

A BILL

To abolish the Forest Service, repeal the provisions of law establishing the Forest Service, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Forest Service Abolition Act of 2026”.

SECTION 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

- (1) The Forest Service (FS), a component of the Department of Agriculture, manages the national forests and grasslands, regulates their use for timber, grazing, mining, and recreation, and funds State and private forestry programs.
- (2) By retaining and regulating vast forest lands within the States and controlling their use, the FS exercises authority beyond Article I, Section 8, Clause 17, which limits exclusive federal legislation to the seat of Government and to places purchased “by the Consent of the Legislature of the State” for “Forts, Magazines, Arsenal, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings,” and beyond the power of Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 to make needful rules respecting the property of the United States, which the Founders did not understand to authorize the permanent federal retention and management of vast lands within the States.
- (3) The functions of the FS are not “necessary and proper for carrying into Execution” any power vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States and therefore find no support in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which Madison in Federalist No. 44 described as a means of executing powers already granted rather than a source of new ones, as the Anti-Federalist writer Brutus warned in his first essay of 1787 it would otherwise become.
- (4) The FS exercises lawmaking power by issuing rules and standards that carry the force of law, contrary to Article I, Section 1, which vests “All legislative Powers herein granted” in the Congress alone, which may not transfer them to officers unaccountable to the people at the ballot box.
- (5) By restricting access to and the use of private inholdings, grazing allotments, and mining claims, the FS violates the Due Process Clause and Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment, which provide that no person shall “be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law” and that private property shall not “be taken for public use, without just compensation”.

(6) In carrying out its functions, the FS disregards the Ninth Amendment, which provides that “The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people,” including the right of the people to order their own lives, property, and affairs free of federal direction in matters the Constitution does not commit to the Federal Government.

(7) The Constitution delegates to the United States no power over lands within the borders of the States and their natural resources. By retaining and regulating vast forest lands within the States and controlling their use, the FS exercises powers that the Tenth Amendment reserves “to the States respectively, or to the people,” contrary to Federalist No. 45, in which Madison described the powers delegated to the Federal Government as “few and defined” and those remaining in the States as “numerous and indefinite.”

(8) The Declaration of Independence affirms that governments are instituted to secure the unalienable rights of the people and derive “their just powers from the consent of the governed,” and it charged the Crown with having “erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.” The FS perpetuates the centralized administration the Declaration condemned. The security of property, which the Founders regarded as inseparable from liberty, may not be left to the discretion of federal officers.

(9) Abolishing the Forest Service and repealing the provisions of law establishing it will reduce the size and cost of the Federal Government, return to the States and to the people the powers the Constitution reserves to them, and restore the constitutional principles of limited government and enumerated powers.

SECTION 3. ABOLITION OF THE FOREST SERVICE.

(a) In General.—The Forest Service, a component of the Department of Agriculture, is hereby abolished effective immediately following the enactment of this Act.

(b) Wind-Down Operations.—Immediately following the enactment of this Act, the President shall designate an appropriate official to expeditiously wind down the operations of the Forest Service, ceasing all functions, none of which shall be transferred to any other department or agency of the Federal Government.

(c) Transfer of Assets and Liabilities.—All assets, liabilities, contracts, property, and records of the Forest Service shall be transferred to the designated official under subsection (b) for appropriate disposition.

(d) Employee Transition.—Employees of the Forest Service shall be offered opportunities for reassignment within the federal government or provided with severance and retraining assistance as prescribed by existing federal law.

SECTION 4. REPEAL OF PROVISIONS OF LAW ESTABLISHING THE FOREST SERVICE.

(a) In General.—The provisions of law establishing the Forest Service, and any provision of law vesting functions in the Forest Service, are hereby repealed.

(b) Conforming Amendments.—The United States Code and all other relevant Federal laws are amended by—

(1) striking all references to the Forest Service and to any office, officer, or function established in or vested in the Forest Service;

(2) terminating every function of the Forest Service, no part of which shall be reassigned to any other department or agency of the Federal Government; and

(3) making such other conforming changes as necessary to reflect the repeal and the permanent abolition of the Forest Service.

(c) Effective Date.—The repeal under this section shall take effect immediately following the enactment of this Act.

SECTION 5. TRANSITION PROVISIONS.

(a) No Restoration of Prior Structures.—No element of the Forest Service shall revert to its organizational structure as it existed prior to the establishment of the Forest Service, and no function of the Forest Service shall be restored to any predecessor department, agency, or office.

(b) Permanent Abolition.—No department, agency, office, or other entity shall be established to carry out the functions of the Forest Service abolished by this Act.

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the remainder of the Act and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.