Resolution in Support of the Healthy Forest Initiative

WHEREAS, America’s forests and rangelands are in a state of deteriorating ecological health caused by decades of federal management that interrupted the natural fire cycle and increased forest density and allowed forests to grow an unnatural fuel basement; and

WHEREAS, forests are now vulnerable to disease, drought, and wildfire; and

WHEREAS, wildfires burned of 7.1 million acres of public and private lands during the summer of 2002; and

WHEREAS, the impact of these forest fires has been severe upon the states and localities that serve as gateways for millions of visitors to our nation’s magnificent national parks, forests and other federal public lands; and

WHEREAS, these forest fires have damaged personal and business properties and displaced thousands of individuals from their homes, and

WHEREAS, excessive analysis, ineffective public involvement, and management inefficiencies have caused public land managers to delay restorative projects and driven up costs to approximately $250 million per year; and

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration has developed a Healthy Forests Initiative that will provide land managers with the ability to effectively reduce the accumulation of hazardous fuels and restore wildfire-damaged areas, and

WHEREAS, the Healthy Forest Initiative has been designed to facilitate the implementation of the National Fire Plan with a 10 year comprehensive strategy; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, 890 rehabilitation and restoration projects were accomplished in 22 states and new public-private community partnerships have been developed under the guidance of the Wildland Fire Leadership Council.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Legislative Exchange Council supports the Administration’s Healthy Forest Initiative legislative proposal, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be sent to the President, the Secretary of the Interior Department, and ALEC alumni in Congress.

Adopted by the Natural Resources Task Force at the Spring Task Force Summit, March 29, 2003. Approved by the full ALEC Board of Directors April, 2003.
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