

## 1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 25

2 INTRODUCED BY D. HAINES

3

4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF  
5 MONTANA URGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TIMBER SALVAGE AND FOREST RESTORATION  
6 PROGRAM.

7

8 WHEREAS, the year 2000 drought and fire season resulted in catastrophic wildfires that consumed  
9 nearly 1 million acres of private, state, tribal, and federal lands within the state of Montana; and

10 WHEREAS, ~~much of this~~ APPROXIMATELY 600,000 ACRES OF THE BURNED land consists of federal land;  
11 ~~over 300,000 acres on the Bitterroot National Forest alone;~~ and

12 WHEREAS, much of this burned-over federal land is forest land already accessible by forest roads;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, the merchantable value of burned timber decreases rapidly as decomposition from  
15 insects and fungal disease develops over the following 12 to 24 months; and

16 WHEREAS, the standing burned trees pose a significant threat to public safety in many areas; and

17 WHEREAS, the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has moved rapidly to harvest  
18 an estimated 21 million board feet of timber from 4,000 acres of burned land in the Sula State Forest, thus  
19 employing hundreds of Montanans and salvaging some of the remaining timber value of the forest; and

20 WHEREAS, federal land management agencies should not miss an opportunity through benign  
21 neglect to produce some positive benefits from last summer's fire disaster.

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23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
24 STATE OF MONTANA:

25 (1) That the federal agencies responsible for forest management in Montana be strongly urged to  
26 develop and initiate an aggressive timber salvage and forest restoration program that would:

27 (a) expedite the removal of as much merchantable timber as possible while it still has some  
28 marketable value;

29 (b) protect the remaining resources and ecological systems in the forest lands; and

30 (c) begin the restoration and reforestation process as rapidly as possible.

