



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 11 June 2019
To: House Agriculture Committee
From: Jacob Pries, Policy Intern
Re: Support for HR 2607

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), we would like to state our support for HR 2607 Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2019 and respectfully ask that you support this vital piece of legislation, as well. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

Recently, forests across the entire country have been devastated by wildfires, invasive pests and crippling diseases. This has caused significant harm to the communities that rely on these forests and the people who seek solace within them. HR 2607 expeditiously enables the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management through a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act to partake in forest management activities necessary to curb the issues stated above. This vital piece of legislation ensures the health of America's extensive forest system and reduces the need for wildfire suppression costs. Reducing the need for wildfire suppression costs will provide relief to 50% of the United States Forest Service's yearly funding. Additionally, this act will provide the necessary tools to create crucial habitat for America's wildlife.

White-tailed deer are one of the many species that stand to benefit from this act. Whitetails are the most popular big game animal in the U.S., and whitetail hunters are the foundation of a nearly \$67 billion hunting industry. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, approximately three of every four hunters pursue whitetails and according to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, \$872 million was raised by hunting license fees just last year. Additionally, since 1939 state fish and wildlife agencies have received over \$62.1 billion in funds directly from sportsmen and women. As you can see, the ripple effects from this act are tremendous. The well-being of our nation depends on the well-being of our extensive forest system. It is vital that legislators continue to zealously represent their country, take the appropriate steps towards conservation and support HR 2607. On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association, we would like to sincerely thank you for your time, your dedicated service to this country and your consideration on this matter.

Respectfully,

Jacob D. Pries
Policy Intern (QDMA)