



HB19-1006

SHORT TITLE: Wildfire Mitigation Wildland-urban Interface Areas

LONG TITLE: Concerning measures to mitigate the effects of wildfires within wildland-urban interface areas, and, in connection therewith, creating a state grant program to promote forest management fuels reduction projects in such areas

SPONSORS: Reps. McLachlan and Carver/Sen. Fields (Wildfire Matter Review Committee)

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: To encourage property owners in the wildland urban interface to work within plans to mitigate risk of wildfire through a grant program to assist with costs of mitigation

PROPONENTS: Wildfire Matters Review Committee

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: Communities in the wildland-urban interface who have developed plans or would develop plans to obtain funding, insurance companies, fire protection districts, homeowners' associations, water providers, public safety officials

BACKGROUND: During the interim committee, members heard from the Forest Health Advisory Council, various homeowners' groups, the Nature Conservancy and others concerning the risk to life and property from build-up of slash and other fuels in the interface area and the cost of mitigation versus the failure to mitigate. This bill is a result of committee discussions. Although the bill was originally conceived as a tax credit program for homeowners who mitigated property, it was amended in Interim committee to a grant program administered by the state forest service.

Is the bill necessary this year? There is no deadline to be met, but wildfire is an increasing risk during drought and as people build further into wildfire-prone areas

How does the bill change current law? The bill creates a grant fund to provide mitigation grants to homeowners' associations, collective groups of landowners of 20 acres of contiguous land or new housing developments that are or will be covered by a homeowners association that consists of at least five distinct properties. Preference must be given to applicants in counties that have been identified as being moderate to high-risk. Awarded grants cannot exceed \$200,000 per applicant; applicants must demonstrate availability of matching funds or in-kind contributions.

Does the bill change Prior Appropriations? No

How is the bill implemented? The program is administered by the Colorado State Forest Service and activities are reported to the legislature annually when grants are issued

Practical considerations: The bill helps to mitigate risks to homes and property; should additional grants be available to protection of other important resources such as reservoirs, key wildlife habitat?

Fiscal Impact: The program is anticipated to be funded by the General Fund; no appropriation amount is included in the bill.