     |
| Barrasso  | Gardner   | Nelson     |
| Bennet    | Graham    | Perdue     |
| Blunt     | Grassley  | Portman    |
| Boozman   | Hassan    | Reed       |
| Burr      | Hatch     | Risch      |
| Cantwell  | Heinrich  | Roberts    |
| Capito    | Heitkamp  | Rounds     |
| Cardin    | Heller    | Rubio      |
| Carper    | Hoeven    | Sasse      |
| Cassidy   | Inhofe    | Scott      |
| Collins   | Isakson   | Shelby     |
| Cooms     | Johnson   | Smith      |
| Corker    | Jones     | Tester     |
| Cornyn    | Kaine     | Thune      |
| Cotton    | Kennedy   | Toomey     |
| Crapo     | King      | Udall      |
| Cruz      | Klobuchar | Van Hollen |
| Daines    | Lankford  | Warner     |
| Donnelly  | Manchin   | Whitehouse |
| Durbin    | McCaskill | Wicker     |
| Enzi      | McConnell | Young      |
| Ernst     | Murkowski |            |
| Fischer   | Murphy    |            |

NAYS—23

|              |            |          |
|--------------|------------|----------|
| Baldwin      | Gillibrand | Peters   |
| Blumenthal   | Harris     | Sanders  |
| Booker       | Hirono     | Schatz   |
| Brown        | Leahy      | Stabenow |
| Casey        | Lee        | Sullivan |
| Cortez Masto | Markey     | Warren   |
| Duckworth    | Menendez   | Wyden    |
| Feinstein    | Merkley    |          |

NOT VOTING—7

|            |         |        |
|------------|---------|--------|
| Hyde-Smith | Paul    | Tillis |
| McCain     | Schumer |        |
| Moran      | Shaheen |        |

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 595.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Randal Quarles, of Colorado, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of fourteen years from February 1, 2018.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Randal Quarles, of Colorado, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of fourteen years from February 1, 2018.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Crapo, Tom Cotton, Johnny Isakson, John Kennedy, John Thune, John Boozman, Roy Blunt, John Cornyn, Tim Scott, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Cory Gardner, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, Jerry Moran.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 892.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Andrew S. Oldham, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Andrew S. Oldham, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, Mike Rounds, Bob Corker, Mike Crapo, Thom Tillis, Chuck Grassley, John Boozman, Johnny Isakson, Orrin G. Hatch, John Cornyn, David Perdue, John Barrasso, John Hoeven, Roy Blunt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 903.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Ryan Wesley Bounds, of Oregon, to be