

PUBLIC LANDS WILDFIRE STUDY

2016 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Ken Ivory

Senate Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill requires the Department of Agriculture and Food to study and analyze certain issues regarding wildfires on public lands within Utah.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ requires the Department of Agriculture and Food to work with Utah State University and certain conservation districts to:
 - complete a study and economic analysis of certain issues regarding wildfires on public lands within Utah, including the impact of wildfires on the state's watershed and air quality; and
 - report to the Legislature's Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands; and
- ▶ allows the Department of Agriculture and Food to contract with another state agency or private entity to complete the required study and economic analysis.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

This bill appropriates in fiscal year 2017:

- ▶ to Department of Agriculture and Food as a one-time appropriation, from the General Fund, one-time, \$250,000.

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:



28 ENACTS:

29 [4-18-109](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953



31 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

32 Section 1. Section **4-18-109** is enacted to read:

33 **4-18-109. Public lands wildfire study and analysis -- Report.**

34 (1) As used in this section:

35 (a) "Conservation districts" means the conservation districts created under Title 17D,
36 Chapter 3, Conservation District Act.

37 (b) "Public lands" means the same as that term is defined in Section [63L-6-102](#).

38 (2) (a) The department shall work with Utah State University and the conservation
39 districts to conduct a study and analysis of the environmental and economic impact of:

40 (i) potential catastrophic wildfires on public lands within Utah, including the impact to
41 the state and the state's counties, of catastrophic wildfire on the state's watershed and air
42 quality; and

43 (ii) changing rangeland and forest management practices to reduce the probability and
44 severity of wildfires in Utah.

45 (b) The study and economic analysis described in Subsection (2)(a) shall:

46 (i) document historical acreage and severity of wildfires in Utah;

47 (ii) assess and document differences in state and federal wildfire preparedness
48 activities;

49 (iii) update and expand upon existing studies of wildfire fuel loads on public lands,
50 including consideration of insect damage, invasive species, grazing management, and timber
51 management;

52 (iv) assess the relative size, probability, and severity of wildfires on public lands in
53 Utah, including consideration of factors that lead to wildfires, including biology and
54 characteristics of land;

55 (v) identify the most cost-effective wildfire preparedness actions; and

56 (vi) develop a statistical model that would allow public land managers to more
57 efficiently allocate funds between wildfire expenditures and other expenditures.

58 (3) The department, in consultation with Utah State University and the conservation

59 districts, may contract with another state agency or private entity to assist with the study and
60 analysis required by Subsection (2).

61 (4) Before December 31, 2016, the department shall work with Utah State University
62 and the conservation districts to submit a final report on the study and analysis described in
63 Subsection (2), including proposed legislation and recommendations, to the Legislature's
64 Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands.

65 **Section 2. Appropriation.**

66 Under the terms and conditions of Title 63J, Chapter 1, Budgetary Procedures Act, for
67 the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016, and ending June 30, 2017, the following sums of money
68 are appropriated from resources not otherwise appropriated, or reduced from amounts
69 previously appropriated, out of the funds or amounts indicated. These sums of money are in
70 addition to any amounts previously appropriated for fiscal year 2017.

71 To Department of Agriculture and Food
72 From General Fund, One-time \$250,000

73 Schedule of Programs:

74 Public Lands Wildfire Study \$250,000

75 The Legislature intends that the appropriation under this section be used to carry out the
76 requirements of Section [4-18-109](#).