



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

March 7, 2023

The Honorable Monique Limón
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 6510
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 675 – SUPPORT
As Introduced February 16, 2023**

Dear Senator Limón:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we support your Senate Bill 675, which expands various components of California’s overall forest resilience and wildfire mitigation strategy to include prescribed grazing. RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county.

Mitigation of wildfire risk is of paramount importance to communities in the wildland-urban interface statewide. CAL FIRE’s recently-updated, draft Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps indicate that, since 2007, there has been a 14.6 percent increase in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) acreage in the state responsibility area (SRA) alone, most of which was shifted from land that was designated as Moderate Fire Hazard Severity fifteen years ago.¹ The maps represent a sobering view of how dramatically the state’s wildfire patterns and potential impacts have been exacerbated by climate change and inattention to fuels treatment. The new maps are just another indicator of California’s ever-worsening fire hazard conditions and the urgent need to expedite wildfire risk mitigation at both the landscape scale and the community level.

In order to effectively mitigate wildfire risk, RCRC strongly believes California must use every tool available to increase the pace and scale of fuels treatment across the state. Prescribed grazing where and when appropriate is an extremely efficient and effective method of clearing overgrown brush and other fuels from around communities to prevent

¹ *Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area (November 21, 2022) (2022) California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.* Available at: <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/ujtbj2zg/fhsz-in-sra-acreage-change.pdf> (Accessed: February 1, 2023).

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them from catching fire. SB 675 would encourage prescribed grazing by expanding the definition of fire prevention activities to include prescribed grazing, providing grant funding by expanding the state's Local Assistance Grant Program, and including prescribed grazing in strategies under the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity program and the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan.

For these reasons, RCRC supports your SB 675. Please do not hesitate to contact me at sheaton@rcrcnet.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Staci Heaton", written in a cursive style.

STACI HEATON
Senior Policy Advocate

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Water
Genevieve Wong, Consultant, Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Water
Todd Moffitt, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus