

115TH CONGRESS } HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES { REPORT  
1st Session } { 115-238

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND  
RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2018

JULY 21, 2017.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of  
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. CALVERT, from the Committee on Appropriations,  
submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

DISSENTING VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 3354]

The Committee on Appropriations submits the following report in explanation of the accompanying bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018. The bill provides regular annual appropriations for the Department of the Interior (except the Bureau of Reclamation and the Central Utah Project), the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other related agencies, including the Forest Service, the Indian Health Service, the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities.

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*Off-Highway Vehicle Report.*—The Committee directs the Service to provide a report on its off-highway vehicle (OHV) mixed-use analysis. The report should include information on how OHV access to forest roads would affect recreational opportunities and related economic activity in forest communities; how many miles potentially could become available; estimated budget needs for expanded access; plans for opening new routes; and how other vehicles, such as all-terrain vehicles, could be utilized by wounded veterans and disabled citizens. The Committee reminds the Service of the importance of making the national forests as accessible as possible to the American people and requests that the Service work with States, local officials, communities, and partners as it implements the travel analysis process.

*Special-use Permits.*—The Committee encourages the Service to increase the pace and scale of its evaluation of special-use permits in order to improve access to public lands and generate additional economic activity in the national forests and forest communities.

*Kisatchie National Forest.*—The Committee is concerned about reports that the Service has insufficiently scoped the Breezy Hill Trail construction proposal and failed to adequately consider public comments, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As such, the Committee directs the Service to provide a report within 30 days of enactment of this Act on how it intends to comply with all NEPA requirements, ensure public participation, and engage local communities regarding this proposal.

*Grazing Management.*—The Committee recommends \$56,856,000 for Grazing Management, equal to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level and \$6,256,000 above the budget request.

The Committee encourages the Service to improve its monitoring of grazing permits in allotments where riparian streamside health is a concern for listed or threatened species. The Committee also requests each Forest Service region increase transparency and reporting on how their monitoring resources are used on the ground to satisfy monitoring requirements or for other purposes.

*Hazardous Fuels.*—The Committee recommends \$392,500,000 for hazardous fuels, \$2,500,000 above the fiscal year 2017 level and \$38,212,000 above the budget request. The Committee accepts the proposal to move Hazardous Fuels to the National Forest System from Wildland Fire Management.

The Committee directs the Service to use the best available science that takes into account historical fire data, landscape characteristics, and forest composition as well as the effects of past and current human influences, such as development and land-use patterns, and climatic conditions to identify the highest priority areas for hazardous fuel reduction and forest health and management treatments. The Committee also recommends prioritizing funding for proactive hazardous fuels management and fire mitigation in high-priority areas to protect life and property.

*Forest Products.*—The Committee recommends \$370,305,000 for Forest Products, \$2,500,000 above the fiscal year 2017 enacted level and \$11,184,000 above the budget request.

The Committee believes timber sales are a vital component of forest health. The budget request assumes 3.2 billion board feet of timber volume will be sold in fiscal year 2018. The Committee encourages the Service to work toward sales of 4 billion board feet.