

An NFCSC Concept Paper

The Sustainable Forests and Secure Rural Schools and Counties Act of 2010

Background

This proposed Act combines the most favorable key elements of SRSCA 2000 and SRSCA 2008, protects transition states in 2011, benefits all receiving states/counties for 10 years, focuses Title II on wildfire risk mitigation and forest health, and recognizes and builds on the success of the Resource Advisory Committee process in achieving effective conflict resolution and project implementation.

Essential Design Elements of the Act

- Begins in 2011.
- Lasts through 2021. (10 year life span)
- Guarantees payment for transition states (CA, OR, WA, TX, SD, PA, LA, and SC) at 85% of high three year average of the years 1986-2010, and guarantees payment to all other states at 100% of high three year average of payments from 1986-2010.
- Elections to accept share of receipts or guaranteed payments is binding for two years. Re-elections to remain in the Act allowed every two years.
- Annual elections of 15% to 20% allocation between Titles II and III, with Title III limited to 7% of guaranteed amount.
- Title II similar to SRSCA 2008, but expanded so that 75% of Title II projects must be for road maintenance/decommissioning, watershed restoration or implementation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, or wildfire risk mitigation through Forest Restoration Thinning (FRT) and Forest Restoration Regeneration Harvesting (FRRH).
 - i. Defines “Forest Restoration Thinning” (FRT) and “Forest Restoration Regeneration Harvesting” (FRRH).
 - ii. Requires BLM and US Forest Service nationally to confer with RACs to develop 10 year work plans that utilize Title II projects for FRT and FRRH, and if RACs have interest in such projects, to submit proposed projects to the RACs within 18 months of effective date of Act.
 - iii. Provides categorical exclusion under NEPA for any RAC-approved projects utilizing FRT or FRRH under the 10-year work plans (subject to annual limitations on size and location for projects using FRRH, and requires submission for ESA 7(a)(2) consultation).
- Title III similar to SRS 2008, but expanded to allow planning and implementation of projects under the Firewise Communities Program, reimbursing for federal lands emergency services, for Community Wildfire Protection Plan - planning and implementation, and to acquire, operate or improve public parks/campgrounds, and forest related interpretation-education facilities.
- Advocate for the SRSCA funding for schools to go directly to the rural schools instead of through the state education funding systems.