

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4944

To provide for the operation and establishment of, and procurement of supplies for, firewood banks, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 22, 2022

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. TILLIS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To provide for the operation and establishment of, and procurement of supplies for, firewood banks, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Firewood Banks Act
5 of 2022”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) COOPERATING PARTY.—The term “cooper-
2 ating party” means a State, local, or Tribal govern-
3 ment, a nonprofit organization, or a cooperative.

4 (2) FEDERAL LAND.—The term “Federal
5 Land” means—

6 (A) public lands (as defined in section 103
7 of the Federal Land Policy and Management
8 Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702));

9 (B) trust land (as defined in section 3765
10 of title 38, United States Code); and

11 (C) National Forest System land.

12 (3) FIREWOOD BANK.—The term “firewood
13 bank” means a site—

14 (A) at which firewood is collected, proc-
15 essed, or stored; and

16 (B) that is used by a cooperating party to
17 distribute firewood to low-income or disabled in-
18 dividuals for personal, residential use.

19 (4) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
20 means—

21 (A) the Secretary of Energy;

22 (B) the Secretary of the Interior; and

23 (C) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting
24 through the Chief of the Forest Service.

1 (5) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Sec-
2 retary concerned” means—

3 (A) the Secretary of the Interior, in the
4 case of Federal land administered by the Sec-
5 retary of the Interior; and

6 (B) the Secretary of Agriculture, in the
7 case of Federal land administered by the Sec-
8 retary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief
9 of the Forest Service.

10 **SEC. 3. GRANTS.**

11 Using funds made available under section
12 40803(c)(17)(B) of the Infrastructure Investment and
13 Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592(c)(17)(B)), the Secretary of
14 Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Serv-
15 ice, shall provide financial assistance to a cooperating
16 party for the operation of firewood banks, including for
17 the procurement of—

18 (1) personal protective equipment;

19 (2) liability insurance policies;

20 (3) processing equipment; and

21 (4) supplies and materials procured on a reg-
22 ular basis.

23 **SEC. 4. FIREWOOD BANKS PILOT PROGRAM.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy, in col-
25 laboration with the Secretary of the Interior and the Sec-

1 retary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the For-
2 est Service, shall establish and carry out a pilot program
3 (referred to in this section as the “pilot program”) to pro-
4 vide heat energy for residences of low-income and disabled
5 individuals with wood-burning stoves.

6 (b) FIREWOOD BANKS ON FEDERAL LAND.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Under the pilot program,
8 the Secretary concerned may authorize 1 or more
9 firewood banks to be established and operated on
10 Federal land.

11 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—A firewood bank de-
12 scribed in paragraph (1)—

13 (A) shall occupy an area of not less than
14 $\frac{1}{2}$ acre and not more than 6 acres;

15 (B) shall be able to store not fewer than
16 20 cords of firewood; and

17 (C) may have privately or publicly owned
18 equipment on site to process logs into firewood.

19 (3) COOPERATING PARTIES.—The Secretary
20 concerned may authorize or consult with cooperating
21 parties—

22 (A) to maintain the Federal land on which
23 a firewood bank is established under this sub-
24 section; and

25 (B) to operate the firewood bank.

1 (4) USE OF FEDERAL LAND.—The Secretary
2 concerned, or a cooperating party, as applicable,
3 shall use the Federal land on which a firewood bank
4 is established under this subsection exclusively as a
5 firewood bank.

6 (5) PERMITS.—The Secretary concerned may
7 require a cooperating party to apply for and obtain
8 a special use permit to establish and operate a fire-
9 wood bank on Federal land under this subsection.

10 (6) LIABILITY.—The Secretary concerned shall
11 not—

12 (A) be liable for any action taken by the
13 Secretary concerned or a cooperating party in
14 establishing or operating a firewood bank on
15 Federal land under this subsection; or

16 (B) require a cooperating party to main-
17 tain a general liability insurance policy to estab-
18 lish and operate a firewood bank on Federal
19 land under this subsection.

20 (c) SECURING SUPPLIES OF FIREWOOD FOR FIRE-
21 WOOD BANKS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Under the pilot program,
23 the Secretary concerned shall—

24 (A) designate trees for cutting and removal
25 on Federal land by marking; and

1 (B) make those trees available to firewood
2 banks, consistent with this subsection.

3 (2) DESIGNATION.—The Secretary concerned
4 shall designate trees under paragraph (1)(A)—

5 (A) in an area located within 10 miles of
6 each firewood bank established under sub-
7 section (b); and

8 (B) in other areas that the Secretary con-
9 cerned determines to be appropriate.

10 (3) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary concerned
11 shall designate trees under paragraph (1)(A) in a
12 sufficient quantity to provide not less than 100
13 cords of firewood continuously to each firewood bank
14 established under subsection (b).

15 (4) NO FEE REQUIRED.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Any Federal employee
17 or party designated by a cooperating party may
18 cut, remove, and transport to a firewood bank
19 a tree designated under paragraph (1)(A) with-
20 out the cooperating party incurring any fee.

21 (B) LIMITATIONS.—

22 (i) PERMITS.—The Secretary con-
23 cerned may require a cooperating party to
24 apply for and obtain a permit for the cut-

1 ting and removal of a tree designated
2 under paragraph (1)(A).

3 (ii) NO SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO RE-
4 SOURCES.—A Federal employee or a co-
5 operating party shall not be permitted to
6 significantly damage any resource while
7 cutting or removing a tree designated
8 under paragraph (1)(A).

9 (5) CLOSED ENTRY.—The Secretary concerned
10 may close to entry an area with trees designated
11 under paragraph (1)(A), or make that entry subject
12 to such conditions as the Secretary concerned deter-
13 mines are necessary—

14 (A) for periods of not longer than 60 con-
15 secutive calendar days; and

16 (B) for not longer than 150 calendar days
17 during any 1 calendar year.

18 (d) DURATION.—The authority to carry out the pilot
19 program terminates on the date that is 10 years after the
20 date of enactment of this Act.

21 **SEC. 5. REPORT.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the
23 date of enactment of this Act, and 5 years thereafter, the
24 Secretaries shall prepare a report describing the imple-
25 mentation of this Act.

1 (b) SUBMISSION.—On completion of each report de-
2 scribed in subsection (a), the Secretaries shall submit the
3 report to—

4 (1) the Committee on Energy and Natural Re-
5 sources of the Senate; and

6 (2) the Committee on Natural Resources of the
7 House of Representatives.

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