

ENROLLED ACT NO. 41, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WYOMING
2026 BUDGET SESSION

AN ACT relating to state forestry; creating the forest health grant program; specifying duties of the state forester; creating an account; requiring the attorney general to approve grants; requiring reports; creating an account; providing an appropriation; and providing for an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

Section 1. W.S. 36-1-601 is created to read:

ARTICLE 6
FOREST HEALTH GRANT PROGRAM

36-1-601. Forest health grant program; duties of state forester; account created; eligible entities; attorney general approval.

(a) There is created the forest health grant program. The grant program shall be administered by the state forester, who shall establish the application process and any other requirements of the grant program not otherwise provided by this section.

(b) The state forester may only grant funds to nonprofit and governmental organizations for the purposes specified in this section.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (d) of this section, grants under the forest health grant program shall pay for not more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the cost of an eligible forest health project as specified in this subsection. Any other source of funds, cash or in-kind contributions may be used as matching funds to cover the remainder of a project's costs and the state

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forester may require that matching funds be obligated to pay for a portion of any project. Forest health projects eligible for grant funding under this section shall be conducted on state, federal government, local government or private land, shall be necessary in the public interest and shall be designed to accomplish one (1) or more of the following:

- (i) Enhancement of water yield or quality;
- (ii) Reduction of the risk of catastrophic wildfire damage;
- (iii) Increased production of forest products;
- (iv) Improvement of habitat conditions for wildlife and livestock;
- (v) Any other project that is beneficial to forest health, that is substantially beneficial to the interest of the state and that has a public purpose as determined by the state forester.

(d) Any grant under the forest health program that is used on federal land shall not pay for more than fifty percent (50%) of the cost of an eligible forest health project as specified under subsection (c) of this section. Any other source of funds, cash or in-kind contributions may be used as matching funds to cover the remainder of a project's costs and the state forester may require that matching funds be obligated to pay for a portion of any project. If a forest health project is conducted through good neighbor authority, receipts collected through implementation of the project may be used as matching funds under this subsection.

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(e) No forest health grant shall be made under this section without the attorney general's review and approval of the grant.

(f) There is created the forest health grant program account. The account shall consist of those funds designated to the account by law. Funds in the account shall be used for grants authorized to be made under this section. Any person may also grant, give, transfer, bequest or donate funds to the account. Funds in the account shall be invested as provided by law. Any funds remaining in the account at the end of any fiscal year shall not lapse or revert as provided by W.S. 9-4-207 but shall remain in the account and be used to implement the purposes of this section. Accrued interest and other earnings on unexpended funds within the forest health grant program account shall be credited to the account.

(g) The state forester shall annually report to the joint agriculture, state and public lands and water resources interim committee not later than September 1 on all grants awarded under this section including the amounts of the grants and the projects the grants were authorized to fund.

Section 2. There is appropriated three million five hundred thousand dollars (\$3,500,000.00) from the general fund to the forest health grant program account for purposes of implementing this act and making grants authorized by this act. This appropriation shall not be transferred or expended for any other purpose without further legislative authorization. Notwithstanding W.S. 9-2-1008, 9-2-1012(e) and 9-4-207, this appropriation shall remain in effect and not lapse or revert at the end of any

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fiscal period except upon further legislative action. It is the intent of the legislature that additional funding for this purpose be included in the state forester's next standard budget request submitted under W.S. 9-2-1013.

Section 3. This act is effective immediately upon completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming Constitution.

(END)

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Governor

TIME APPROVED: _____

DATE APPROVED: _____

I hereby certify that this act originated in the House.

Chief Clerk