

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED THIRD LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 634

Introduced by Davis, 43; Brasch, 16; Carlson, 38; Christensen, 44;
Hansen, 42; Larson, 40; Mello, 5; Schilz, 47; Wallman,
30.

Read first time January 23, 2013

Committee: Natural Resources

A BILL

1 FOR AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Forest Service; to adopt the
2 Wildfire Control Act of 2013; and to provide powers and
3 duties for the service relating to the control and
4 fighting of wildfires.
5 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Sections 1 to 3 of this act shall be known and
2 may be cited as the Wildfire Control Act of 2013.

3 Sec. 2. The Legislature finds that the State of
4 Nebraska's forests, pasture land, and range land have been destroyed
5 by catastrophic wildfires, primarily due to higher temperatures,
6 intense and prolonged drought, increased forest fuel loads, and the
7 extensive spread of Eastern Red Cedar trees into forests, pasture
8 land, and range land. Because of these conditions, wildfires occur
9 more frequently, spread and grow very rapidly upon ignition, and
10 consume large tracts of productive land. These severe, fast moving
11 wildfires put the lives of citizens, emergency responders, and
12 visitors at great risk, are difficult to control, quickly overwhelm
13 local suppression capacity, and cost enormous amounts of funds to
14 suppress and control.

15 Sec. 3. Pursuant to the Wildfire Control Act of 2013, the
16 Nebraska Forest Service shall (1) contract to place two single engine
17 air tankers to be located near Chadron, Nebraska, and near Valentine,
18 Nebraska, for use in fighting wildfires; (2) thin forests to reduce
19 forest fuel loads in order to substantially reduce wildfire risk,
20 intensity, and rate of the spreading of wildfires; (3) provide
21 expanded training programs for volunteer firefighters, private
22 landowners, and communities in Nebraska in fire suppression tactics
23 of wildfires in order to increase suppression effectiveness and
24 safety; (4) develop a Nebraska-based incident management team to
25 respond throughout the state to control or fight wildfires and to

1 serve as a comprehensive resource to augment and help manage large
2 wildfire operations; (5) expand the federal excess property programs
3 sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture and the
4 United States Department of Defense and managed by the Nebraska
5 Forest Service in Nebraska; and (6) oversee the rehabilitation of
6 forest lands that have been destroyed by wildfires.