

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13—COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE, AND MINING

(ON BEHALF OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW
AND OVERSIGHT OF THE TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING
AGENCY AND THE MARLETTE LAKE WATER SYSTEM)

MARCH 29, 2005

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources,
Agriculture, and Mining

SUMMARY—Expresses support for Healthy Forests Initiative
and urges Congress to make appropriations.
(BDR R-310)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION—Expressing support for the
Healthy Forests Initiative and urging the Congress of the
United States to make the necessary appropriations for
full implementation of the Healthy Forests Restoration
Act.

1 WHEREAS, Lake Tahoe, formed over 2 million years ago,
2 straddles the California-Nevada border, stretches 22 miles long and
3 12 miles wide, is the second deepest lake in the United States, has
4 an elevation of over 6,200 feet above sea level, and, with its
5 sapphire blue waters, is the “Jewel” of the Sierra Nevada; and

6 WHEREAS, The Lake Tahoe Basin covers 200,000 acres, three-
7 fourths of which have ecologically sensitive meadows, marshes and
8 slopes and a watershed that is home to 260 species of wildlife and
9 1,000 species of plants, including 16 species that are threatened or
10 endangered; and

11 WHEREAS, Property in the Lake Tahoe Basin is held by a
12 diverse group of landowners, with just 15 percent of the land in
13 private ownership and the remainder owned by the United States



1 Forest Service, Nevada's Division of State Parks of the State
2 Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, California's
3 Department of Parks and Recreation, the Washoe Tribe of Nevada
4 and California, and the California Tahoe Conservancy; and

5 WHEREAS, In August 2002, at the height of one of the most
6 destructive wildfire seasons in 50 years, President George W. Bush
7 announced the Healthy Forests Initiative, a joint effort of the
8 Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture that
9 pledged to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire to communities
10 and to improve the health of our nation's forests and rangelands by
11 expanding the collaboration of Federal, State, Tribal and local
12 agencies and reducing unnecessary delays in forest health projects;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, In December 2003, the President signed into law the
15 Healthy Forests Restoration Act, which was passed by a bipartisan
16 coalition in Congress and designed, in part, to strengthen public
17 participation in developing high priority forest health projects, to
18 reduce the complexity of environmental analysis allowing federal
19 land agencies to use the best science available to actively manage
20 land under their protection and to implement the Healthy Forests
21 Initiative; and

22 WHEREAS, The management practices for care of the nation's
23 forests over the last 100 years, combined with years of drought and
24 beetle infestation, have created certain environmental and public
25 safety conditions in the beautiful Lake Tahoe Basin; and

26 WHEREAS, In addition to untold economic impacts, a
27 catastrophic wildfire in the Lake Tahoe Basin would likely have a
28 severely detrimental impact on the clarity and quality of the water in
29 Lake Tahoe and the ecology of the Basin; and

30 WHEREAS, Agencies of the Department of the Interior and the
31 Department of Agriculture have collaborated to expand and
32 strengthen their partnerships with the State of Nevada, Tribal
33 governments, local land management agencies and local
34 communities and citizens, and, while this combined effort has made
35 some progress in the reduction of hazardous fuel conditions in the
36 Lake Tahoe Basin, much more Basin-wide action and funding is
37 urgently needed; and

38 WHEREAS, The Lake Tahoe Basin is protected by seven fire
39 protection districts, all of which have recently completed the
40 community fire plans necessary for compliance with the Healthy
41 Forests Restoration Act and the National Fire Plan and for meeting
42 the requirements for receiving federal funds to meet the Basin's
43 healthy forests objectives; and

44 WHEREAS, A lack of sufficient funding has had very serious
45 short-term and long-term consequences for the Lake Tahoe Basin,



1 its forests, its communities and its visitors, and an immediate
2 infusion of money and sustained investment is critical for the
3 implementation of the community fire plans and to accomplish
4 critical forest fuels reduction, forest thinning and healthy forest
5 programs to avoid catastrophic wildfire in the Lake Tahoe Basin;
6 now, therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE OF THE STATE OF
8 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the Nevada Legislature strongly urges
9 Congress to make full appropriations, as requested by President
10 George W. Bush in the Fiscal Year 2006 Budget, to the Department
11 of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior for
12 implementation of the programs for restoring the health of the
13 forests, reducing the fuels that feed wildfires and strengthening the
14 biodiversity of the Lake Tahoe Basin; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the political leaders and the residents of the
16 State of Nevada have seen first-hand the devastation that can be
17 wrought by catastrophic wildfires and are committed to protecting
18 the Lake Tahoe Basin and all of Nevada from the long-lasting
19 effects of such events; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and
21 transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United
22 States, the Vice President of the United States as presiding officer of
23 the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and each
24 member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon
26 passage.



