

State of South Dakota

SEVENTY-SEVENTH SESSION
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2002

276H0628

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3

Introduced by: Senators Vitter, Albers, Apa, Bogue, Brown (Arnold), Craddock, Diedrich (Larry), Everist, Greenfield, Ham, Kleven, Madden, McCracken, Munson, Olson (Ed), Putnam, and Symens and Representatives Rhoden, Derby, Duniphan, Eccarius, Hennies (Thomas), Lintz, McCoy, Napoli, Pederson (Gordon), Pummel, and Teupel

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Requesting the forest service to address the forest health
2 and wildfire risk crisis facing the Black Hills.

3 WHEREAS, an epidemic of bark beetles has already killed approximately 485,000 trees in
4 the Black Hills National Forest and continues to spread throughout the forest; and

5 WHEREAS, the United States General Accounting Office Report to the House of
6 Representatives' Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health, GAO/RCED-99-65, stated in 1999
7 that, "The most extensive and serious problem related to the health of the national forests and
8 forestlands in the interior West is the over-accumulation of vegetation"; and

9 WHEREAS, the beetle epidemic and chronic over-stocking has resulted in dangerously high
10 fuel loading and subsequent risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Black Hills National Forest; and

11 WHEREAS, catastrophic wildfire risk across the Black Hills National Forest endangers the
12 city of Sturgis, and numerous other communities, residents, residences, businesses, historic
13 landmarks, livelihoods, and general public safety; and



1 WHEREAS, catastrophic wildfire risk across the Black Hills National Forest endangers the
2 maintenance of all the forest's multiple-uses for all its multiple-users as mandated by the
3 Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 and the National Forest Management Act of 1976;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, the USDA Forest Service announced in 1997 its commitment to resolve wildfire
6 risks on National Forests by fiscal year 2015; and

7 WHEREAS, the completion of the Phase II Amendment to the Black Hills National Forest
8 Plan is essential to enabling the forest to undertake large-scale fuel load reduction treatments;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, the Settlement Agreement for Civil Action No. 99-N-2173, to which the USDA
11 Forest Service was a party, states that, "Phase II is anticipated to be completed in 2002," leading
12 to a public expectation that the Phase II Amendment would actually be finished in 2002:

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Seventy-seventh Legislature
14 of the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the South
15 Dakota State Legislature beseeches the USDA Forest Service to rapidly address the forest health
16 and wildfire risk crisis facing the Black Hills and endangering its residents; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota State Legislature beseeches the
18 USDA Forest Service to expeditiously complete the Phase II Amendment to the Forest Plan, no
19 later than the end of 2002; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota State Legislature is committed to
21 assisting the USDA Forest Service in their procurement of whatever resources are necessary to
22 achieve these ends.