

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 16, 2007

Chief Gail Kimbell
United States Forest Service
United States Department of Agriculture
14th & Independence, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Chief Kimbell-

We are writing to urge you to re-program current year funding to United States Forest Service (USFS) hazardous fuel and forest health projects in the State of Colorado in Fiscal Year 2007. We encourage you to consider utilizing funds within the Chief's Reserve Fund as well as the approximately \$30 million allocated to the Northwest Forest Plan in Fiscal Year 2007 if it is determined that that level of funding cannot be fully utilized this fiscal year.

On February 15th, the President signed H.J. Res. 20, the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution into law. This Resolution gave departments and agencies broad discretion with funds for the remaining fiscal year. The Forest Service chose to cut funding to Colorado's Region Two by \$4.3 million. This cut will result in reduced on-the-ground management activities to mitigate the effects of Colorado's sustained bark beetle infestations that have advanced hazardous fuel and forest health treatment needs beyond existing funding levels.

The fact is that not enough is being done. In 2006 approximately 74,000 acres of USFS land received hazardous fuels treatment. However, as of 2006, Colorado had over 280,000 acres of treatments NEPA approved with another 235,000 acres of treatments in NEPA analysis. In addition, there is another 12,000 acres ready for timber sales and forest health treatments, but lack of funding threatens to keep those projects shelved. These needs continue to grow as the bark beetle infestation spreads and outbreaks on Colorado's Front Range create even more hazardous conditions and needs in this expansive wildland-urban interface area.

The need for increased funding is apparent. It is imperative that you work to bring more funds to Colorado to address these critical needs. Therefore, we respectfully request that you immediately re-program at least \$4.3 million for Region Two in order to bring it back to its Fiscal Year 2006 funding level. This funding is essential to implement needed on-the-ground projects in Colorado. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ken Salazar

Wayne Allard

Mark Udall

John T. Seligson

Ed Perlmutter

Marilyn Thurgood

Dana O'Rourke

Doug Lamborn

Tom Tanenbaum