

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

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To require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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**A BILL**

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program, 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 “Joint Chiefs Land-  
5 scape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. JOINT CHIEFS LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PART-  
7 NERSHIP PROGRAM.**

8       (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1                   (1) CHIEFS.—The term “Chiefs” means the  
2                   Chief of the Forest Service and the Chief of the  
3                   Natural Resources Conservation Service.

4                   (2) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY.—The term “eligible  
5                   activity” means an activity—

6                         (A) to reduce the risk of wildfire;  
7                         (B) to protect water quality and supply; or  
8                         (C) to improve wildlife habitat for at-risk  
9                         species.

10                  (3) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means  
11                  the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership  
12                  program established under subsection (b)(1).

13                  (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
14                  the Secretary of Agriculture.

15                  (5) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—The term  
16                  “wildland-urban interface” has the meaning given  
17                  the term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Res-  
18                  toration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).

19                  (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

20                  (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish  
21                  a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership  
22                  program to improve the health and resilience of for-  
23                  est landscapes across National Forest System land  
24                  and State, Tribal, and private land.

1                         (2) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall ad-  
2 minister the program by coordinating eligible activi-  
3 ties conducted on National Forest System land and  
4 State, Tribal, or private land across a forest land-  
5 scape to improve the health and resilience of the for-  
6 est landscape by—

7                             (A) assisting producers and landowners in  
8 implementing eligible activities on eligible pri-  
9 vate or Tribal land using the applicable pro-  
10 grams and authorities administered by the  
11 Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation  
12 Service under title XII of the Food Security Act  
13 of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.), not including  
14 the conservation reserve program established  
15 under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D  
16 of that title (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.); and

17                             (B) conducting eligible activities on Na-  
18 tional Forest System land or assisting land-  
19 owners in implementing eligible activities on  
20 State, Tribal, or private land using the applica-  
21 ble programs and authorities administered by  
22 the Chief of the Forest Service.

23                         (c) SELECTION OF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—The ap-  
24 propriate Regional Forester and State Conservationist

1 shall jointly submit to the Chiefs on an annual basis pro-  
2 posals for eligible activities under the program.

3 (d) EVALUATION CRITERIA.—In evaluating and se-  
4 lecting proposals submitted under subsection (c), the  
5 Chiefs shall consider—

6 (1) criteria including whether the proposal—  
7 (A) reduces wildfire risk in a municipal  
8 watershed or the wildland-urban interface;

9 (B) was developed through a collaborative  
10 process with participation from diverse stake-  
11 holders;

12 (C) increases forest workforce capacity or  
13 forest business infrastructure and development;

14 (D) leverages existing authorities and non-  
15 Federal funding;

16 (E) provides measurable outcomes; or  
17 (F) supports established State and re-  
18 gional priorities; and

19 (2) such other criteria relating to the merits of  
20 the proposals as the Chiefs determine to be appro-  
21 priate.

22 (e) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall provide—

23 (1) public notice on the websites of the Forest  
24 Service and the Natural Resources Conservation  
25 Service describing—

(B) the criteria for selecting proposals in accordance with subsection (d); and

9           (f) EXCLUSIONS.—An eligible activity may not be  
10 carried out under the program—

11                   (1) in a wilderness area or designated wilder-  
12                   ness study area;

13 (2) in an inventoried roadless area;

**20 (g) ACCOUNTABILITY.—**

- 1                             (A) funding mechanisms for the program;
- 2                             (B) staff capacity to carry out the pro-
- 3                             gram;
- 4                             (C) privacy laws applicable to the program;
- 5                             (D) data collection under the program;
- 6                             (E) monitoring and outcomes under the
- 7                             program; and
- 8                             (F) such other matters as the Secretary
- 9                             considers to be appropriate.

10                             (2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Chiefs shall annu-

11                             ally submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-

12                             tion, and Forestry and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Agri-

13                             culture and the Committee on Appropriations of the

14                             House of Representatives a report describing

15                             projects for which funding is provided under the pro-

16                             gram, including the status and outcomes of those

17                             projects.

19                             (h) FUNDING.—

20                             (1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In

21                             addition to amounts otherwise available to the Sec-

22                             retary to carry out the program, there is authorized

23                             to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out the

24                             program \$90,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021

25                             through 2030.

1                   (2) DURATION OF AVAILABILITY.—Funds made  
2                   available under paragraph (1) shall remain available  
3                   until expended.

4                   (3) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—Of the funds  
5                   made available under paragraph (1)—

6                         (A) not less than 40 percent shall be allo-  
7                         cated to carry out eligible activities through the  
8                         Natural Resources Conservation Service;

9                         (B) not less than 40 percent shall be allo-  
10                         cated to carry out eligible activities through the  
11                         Forest Service; and

12                         (C) the remaining funds shall be allocated  
13                         by the Chiefs to the Natural Resources Con-  
14                         servation Service or the Forest Service—

15                                 (i) to carry out eligible activities; or  
16                                 (ii) for other purposes, such as tech-  
17                                 nical assistance, project development, or  
18                                 local capacity building.