



Forestry and Wildfire Management

The National Forest System (NFS) consists of 232 million acres. Unfortunately, forests on private lands are often healthier and more productive than their neighboring, equivalent federal lands. NACD supports site appropriate silvicultural techniques and advanced, scientifically-proven forest management practices to promote the growth and maintenance of healthy, diverse forests, reducing their susceptibility to widespread insect or disease outbreaks, wildfire danger and soil erosion. Furthermore, NACD supports the use of additional cross-boundary authorizations and re-authorizations, such as Good Neighbor and Stewardship Contracting Authority.

By December of 2020, wildfires had destroyed over 10 million acres. To meet the needs of each diverse landscape, resource managers rely on assorted toolboxes that allow them to best match the ecological aspect of the landscape with the management tactic used. NACD supports the ability to use a wide variety of wildfire management tools, including grazing, prescribed burns and fuel breaks. A recent study by the University of California Cooperative Extension found that the 1.8 million beef cattle grazing on California's rangelands have reduced fuel loads on the landscape. On average, the study found that cattle grazing reduced the fuel load by 596 pounds per acre.

Invasive Species Management

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) conducts management activities to mitigate damages caused by invasive species like feral swine. NACD encourages full funding both for APHIS Wildlife Services and the national feral swine control program. NACD supports technical and financial assistance for trapping or other removal methods of feral swine and other invasive species.

NACD supports the use of native plant and seed species in recovery efforts and restoration projects and urges the Departments of Agriculture and Interior to develop and disseminate geographically-specific lists of "recommendations on what to plant and what not to plant" to help guide recovery and restoration efforts and to avoid using invasive species. NACD supports NRCS policies to allow for technical and financial assistance for trapping or other removal methods of feral swine and other invasive species.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Modernization

NACD supports local management of habitat and species, rather than a top-down approach. Legislation is needed to improve and modernize the ESA to reflect current scientific wildlife management principles. ESA recovery plans need to have local public involvement from the outset in order to provide clearly defined goals, objectives and alternative recovery options.

Over 1,650 species are listed as threatened or endangered, yet, in 2018, only three percent of listed species have achieved recovery. NACD supports the proposed language by Chairman Barrasso (Wyo.) in the 116th Congress to strengthen states' rights and states' input on species management throughout the listing and delisting process.

Wild Horse and Burro Management

Per the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in 2009, an estimate of 36,940 wild free-roaming horses and burros were recorded on federal lands, and by 2020 the number had increased to an estimated 95,114. Unfortunately, current management efforts have failed to control the ever-increasing horse and burro population, which continues to strain the natural resource capabilities of these lands beyond their carrying capacity, resulting in rangelands that in certain areas are already unrecoverable.

NACD urges Congress to continue investing in population management by providing \$115.7 million for BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program as requested by the agency to continue addressing excessive herd populations.