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(Neb.)- Neb. Wildfire Control Bill Wins Initial Approval



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 03/25/2013 01:04 PM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - A measure to help fight wildfires in rural Nebraska has won initial approval from lawmakers.

Lawmakers voted 36-0 on Monday to advance the bill, in response to summer blazes that scorched massive areas of rural Nebraska.

The bill would place aerial tankers in Valentine and Chadron during fire season, require the state to thin forests, and offer new training to emergency responders, in addition to other steps.

Nebraska experienced 1,570 wildfires last year that burned a total of 786 square miles. Many of the fires are blamed on eastern red cedar trees, which are invasive and highly flammable.

The bill was sponsored by Sen. Al Davis of Hyannis.