

More logging in national forests approved by House

By Richard Simon, Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON – In response to fires that have ravaged the West this year, the House on Friday approved a bill that would expand logging in national forests despite a White House veto threat.

The measure, which would impose limits on environmental reviews to speed timber-cutting projects, was approved by the Republican-controlled House, 244-173, on a largely party-line vote.

The bill would more than double timber harvest levels nationwide to roughly 6 billion board feet of timber for sale each year, up from the average of 2.5 billion board feet sold annually in recent years.

It would significantly affect California with its 18 national forests that take in more than 20 million acres. About 5 million acres of California forest are suitable for harvest. Currently, about 22,000 acres are logged in the state, a number that would likely increase if the measure became law.

Read the whole story