



DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
OF PUBLIC LANDS
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January 8, 2019

The Honorable Bernard Dean
Chief Clerk of the House
338B Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504

The Honorable Brad Hendrickson
Secretary of the Senate
312 Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chief Clerk Dean and Secretary Hendrickson:

It is my pleasure to forward the Report on Substitute House Bill 2561 prepared by the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee. In 2018, the legislature tasked the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee with recommending solutions to three critical wildfire issues facing Washington. These included:

- Wildfire protection on remaining unprotected lands;
- Supporting and improving community-based wildfire hazard reduction programs; and
- Improving emergency wildfire communications with residents that do not speak English.

The Committee worked diligently with stakeholders to examine these issues and develop recommendations to address them. I believe this report provides the recommendations sought by the legislature, and if implemented, will make Washington safer and more resilient. I would like to extend my gratitude to the members of the Committee for completing this important work in a timely manner.

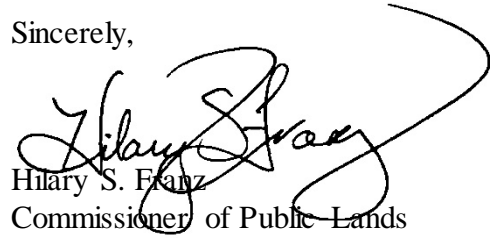
Throughout the process of developing its report, the Committee realized these solutions are only pieces of a larger set of solutions needed to address the challenges wildfires pose for our state. Many of our communities, and the natural resources they depend on, face greater risk from wildfires than ever before. In order to fight the wildfires we have now and to prevent more catastrophic wildfires in the future, we must focus our efforts on strategies that set us on the right course.

Washington's 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan for Eastern Washington, and the 10-Year Wildland Fire Protection Strategic Plan, represent the right course. Developed with the cooperation and expertise of forest landowners, firefighters, tribes, homeowners and community leaders, these plans lay out immediate courses of action that will reduce wildfire impacts and increase forest resiliency for the next several decades.

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It is gratifying to see the recommendations contained in the Report on Substitute House Bill 2561 advance the goals of both plans. By continuing this work, and sustaining the partnership we share, we will help all of Washington be prepared for wildfires.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hilary S. Franz", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Hilary S. Franz
Commissioner of Public Lands

Enclosure: Legislative Status Report from the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee

cc: Members of the Senate Natural Resources & Parks Committee
Members of the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee
Members of the Senate Ways & Means Committee
Members of the House Appropriations Committee