

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 1839

To authorize a study of the equity of Forest Service regional funding allocations, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 9 (legislative day, JANUARY 25), 1994

Mr. BINGAMAN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To authorize a study of the equity of Forest Service regional funding allocations, and for other purposes.

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 “Forest Service Equity
5 Study Act of 1994”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) data supplied by the Forest Service docu-
9 ments that some National Forest System regions re-
10 ceive more funding on a per unit basis than others

1 for recreation management, wildlife and fish man-
2 agement, road maintenance, and other activities;

3 (2) the ecological integrity of some regions is
4 compromised by the funding disparity;

5 (3) the regional funding of the Forest Service
6 should be equitable, and significant disparities
7 should be eliminated;

8 (4) the funding methodology and practices of
9 the Forest Service should support the policy goals of
10 the National Forest System, particularly ecosystem
11 management; and

12 (5) the regional funding methodology and prac-
13 tices of the Forest Service should reflect the diverse
14 needs of the national forests.

15 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

16 As used in this Act—

17 (1) the term “funding” means the annual fiscal
18 year allocation received by each region;

19 (2) the term “region” refers to the 9 regions
20 into which the Forest Service divides the country for
21 purposes of planning and implementing activities in
22 the National Forest System;

23 (3) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
24 of Agriculture; and

1 (4) the term “unit” refers to measures of use
2 or activity in the National Forest System, includ-
3 ing—

4 (A) visitor days;

5 (B) nontimber acreage;

6 (C) miles maintained;

7 (D) animal unit months;

8 (E) people at one time (PAOT) days; and

9 (F) any other measure of use or activity
10 commonly associated with the regions.

11 **SEC. 4. EQUITY STUDY.**

12 (a) AUTHORIZATION.—Not later than 1 year after
13 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall con-
14 duct a study detailing the regional funding allocation sys-
15 tem of the National Forest Service.

16 (b) SUBJECT OF STUDY.—As part of the study, the
17 Secretary shall—

18 (1) analyze the methodology and rationale be-
19 hind regional funding decisions made prior to the
20 date the study is conducted;

21 (2) examine the fairness of allocations among
22 regions, taking into account the unit burdens of each
23 region; and

24 (3) examine the relationships between funding
25 allocations, Forest Service goals, and the diverse

1 needs of the regions based on ecological factors, such
2 as threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, for-
3 est health, rangeland and watershed conditions, and
4 public demand for multiple use services.

5 (c) CONTRACT.—The Secretary may enter into a con-
6 tract with an independent entity to carry out the study
7 pursuant to subsection (a).

8 (d) REPORT.—Upon completion of the study author-
9 ized under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit a re-
10 port to Congress that includes—

11 (1) recommendations for changes and improve-
12 ments in regional funding patterns and methodology
13 to eliminate funding disparities among regions;

14 (2) recommendations for changes in regional
15 funding patterns to reflect Forest Service goals and
16 regional needs;

17 (3) an assessment of whether the recommended
18 changes can be implemented administratively or will
19 require congressional action; and

20 (4) a plan for implementation of the rec-
21 ommended changes.

22 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

23 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
24 as are necessary to carry out this Act.

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