

PARTNER CAUCUS on FIRE SUPPRESSION FUNDING SOLUTIONS

JUNE 27, 2014

Dear Members of Congress:

For years the USDA Forest Service (USFS) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) have “robbed from Peter to pay Paul,” by transferring money out of vital agency programs and services in order to fund wildfire suppression costs. This practice is negatively affecting land management programs including those that decrease long-term wildfire risk and costs.

The Partner Caucus on Fire Suppression Funding Solutions believes that the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, S. 1875 and H.R. 3992, offers a promising approach to managing emergency wildfire suppression costs without impacting other priority programs within the responsible agencies. This bill would fund a portion of the USFS and DOI wildfire suppression costs through a budget cap adjustment similar to the budget cap adjustment currently in use by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. This bill will not change federal fire suppression policies or strategies and will not change the cost of fire suppression, and thus will have a neutral impact on federal spending and the federal budget deficit. The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act would provide a reliable funding structure, consistent with that used by other agencies responding to natural disaster emergencies. The act will enable the agencies to meet their land management and emergency response objectives.

Longer fire seasons, increased development in the wildland-urban interface, and millions of acres of forests with fuel loads exceeding the historic range of variability are among the many factors contributing to the repeated need to transfer funds from non-fire programs to pay for wildfire suppression. In January 2009, a diverse coalition of organizations came together to find a solution to the repeated fire transfers, and corresponding reductions to other agency programs – many of which reduce long-term fire risk. The Partner Caucus represents a diverse set of international, national and local organizations interested in sustainable forest management on private, tribal, municipal, state, and federal lands.

Critical landscape management activities are often postponed or canceled as a result of fire transfers from non-suppression agency accounts once annual wildfire suppression funds are depleted. For example, the USFS wildfire management activities (the largest component of which is suppression) rose from 13 percent of the agency’s FY 1991 budget to nearly 50 percent over the last several fiscal years. Consequently, landscape management has been negatively impacted across all lands including national forests and on DOI lands, such as our national parks, *and* state and private lands.

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As we continue to experience longer fire seasons, the practice of transferring funds from non-fire programs to pay for emergency wildfire response will continue unless Congress adopts the solution proffered by the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. The federal agencies responsible for managing wildfires and public lands must be armed with the tools and resources that will enable them to succeed. The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act is a critically important to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of our nation's forests.

We respectfully urge you to support the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, S. 1875 and H.R. 3992.

Sincerely,

Partner Caucus on Fire Suppression Funding Solution
Signed by the following 234 Organizations

For information regarding this letter or members of the Fire Suppression Funding Solutions Partner Caucus, please contact Cecilia Clavet, cclavet@mc.org, 703-841-7429.

3 LEGS COLLABORATION SERVICES
ALAMO NAVAJO SCHOOL BOARD, INC
ALLEGHENY HARDWOOD UTILIZATION GROUP
ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY TREES
AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY
AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION | CANOE -
KAYAK - SUP - RAFT - RESCUE
AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
AMERICAN FOREST & PAPER ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN FOREST FOUNDATION
AMERICAN FOREST RESOURCE COUNCIL
AMERICAN FORESTS
AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY
AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL
AMERICAN YOUTHWORKS
APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB
APPLEGATE PARTNERSHIP AND WATERSHED
COUNCIL
ARID LAND INNOVATION
ARIZONA CONSERVATION CORPS
ARIZONA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
ARIZONA PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL

ARIZONA WILDLIFE FEDERATION
ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL GRASSLANDS
ASSOCIATION OF PARTNERS FOR PUBLIC LANDS
BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS & ANGLERS
BLACK HILLS FOREST RESOURCE ASSOCIATION
BLACK HILLS REGIONAL MULTIPLE USE
COALITION
BLACK HILLS RESOURCE, CONSERVATION, AND
DEVELOPMENT
BLUE GOOSE ALLIANCE
BLUE MOUNTAINS FOREST PARTNERS
BOULDER COUNTY, CO
BRL SERVICES INC/BRL LOGGING
BULL MOOSE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE
CALIFORNIA DEER ASSOCIATION
CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
CALIFORNIA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL
CALIFORNIA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
CALIFORNIA SKI INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
CALIFORNIA WATERFOWL
CATCH-A-DREAM FOUNDATION

