

1 WHEREAS, use of all resources should be examined to maximize private, local government, and state
2 fire resources; and

3 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature, which sets policy for and pays for much of the wildland
4 firefighting on behalf of state taxpayers, has not fully examined these and other related issues since 2009.

5

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

7

8 NEW SECTION. Section 1. Study of state fire suppression issues, methods, and costs. (1) The
9 environmental quality council provided for in 5-16-101 shall conduct a comprehensive fire suppression study.

10 (2) The study must include an investigation of:

11 (a) firefighting operations in Montana by the state and federal governments, including operations
12 on tribal land and private land, and the management policies affecting the success of those operations;

13 (b) the efficient use of fire suppression resources, including equipment and firefighters;

14 (c) the impact of operations on private land and the effective use of private resources to fight fires;
15 and

16 (d) state and federal forest management AND GRAZING policies and how those policies may
17 potentially contribute to an increased AFFECT THE number of wildfires, great safety risk to firefighters, or
18 compromised effectiveness of fire suppression efforts.

19 (3) The environmental quality council shall complete the study by September 15, 2026, and report
20 its findings and recommendations, including legislation, to the 70th legislature.

21

22 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated \$50,000 from the general fund to
23 the legislative services division for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, to pay for costs associated with the
24 study required under [section 1.]

25

26 NEW SECTION. Section 3. Contingent voidness. (1) Pursuant to Joint Rule 40-65, if [this act] does
27 not include an appropriation prior to being transmitted to the governor, then [this act] is void.

28 (2) If the appropriation in [section 2] is vetoed, then [this act] is void.

1

2 NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

3

4 NEW SECTION. **Section 5. Termination.** [This act] terminates December 31, 2026.

5

- END -