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*Congress of the United States*  
*House of Representatives*  
Washington, DC 20515-0504

COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER  
CHAIRMAN  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION  
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

February 6, 2014

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
United States Senate  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer:

Today the House passed HR 2954, the Public Access and Lands Improvement Act. Title IX of that bill comprises the Rim Fire Emergency Salvage Act.

This language is the result of consultations with the U.S. Forest Service and several Democratic congressional offices:

- It authorizes the USFS to select acreage for salvage where there is no wilderness designation, ESA, historic or other legal restrictions.
- It authorizes the USFS to implement the draft EIS that is expected to be completed by April and deems the draft as compliant with all applicable environmental reviews. This will allow salvage to begin under their direction in April.
- It authorizes the USFS to modify the draft EIS in response to public comment and allows for judicial review of the final EIS based on ecological impacts – but it bars litigation based on process and it bars temporary restraining orders. This will allow timely salvage of a portion of the public lands destroyed by the fire while the final EIS is prepared and while any judicial review proceeds.
- Finally, it approves of the USFS using the millions of dollars raised by the salvage for forest restoration in the devastated Sierra.

This compromise language assures compliance with all environmental laws and maintains judicial review, while assuring that salvage can begin this spring.

Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer

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Time is of the essence. Within a year, the timber loses much of its salvage value and within two years it becomes worthless. The USFS has exhausted all administrative options to accelerate the salvage timeline. Under current law, the earliest the agency can complete the environmental review process is August and any plan will then be subject to indefinite delay as litigation begins.

This region's economy has been devastated by the fire and by increasingly stringent federal restrictions and land acquisitions that have ravaged the timber, livestock, mineral and tourist industries. This measure means jobs for hundreds of lumberjacks, mill workers, truckers, and all those who support them. It means millions of dollars of economic activity and millions of dollars of federal revenues for reforestation.

I urge you to act quickly either to approve this measure or send the House legislation that is acceptable to the Senate. I hope you will agree that there is plenty of room for compromise, but there is no excuse for inaction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom McClintock", written in a cursive style.

Tom McClintock