



U.S. SENATOR MARK UDALL

Armed Services, Energy and Natural Resources, and Intelligence Committees

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Udall Welcomes White House's Steps to Fundamentally Shift How It Fights Wildfires, Safeguard Proactive Fire Prevention Efforts

Proposal in President's 2015 Budget Mirrors Udall's Push to Modernize Wildfire Spending, Protect Mitigation Programs from 'Fire Borrowing'

Mark Udall, a senior member of the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, welcomed [news that the president's 2015 budget](#) will take steps to protect critical wildfire-prevention programs from destructive "fire borrowing." The budget request mirrors [Udall's push to prevent federal agencies from draining proactive and cost-saving wildfire prevention programs to pay for fire-fighting costs](#).

"With the rise of modern mega-fires in Colorado and across the West, federal firefighting agencies have been forced to raid forestry programs that could help prevent future fires. This destructive cycle — robbing Peter to pay Paul — leaves Coloradans exposed to wildfires and only invites future catastrophic mega-fires like the Waldo Canyon Fire, the High Park Fire and the West Fork Complex Fire," **Udall said**. "I am proud the president listened to Colorado and supports adopting my wildfire-funding approach. This strategy will ensure we fight today's fires without undermining efforts to get ahead of tomorrow's blazes, and I will continue to fight in Congress to enact this common-sense plan into law."

The president's 2015 budget will include provisions that treat wildfire-fighting efforts as the extraordinary measures they are, separate from ongoing prevention efforts. That approach, which treats modern mega-fires like other major natural disasters, protects funding for other important U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Department of the Interior programs that reduce hazardous fuels on public lands and in [the wildland-urban interface](#) — fire-prone areas where a significant proportion of Coloradans live.

Udall, a senior member of the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, has [championed common-sense programs and strategies to prevent western wildfires](#). He recently [introduced bipartisan legislation to allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency to proactively work with states and localities on wildfire mitigation projects](#). He also has [pressed the U.S. Forest Service to quickly adopt the Government Accountability Office's recent recommendations on how to upgrade its air tanker fleet](#).

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