



March 16, 2011

Secretary Ken Salazar
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Secretary Tom Vilsack
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW, Suite 200-A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Salazar and Secretary Vilsack –

On behalf of the National Association of Counties (NACo), I am writing to communicate our sincere appreciation for the opportunity to collaborate in the development of a cohesive strategy for wildland fire management. NACo is proud to have served as a partner in the development of two principle documents crafted to address the wildland fire management challenges across America -- *A National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy)* and *The Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act of 2009 – Report to Congress*.

NACo would like to formally endorse both documents and commit to continued cooperation on the implementation of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy. As you well know, authorities (and responsibilities) differ between local, state, and Federal land management agencies. Without careful coordination, conflict can arise due to the complexities associated with wildland fire management.

The development of these two landmark documents, paired with the long-term success of a cohesive wildland fire management strategy, provides a clear vision on how to address critical issues such as wildfire suppression, assistance to communities, hazardous fuels reduction, habitat restoration, and rehabilitation of the Nation's forests and rangelands.

We look forward to our continued engagement in the next phases of the Cohesive Strategy which include local county representation on the Wildland Fire Executive Committee, the Regional Strategy Committees and the working groups that will be formed to undertake the regional analysis' that will comprise the Phase III National Trade-Off Analysis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry E. Naake". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry E. Naake
Executive Director
National Association of Counties