

National Prescribed Fire Act of 2020

Section-by-Section

Title I – USE OF FUNDS

Sec.101. Prescribed fire accounts.

Authorizes \$300 million for the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior (DOI) for facilitating controlled burns on Federal, State, and private land (including assisting with training, personnel, and insurance for those implementing controlled burns on private lands).

Sec.102. Policies and practices.

Requires Federal agencies to increase the number of acres treated with controlled burns and requires each National Park, National Forest, National Wildlife Refuge, etc. to conduct a controlled burn, so that the staff of the unit can become familiar with controlled burns.

Sec.103. Collaborative prescribed fire program.

Establishes a \$10 million, competitive, cost-share program to implement controlled burns on land at high risk of burning in a wildfire, especially if that wildfire would be difficult for firefighters to stop.

Sec.104 .Large cross-boundary prescribed fire incentive program.

Establishes an incentive program that provides \$100,000 to a State, county, and Federal agency for any controlled burns conducted that are larger than 50,000 acres.

Title II – FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTREACH

Sec.201. Cooperative agreements and contracts.

Authorizes Federal agencies to partner with others to conduct controlled burns on Federal land.

Sec.202. Human resources.

- Enables land managers to hire temporary workers to plan and implement controlled burns.
- Uses the wildfire disaster account to fund firefighters' overtime pay on controlled burns.
- Enables seasonal firefighters to be converted to year-round employees to reduce flammable debris and vegetation in areas (e.g., controlled burns) when outside of the fire season.
- Establishes employment programs for veterans, women, and those formerly incarcerated.
- Requires firefighters to have conducted controlled burns before moving to leadership roles.
- For escaped burns, requires victims to sue Federal agencies rather than individual personnel.

Sec.203. Liability of certified prescribed fire managers.

Supports the National Governors Association hosting a meeting to discuss State-specific liability laws.

Sec.204. Environmental review.

Requires state air quality agencies to use current laws and regulations to allow larger controlled burns, and give states more flexibility in winter months to conduct controlled burns.

Sec.205. Prescribed fire education program.

Authorizes the “Burner Bob” mascot to be used in a national education campaign for controlled burns.

TITLE III – REPORTING; TERMINATION

Sec.301. Annual Reports to the National Interagency Fire Center.

Authorizes DOI to provide financial assistance to States for reporting their acreage accomplishments.

Sec.302. Termination Date.

Terminates the authorizations in this bill 10 years after the date of enactment.