



HB24-1024

SHORT TITLE: Extend Outreach Campaigns Wildfire Risk Mitigation

LONG TITLE: Concerning the continuation of public outreach campaigns relating to wildfire risk mitigation in the wildland-urban interface, and, in connection therewith, making an appropriation.

SPONSORS: Sen. Story/Representatives Velasco and Cutter

COMMITTEES: House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources Committee

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: To continue public outreach campaigns relating to wildfire risk mitigation and increase funding and fund those efforts through FY 2026-27.

PROPOSERS OF THE BILL: Interim Wildfire Matters Committee

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: The State Forester, Colorado State University

BACKGROUND: In 2022, Senate Bill 22-007 required the Colorado State Forest Service to convene a working group and implement an enhanced wildfire awareness month outreach campaign in 2023 and 2024. It transferred \$800,000 from the General Fund to the Healthy Forests and Vibrant Communities Fund to implement the campaign. The Wildfire Matters Committee recommended this bill to extend those efforts for another with increased funding.

Is this bill necessary this year? There are no deadlines to meet.

How does the bill change current law? It directs an appropriation and continuation through three additional fiscal years through FY 2026-27.

Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system? No

How is the bill implemented: The legislature is required to appropriate \$300,000 for use over the next three fiscal years.

Practical considerations: It is difficult to imagine that people living in the wildland-urban interface are not already aware of wildfire danger and the need for mitigation; however, as the Marshall Fire experience demonstrated, the wildland-urban interface is becoming increasingly suburban and urban.

Fiscal Impact: According to the fiscal note "The bill increases state expenditures by \$300,000 in FY 2024-25, paid from the Healthy Forests and Vibrant Communities Fund. The CSFS will use the appropriated funds over the next three fiscal years for the outreach campaign and distribution of outreach materials, including printing costs, event fees, travel, and website maintenance. The CSFS will also hire hourly student interns to assist in the wildfire awareness month campaign"