

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO DIRECT THE APPROPRIATE INTERIM COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP A LONG-TERM FUNDING PLAN FOR FOREST AND WATERSHED RESTORATION WORK IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, New Mexico needs a large-scale forest and watershed restoration program; and

WHEREAS, the urgency of the situation has been established in the New Mexico forest action plan, New Mexico forest and watershed health plan and the federal agency land and resource management plans; and

WHEREAS, scientists and stakeholders agree that the current level of active management on forest lands is insufficient to address the scope, scale and pace needed to restore these forests to a more resilient condition; and

WHEREAS, uncharacteristically large and intense wildfires and insect epidemics are affecting federal forest lands in acreages that dwarf the agencies' accomplishments in actively managing forests to improve their resiliency; and

WHEREAS, if New Mexico waits for a federal solution, it will be too late; and

WHEREAS, the state needs a coordinated, multi-partner approach that leverages each federal dollar and pools revenue from diverse state, local and Native American sources as well as businesses and the private sector; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of accelerated forest and watershed restoration are numerous, including secure water sources; resilient forests and habitat for wildlife; and hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities as well as New Mexico tourism and creation of jobs and economic development in rural communities; and

WHEREAS, the alternative, which would be to take no action, will result in damage to forests and water sources for generations to come;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to direct the appropriate interim committee of the legislature to develop a long-term funding plan for federal, state, local and tribal agencies and diverse stakeholders to cooperate on forest and watershed restoration work in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee report its recommendations to the full legislature by the convening of the first session of the fifty-second legislature in January 2015; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the state forester, the chair of the interstate stream commission, the state engineer, the New Mexico congressional delegation and the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.