



**CWSF**  
COUNCIL OF WESTERN  
STATE FORESTERS

## Legislative & Policy Update – April 2024

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The [Council of Western State Foresters](#) (CWSF) Legislative & Policy Update provides information on issues of importance to CWSF. Policy and legislative updates are found on the CWSF webpage [here](#). Please note that the items highlighted in these updates are only a selection of the issues CWSF and the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) are monitoring. Keep an eye out for our monthly newsletter that will provide summaries on other key legislative and programmatic issues. If you have not yet subscribed, you can do so [here](#). For more information, please contact [Neil Simpson](#), Director of Policy.

This month's policy update highlights:

- USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) Chief Randy Moore's recent Congressional testimony on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget
- The latest on the Farm Bill
- The recently introduced Biomass for Transportation Fuel Act
- National Park System and National Wildlife Refuge Lands added to the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) and GNA for Recreation passes the House of Representatives

### **Forest Service Chief Randy Moore provides testimony to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees on the Fiscal Year 2025 Forest Service Budget Justification**

The Forest Service has released its [Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Justification](#), and Congress has begun working on FY 2025 negotiations. Forest Service Chief Randy Moore recently testified at House and Senate Appropriations Committee Hearings.

Chief Moore's testimony to the Senate Appropriations Committee on April 10, 2024, highlighted the need to modernize and invest in the wildland fire management workforce, ensure equitable access to and benefits from the National Forest System, and leverage additional funding opportunities. Committee members questioned the Chief on the role of the timber industry in helping the Forest Service achieve the goals of the wildfire crisis strategy and the role of State and Volunteer Fire Assistance Programs. Committee members also discussed the need to extend the wildfire funding fix and voiced concerns about staff recruitment and retention in firefighting and the broader workforce.

Chief Moore's testimony to the House Appropriations Committee on April 16, 2024, highlighted the same topics. Committee members questioned the Chief on a wide range of topics, including firefighting aircraft, harvest levels, and how to measure success in addressing the nation's wildfire crisis.

Read Chief Moore's written testimony and watch the hearings at the following links: [House Appropriations Committee](#) and [Senate Appropriations Committee](#).

## **Farm Bill**

[Politico](#) reports that House Agriculture Committee Chairman GT Thompson (R-PA) plans to unveil a draft of the Farm Bill before Memorial Day. However, the bill would require significant Democratic support to reach the House floor amidst a deep impasse over nutrition, climate, and farm safety net funding provisions.

Click [here](#) to read the latest from the House Agriculture Committee.

## **Biomass for Transportation Fuel Act**

Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) and two co-sponsors have introduced the [Biomass for Transportation Fuel Act, H.R. 7609](#). Senator Angus King (I-ME) and co-sponsor Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) introduced [S. 3899](#) under the same name. The Senate version has been referred to the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, and the House version has been referred to the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

The legislation fully implements the eligibility for electricity generated from renewable biomass under the Renewable Fuel Standard program provided by Congress in 2007 and would make currently ineligible biomass removed from federal lands eligible for the program.

## **Expansions to GNA**

The [Fiscal Year 2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act](#) has extended GNA to National Park System and National Wildlife Refuge System lands.

Additionally, the Explore Act, [H.R. 6492](#), introduced by Congressman Bruce Westerman (R-AR), would create “Good Neighbor for Recreation” authorizing states, tribes, and counties to enter into agreements to perform “authorized recreation services,” such as repairing, restoring, improving, relocating, constructing, or reconstructing new or existing trailheads, campgrounds, and picnic areas on federal lands administered by the Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management. The bill has passed the House. It has been referred to the Senate but has not yet been assigned to a Senate Committee.