

Greetings -

After a long hiatus, the fire suppression funding issue is once again beginning to percolate. We thought it would be good to send out a House FLAME status update, Senate strategy and outreach update and an update on the Fire Suppression Funding Solutions Coalition.

#### Status Update

The FLAME Act passed the House with 11 amendments. Some of those amendments have implications for the original intent of the bill. The attached summary contains summaries of the amendments, implications and Coalition call to action. This document may be helpful as you are discussing the FLAME Act and/or the President's proposed contingency fund with your network and contacts. This document will be posted on our Fire Suppression Funding Group Page (<http://groups.google.com/group/fire-suppression-funding>).

The President's Contingency Fund was funded in both the House Interior Appropriations Bill and in the not-yet-finalized Senate Interior Appropriations Bill. This contingency fund would work with the FLAME Act provisions as the FLAME Act could provide the framework for how the contingency fund monies would be spent. The House Interior Appropriations report language includes the statement "The Committee notes that the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act (FLAME) passed the House in March 2009. That Act authorizes a supplemental funding source for catastrophic emergency wildland fire suppression activities on Department of the Interior and National Forest System lands. If the FLAME Act is authorized, the Committee will work with the Administration and others to make this new wildfire suppression contingency fund compatible with the new FLAME Act funding procedures."

#### Senate Strategy and Outreach

The Senate expects to hold a hearing on FLAME within the next few weeks. Once we learn of a date and a list of witnesses, we will share this information with the Coalition. As we move closer to a hearing, we will engage members of the Coalition to help draft written testimony to submit from the Fire Suppression Funding Solutions Coalition. We will also draft and circulate a sign-on letter to send to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee members prior to the hearing.

#### Coalition Update

The National Association of State Foresters, The Wilderness Society and American Forests have been working together on this issue for some time. In an effort to harness the work of many other organizations on the fire suppression funding issue, our three organizations brought together this Coalition in February. Laura Schweitzer has taken a wonderful opportunity to study in Rome, and unfortunately for us, is no longer with American Foresters. We would like to recognize her as an important leader in our fire funding efforts. We are happy to present Kathy Lynn, who will take on fire funding work on behalf of American Forests and will be filling in behind Laura. We look forward to working with her as we continue to find new ways to empower the members of the Coalition to talk about the need for a 'fix' to the fire suppression funding problem facing the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior.

Sincerely,

Cecilia Clavet, The Wilderness Society

Caitlyn Peel, Council of Western State Foresters / NASF 'Fire' Staff

Kathy Lynn, American Forests