

LEGISLATIVE BILL 917

Approved by the Governor April 13, 2004

Introduced by Wehrbein, 2; Louden, 49

AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Forest Service; to provide for acknowledgement, administration, and core programs; and to provide intent relating to appropriations.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. The Nebraska Forest Service is acknowledged within the University of Nebraska. The State Forester appointed pursuant to section 85-162.01 shall be the administrative head of the Nebraska Forest Service and shall report to the vice chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The mission of the Nebraska Forest Service is to provide education and services to the people of Nebraska for the protection, utilization, and enhancement of the state's tree and forest resources. In carrying out its mission, the Nebraska Forest Service shall provide education and services covering all aspects of planting, protection, care, and utilization of the state's tree and forest resources and shall provide fire protection to all rural land in cooperation with the state's rural fire protection districts.

The Nebraska Forest Service shall provide education and services through four core programs: (1) The Rural Forestry Assistance Program; (2) the Urban and Community Forestry Program; (3) the Forest Health Program; and (4) the Rural Fire Prevention and Control Program.

In carrying out its mission, the Nebraska Forest Service shall work cooperatively with all federal, state, and local entities to maximize services and funding. The Nebraska Forest Service shall work cooperatively with the natural resources districts to coordinate services and funding for the core programs.

Sec. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate to the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska from the General Fund the money necessary to fund the core programs and services of the Nebraska Forest Service. Such appropriations shall be for the sole purpose of carrying out such programs.