



## A Statement on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill

### Provisions that Pump Billions into Fossil Fuels and Logging Would Exacerbate the Climate and Biodiversity Crises

Over [200 of the nation's top climate scientists and ecologists recently told Congress](#) that, in order to overcome the climate crisis, we must do two things now: (1) rapidly move beyond fossil fuel consumption, and (2) substantially increase protection of our forests, to reduce carbon emissions from logging and to facilitate increased drawdown and sequestration of excess atmospheric carbon. The scientists urged Congress to refrain from advancing *any legislation* that would promote production of wood pellets/woody biomass energy or increase forest “thinning” or other logging activities conducted under the guise of fire management or “hazardous fuels reduction.” They noted the best available science finds that fires are driven mainly by weather and climate and that thinning and other logging increases carbon emissions relative to fire alone, often resulting in increased fire intensity.

Unfortunately, the bipartisan Senate Infrastructure bill contains numerous provisions that would increase subsidies for dirty fuels and logging by billions of dollars, while providing far too little funding for clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency. Instead of promoting natural climate solutions like protecting forests and wetlands, which would advance 30x30 goals, mitigate the climate crisis, protect biodiversity and increase access to nature, the Infrastructure bill would make climate change worse, harm biodiversity, increase fire intensity, and exacerbate pollution in lower-income communities and communities of color that are already disproportionately impacted by biomass and wood pellet facilities. For this bill to be worthy of passage and live up to its potential to build back better, the following provisions must be removed.

- Section 11318: Exempts oil and gas pipelines on most federal lands from environmental analysis.
- Sections 40301-40333 (“Fuels and Technology Infrastructure Investments”): These sections propose nearly \$15 billion in taxpayer subsidies for dirty energy, including oil, coal, gas, and woody biomass via investments in largely theoretical and unproven carbon capture and storage technologies, including an additional \$3 billion to begin construction of a massive network of new CO2 pipelines (Sec. 41004), while also dishonestly defining “clean hydrogen” to include hydrogen derived from climate-polluting carbon-fuel sources such as biomass and fossil fuels (Sec. 40311). The approach outlined here is riddled with uncertainty and

harmful impacts while perpetuating our reliance on fossil fuels, which is why it has been denounced [as a false climate solution by the scientific community](#). An additional \$6 billion in subsidies is proposed for nuclear energy ( Sec. 41002).

- Section 40801: Authorizes USFS to upgrade and “store” National Forest System roads for future commercial timber production, rather than decommission them.
- Section 40803 (“Wildfire Risk Reduction”): Mandates the logging of 10 million acres of federal forestlands over the next 6 years, and an additional 20 million acres of federal forestlands following the initial 10 million acres of logging. The way these provisions are worded could and likely would be interpreted by courts as intending a complete elimination of all federal environmental laws (including NEPA, ESA, NFMA, and others) to facilitate this logging mandate. Section 40803 also dedicates over \$1.6 billion in new taxpayer subsidies for logging, including post-fire clearcutting, on federal lands.
- Section 40804 (“Ecosystem Restoration”) : Authorizes \$400 million in subsidies for wood processing facilities, such as sawmills, biomass power plants and wood pellet manufacturing; \$400 million for increased logging on public and private forests; \$50 million for a program to rent equipment to the timber industry to allow them to log otherwise inaccessible areas, and grants to build sawmill infrastructure and other wood-processing facilities.
- Section 40806: Eliminates environmental analysis under NEPA for an unlimited number of logging projects on federal lands, up to 1,000 feet wide and 3,000 acres in size each, under the guise of “fuelbreaks”.
- Section 40807: Weakens current environmental laws to create a broad exemption which eliminates the public’s right to file administrative objections against planned logging projects on federal lands.
- Sections 70301-70303: Promotes post-fire clearcutting and carbon removal, under the scientifically discredited notion that forests do not regenerate after fires, and promotes conversion of native forests to industrial tree plantations.
- Section 80402: Proposes a system of sweeping tax credits (financial implications unspecified, but potentially in the billions of dollars) for dirty energy, including coal, oil, gas, garbage incineration, and woody biomass under the false-solution catch-all of carbon capture and storage.