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112TH CONGRESS, 2d Session } HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES { REPORT 112–589

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL, 2013

JULY 10, 2012.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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

REPORT

together with

MINORITY VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 6091]

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, 2013. 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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Timely Delivery of Critical Reports.—In the wake of the tragic Station Fire in Southern California, it is necessary to ensure that the Forest Service's firefighting policies provide the most effective initial response possible, particularly for forests close to urban areas. The Committee remains concerned that the Forest Service has not produced two critical documents in a timely fashion. The Forest Service is strongly encouraged to provide the results of the nationwide assessment of the agency's night flying operations (both the helicopter portion and fixed-wing portion) within 90 days of enactment of this Act. The Forest Service is also strongly encouraged to release the third and final phase of the cohesive wildland fire strategy, as required by the FLAME Act, that includes critical components of that strategy such as considering potential approaches for addressing the growing wildfire threat, estimating the costs of each approach, and identifying trade-offs—within 180 days of enactment of this Act.

Wildland Firefighting.—The Committee encourages the Forest Service to thoroughly evaluate the impact of crew size on operational efficacies and firefighter safety with respect to wildland firefighting operations. The Forest Service should report its findings to the Committee.

Federal Coordination with State and Local Fire Managers.—The Committee is aware that the facility housing the Forest Service's Southern California Geographical Coordination Center has been condemned and that it houses a number of fire emergency managers, including the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The Committee recognizes the importance of close Federal coordination with State and local fire managers when fighting wildland fire and the significant role collocation of fire emergency managers can play in facilitating this coordination. The Committee notes that CAL FIRE has expressed its desire to continue this collocation within the new Southern California Geographical Coordination Center. The Committee encourages the Forest Service to continue working with CAL FIRE to collocate their operations at the new Southern California Geographical Coordination Center.

FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriation enacted, 2012	$315,381,000
Budget estimate, 2013	315,000,000
Recommended, 2013	315,000,000
Comparison:	
Appropriation, 2012	−381,000
Budget estimate, 2013	0

The Committee recommends $315,000,000 for the FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund, as requested, $381,000 below the fiscal year 2012 enacted level.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS, FOREST SERVICE

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The Committee has continued all administrative provisions included in the fiscal year 2012 Omnibus Appropriations Act.