



Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
Sarah Cottrell Propst, Cabinet Secretary
Todd E. Leahy, JD, PhD, Deputy Cabinet Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Susan Torres
Public Information Officer, EMNRD
susan.torres@state.nm.us
505-476-3226

February 11, 2021

Prescribed Burning Act passes House with bipartisan support

Santa Fe, NM – Today the Prescribed Burning Act, an Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) priority bill, passed the New Mexico House of Representatives unanimously with a 64 – 0 vote. The bill, sponsored by Representatives Matthew McQueen and Gail Armstrong, focuses on managing our forests for a changing climate and aims to prevent future catastrophic fires.

“Today’s bipartisan vote highlights the importance of providing the state with additional tools to prevent future wildfires from becoming more intense as New Mexico faces warmer and drier conditions due to a changing climate,” said EMNRD Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst. “Thank you to our sponsors and partners who have voiced their support for this bill.”

“The Prescribed Burning Act is one step closer to becoming law, setting New Mexico up to take much needed action on managing our forests for a changing climate,” said Representative Matthew McQueen. “The proactive measures laid out in the bill will allow EMNRD to manage our forests for a healthier and more resilient future.”

“I’m proud to co-sponsor the Prescribed Burning Act and see it advance through the House today,” said Representative Gail Armstrong. “All New Mexicans will benefit from the expanded use of prescribed burns to enhance our grasslands and watersheds.”

Prescribed burns are an important tool in forest management, especially as the climate changes and fire season becomes longer and more intense. The Prescribed Burning Act would clarify liability for private landowners who conduct prescribed burns making insurance more available and affordable. This has resulted in increased prescribed burning in other states that have enacted similar legislation.

Next, the bill will be assigned to a Senate committee, updates can be found on the <https://www.nmlegis.gov/> website.

An overview of the legislation, including frequently asked questions, can be found [here](#).

###

The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

<http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us>