

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2—
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

(ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT
AN INTERIM STUDY CONCERNING WILDFIRES)

FEBRUARY 10, 2021

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources

SUMMARY—Recognizes that the health of forests, rangelands and soils are inextricably linked to the quantity and quality of water. (BDR R-112)

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—Recognizing that the health of forests, rangelands and soils are inextricably linked to the quantity and quality of water.

1 WHEREAS, Healthy forests, rangelands and soils work as filters
2 to keep sediment and other contaminants out of water, leaves,
3 branches and other residual vegetation reduce the erosive power of
4 rainfall, roots secure soil against erosion, and plant debris improves
5 soil structure and helps absorb nutrients and sediment; and

6 WHEREAS, Healthy forests, rangelands and soils operate as
7 natural sponges by collecting snow and rainfall, filtering out
8 sediment and other pollutants, and slowly releasing the filtered
9 water into rivers, lakes and streams; and

10 WHEREAS, Healthy forests, rangelands and soils help to
11 recharge depleted ground water; and

12 WHEREAS, The ability of forests, rangelands and soils to aid in
13 the metered release and filtration of water provides enormous
14 benefits to both public health and the overall health of an ecosystem;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Through this filtration process, forests, rangelands
17 and soils reduce both sediment and turbidity in drinking water



1 sources, which may result in a decrease in water treatment costs;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The loss or degradation of forests, rangelands and
4 soils from catastrophic wildfires in watersheds diminishes water
5 quality, and thereby may increase the cost of water treatment; and

6 WHEREAS, Climate change is exacerbating drought and
7 increasing the size and intensity of wildfires in our forests and
8 rangelands, presenting a direct threat to water resources from
9 deforestation, soil erosion and post-fire runoff; and

10 WHEREAS, Fire suppression has resulted in the proliferation of
11 closed-canopied forests, which have reduced snow accumulation on
12 the forest floor and accelerated the timing of snowmelt in a manner
13 that is incongruous with the needs of the ecosystem and humans;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Healthy forests, rangelands, soils, water quantity and
16 water quality are important for economic development, the economy
17 and the management of wildlife species; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE OF THE STATE OF
19 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the 81st Session of the Nevada Legislature
20 recognizes that the health of forests, rangelands and soils are
21 inextricably linked to water quality and quantity; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the 81st Session of the Nevada Legislature
23 expresses its support for the Federal Government, state agencies,
24 conservation districts and local governments to work collaboratively
25 with water purveyors, land managers, private landowners, land users
26 and other stakeholders to identify watersheds that can be improved
27 by better forest, rangeland and soil health measures and to identify
28 or establish voluntary programs, within the limits of legislative
29 appropriations and other available money, to address the health of
30 forests, rangelands and soils; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon
32 passage.

