

FOREST SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

SUPPLEMENTAL ESTIMATE OF APPROPRIATION FOR THE FOREST SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1927, TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FIRE PROTECTION IN THE FORESTS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, \$100,000

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JUNE 2, 1926.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed

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THE WHITE HOUSE,  
Washington, D. C., June 2, 1926.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith for the consideration of Congress a supplemental estimate of appropriation for the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1927, to provide additional fire protection in the forests in southern California, \$100,000.

The details of this estimate, the necessity therefor, and the reason for its submission at this time are set forth in the letter of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget transmitted herewith, with whose comments and observations thereon I concur.

Respectfully,

CALVIN COOLIDGE.

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BUREAU OF THE BUDGET,  
Washington, June 2, 1926.

SIR: I have the honor to submit herewith for your consideration, and upon your approval for transmission to Congress, a supplemental estimate of appropriation for the Department of Agriculture for the

fiscal year ending June 30, 1927, for the construction and maintenance of roads, trails, bridges, fire lanes, and other improvements in the national forests, \$100,000.

General expenses, Forest Service (improvement of national forests)--- \$100, 000

The estimate submitted herewith is to enable the Secretary of Agriculture to construct trails, fire lanes, and telephone lines and to make other improvements in the Angeles, Cleveland, Santa Barbara, and San Bernardino National Forests in southern California in order to protect those forests and adjoining property from forest fires. During the past few years the average annual loss of forest cover on these forests was between 3 and 4 per cent of the total acreage. This loss is estimated to be about fifteen times the average annual loss on all national forests. The fire hazard on the forests referred to is intensified by the lack of rainfall between May and November and also by the fact that the forest cover is, for the most part, composed of brush. This brush during dry periods of summer is easily ignited and rapidly burned. The many fires on these forests since 1922 have been the source of great concern to various interests of southern California. Some of the conditions which cause much anxiety may be summarized as follows: The ever presence of a great fire hazard during dry periods between May 1 and October 31, which in a few hours may break out and spread over an immense territory; the knowledge that such a fire is uncontrollable with the limited number of fire lanes, trails, telephone lines, lookout stations, etc.; the knowledge that the fires may destroy private holdings such as summer homes, timber, and other property within the forest boundaries; the closing of all forests to tourist travel during periods of extreme fire hazard. In addition to the foregoing there is a problem resulting from fires on these forests which appears to greatly outweigh those already mentioned. This problem is the rapid run-off of the rainfall on the burned-over areas. This rapid run-off causes a shortage of water both for agricultural and municipal use in a community where conservation of rainfall is a necessity. The rapid run-off is so great that it causes many floods and excessive erosion of the soil on the burnt-over areas. The soil, stone, and dead wood brought down by the flood is often deposited to the depth of 3 and 4 feet on adjacent ranches. The flooded streams also carry this debris into harbors on the coast, from which it has to be dredged at great expense. Under normal conditions the forest cover would retain much of this rainfall, thereby conserving the water for agricultural and municipal use.

The concern of the various interests in the communities in and around the forests mentioned is so great that they are desirous of cooperating with the Government on the basis of dollar for dollar in an effort to provide more effective control of this fire menace. A thorough investigation of the situation shows that more fire lanes, breaks, telephone lines, etc., are needed to take care of the abnormal fire hazard. The funds provided by this estimate will be used exclusively for fire-control improvement on the forests referred to and only then in the event that the interested communities subscribe a like amount to be expended under the direction of the Federal Government for the same purpose.

This estimate of appropriation is required to meet a contingency which has been developed since the transmission of the Budget for the fiscal year 1927, and its approval is recommended.

Very respectfully,

H. M. LORD,

*Director of the Bureau of the Budget.*

The PRESIDENT.

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*Supplemental estimate of appropriation required for the service of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1927, by the Department of Agriculture*

Improvements on the national forests: For an additional sum for the construction and maintenance of improvements on the national forests, and for all other objects of expenditures specified in the act making appropriations for the same purposes for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year 1927 (act May 11, 1926)----- \$100,000



This certificate of appropriation is required to cover a continuing appropriation which has been approved since the termination of the Budget for the fiscal year 1915 and its approval is recommended.

H. M. Jones  
Director of the Bureau of the Budget

The President

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of the Budget, Department of the Interior

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Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of the Budget, Department of the Interior