

**Resolution Supporting Passage of
Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act**

WHEREAS, in recent decades the number and severity of catastrophic events, such as wildfires and windstorms, has increased causing severe resource damage on forest and rangelands, and causing serious adverse environmental, social and economic consequences to both national and local interests; and

WHEREAS, catastrophic events devastate ecosystems, severely compromising their capacity to recover, delaying reestablishment of appropriate forest and plant cover, increasing the susceptibility of the lands to repeated wildfires and invasions of noxious plant species, increasing the frequency and severity of insect infestations and disease outbreaks on adjacent public and private lands, and causing increased erosion and degradation of riparian plant and wildlife habitats and water quality for human consumption; and

WHEREAS, authorities currently available to the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to respond to catastrophic events on lands under their jurisdictions do not provide for timely and effective response activities with currently required review processes frequently resulting in delays beyond the window of opportunity available for effective recovery plan implementation; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act (FERRA) would provide authority for timely and effective responses to catastrophic events, allowing the land management agencies to rapidly respond to the unique characteristics of each event and the particular needs of each locale, allowing for the use of damaged trees and other resources before they lose all economic value, while restoring ecosystems to a naturally functioning state; and

WHEREAS, expedited procedures under FERRA would be limited to catastrophic events over 1,000 acres, providing for prompt evaluation of damage and risk assessments for federal and adjacent non-federal lands, interdisciplinary scientific review, public notice and full participation in the development of recovery plans, and access to speedy appeals and litigation if there are disagreements; and

WHEREAS, increased scientific research on the means and methods for best recovering ecosystems damaged by catastrophic events is needed, and FERRA provides for such research, including monitoring of restoration projects, partnerships with colleges and universities, and increased emphasis on implementing the results of such research in the formulation of response plans; and

WHEREAS, FERRA provides for involvement of state, local, and tribal authorities in evaluating damage from catastrophic events and formulating appropriate response plans, thereby insuring that the interests of local communities and adjacent landowners are heard and considered;

