

1 **WILDLAND FIRE POLICY**

2 2015 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: Evan J. Vickers**

5 House Sponsor: Joel K. Briscoe

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This bill modifies the responsibilities of the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands.

10 **Highlighted Provisions:**

11 This bill:

- 12 ▶ requires the director of the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands to:
- 13 • coordinate the development of a state-wide wildland fire policy; and
 - 14 • report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim

15 Committee on the director's recommendation for a state-wide wildland fire
16 policy;

- 17 ▶ describes the goals of a state-wide catastrophic wildfire reduction strategy; and
- 18 ▶ states that the division may use funds to promote wildfire prevention, wildfire
19 mitigation, and wildfire preparedness.

20 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

21 None

22 **Other Special Clauses:**

23 None

24 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

25 AMENDS:

26 **65A-8-103**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2011, Chapter 342

27 ENACTS:

28 **65A-8-103.5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

29

30 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

31 Section 1. Section **65A-8-103** is amended to read:

32 **65A-8-103. Forestry and fire control funds.**

33 (1) The division shall use money available to it to meet the costs of:

34 (a) controlling forest, range, and watershed fires;

35 (b) controlling insect and disease epidemics;

36 (c) rehabilitating or reforesting nonfederal forest, range, and watershed lands; ~~and~~

37 (d) promoting wildfire preparedness, wildfire mitigation, and wildfire prevention; and

38 ~~[(d)]~~ (e) carrying on the purposes of this chapter.

39 (2) All money available to the division to meet the costs of Subsections (1)(a) through

40 ~~[(d)]~~ (e) is nonlapsing and available to the division until expended.

41 (3) (a) The collection and disbursement of all money made available to the division

42 shall be in accordance with the rules of the Division of Finance.

43 (b) Money collected by the division from fees, rentals, sales, contributions,

44 reimbursements, and other such sources shall be deposited in the appropriate account.

45 Section 2. Section **65A-8-103.5** is enacted to read:

46 **65A-8-103.5. Wildland fire policy -- Report.**

47 (1) The director shall:

48 (a) coordinate the development of a comprehensive, state-wide wildland fire

49 prevention, preparedness, and suppression policy;

50 (b) coordinate with applicable state agencies to identify critical wildlife habitat areas as

51 the policy described in Subsection (1)(a) is developed; and

52 (c) report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee

53 by November 30, 2015, on the director's recommendation for the policy described in

54 Subsection (1)(a).

55 (2) The goals of the state-wide catastrophic wildfire reduction policy described in

56 Subsection (1)(a) shall be to:

57 (a) restore and maintain landscapes, ensuring landscapes across the state are resilient to

58 wildfire-related disturbances in accordance with fire management objectives;

59 (b) create fire-adapted communities, ensuring that human populations and
60 infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life or property;

61 (c) improve wildfire response, ensuring that all political subdivisions can participate in
62 making and implementing safe, effective, and efficient risk-based wildfire management
63 decisions; and

64 (d) reduce risks to wildlife, such as the greater sage grouse, which can be devastated by
65 wildfire.

66 (3) In developing the wildland fire policy described in Subsection (1)(a), the director
67 shall coordinate with representatives of counties, cities, and towns in the state, along with any
68 other stakeholders the director considers necessary and relevant, including the Catastrophic
69 Wildfire Reduction Strategy Statewide Steering Committee and six regional work groups.