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CENTER FOR HEIRS' PROPERTY PRESERVATION
CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
CENTRAL OREGON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
COUNCIL
CHOOSE OUTDOORS
CITY OF ASHLAND, OR
CIVIL WAR TRUST
CLEAN WATER ACTION
CLEARWATER RESOURCE COUNCIL
COLORADO TIMBER INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
CONGRESSIONAL SPORTSMEN'S FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION LEGACY
CONSERVATION NORTHWEST
CONSERVATIONCORPS, MN & IA
CRILEY CONSULTING
DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE
DUCKS UNLIMITED
EARTHJUSTICE
EASTERN ARIZONA COUNTIES ORGANIZATION
ECOSYSTEM WORKFORCE PROGRAM
EL TESORO RETREAT CENTER
ELLIOTSVILLE PLANTATION, INC
ENDANGERED SPECIES COALITION
ENVIRONMENT AMERICA
ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY STUDY
INSTITUTE
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS
ESTRADA COLLABORATIVE RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT, LLC
FEDERAL FOREST RESOURCE COALITION
FIREFIGHTERS UNITED FOR SAFETY, ETHICS,
AND ECOLOGY (FUSEE)
FLAGSTAFF FIRE DEPARTMENT
FLATHEAD ECONOMIC POLICY CENTER
FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY
FOOTHILLS CONSERVANCY OF NORTH CAROLINA
FOREST BUSINESS NETWORK
FOREST COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP
FOREST ENERGY CORPORATION
FOREST GUILD
FOREST HEALTH TASK FORCE
FOUR FOREST RESTORATION INITIATIVE
COLLABORATIVE STAKEHOLDER GROUP
(4FRI)
FOURTH SECTOR STRATEGIES
FRAMING OUR COMMUNITY, INC
FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE
FRIENDS OF THE URBAN FOREST
FRONT RANGE ROUNDTABLE
FUTURE FOREST, LLC
GILA TREE THINNERS
GILA WOODNET
GLOBAL PARKS
GRASSROOTS OUTDOOR ALLIANCE
GREAT LAKES TIMBER PROFESSIONALS
ASSOCIATION
GREAT OLD BROADS FOR WILDERNESS
GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION
HAWKS ALOFT, INC
IDAHO CONSERVATION LEAGUE
IDAHO FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION
ILLINOIS FIREFIGHTER ASSOCIATION
INDIANA FORESTRY & WOODLAND OWNERS
ASSOCIATION
INTERMOUNTAIN FOREST ASSOCIATION
INTERMOUNTAIN ROUNDWOOD ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE
FIGHTERS
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WILDLAND
FIRE
INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING
ASSOCIATION
INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL
JARA LANDWORKS
KHII RADIO
LAKE COUNTY RESOURCES INITIATIVE
LEMHI COUNTY
LITTLE COLORADO RIVER PLATEAU RC&D

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LOMAKATSI RESTORATION PROJECT
LOS PADRES FORESTWATCH
LOUISIANA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
MAINE AUDUBON
MAINLAND PLANNING, INC
MASS AUDUBON
MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF
CONSERVATION COMMISSIONS
MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST COALITION
MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENT
MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS ASSOCIATION
MCCUTCHANVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT
MID KLAMATH WATERSHED COUNCIL
MONTANA CONSERVATION CORPS
MONTANA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION
MONTANA WOOD PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION
MOTTEK CONSULTING
MOUNTAIN STATES LUMBER AND BUILDING
MATERIAL DEALERS ASSOCIATION
MT ADAMS RESOURCE STEWARDS
MT TAYLOR MACHINE, LLC
MULE DEER FOUNDATION
NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF FOREST OWNERS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FOREST SERVICE
RETIRES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY
FOREST RESOURCES PROGRAMS
NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL
EMPLOYEES
NATIONAL NETWORK OF FOREST
PRACTITIONERS
NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL
NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION
NATIONAL WILDFIRE INSTITUTE
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL WOODLAND OWNERS
NEVADA CONSERVATION CORPS
NEW MEXICO FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
NEW MEXICO PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL
NEW MEXICO STATE LAND OFFICE
NORTHBROOK PUBLIC WORKS
NORTHERN ARIZONA WOOD PRODUCTS
ASSOCIATION
NORTHERN FOREST CENTER
NORTHWEST CONNECTIONS
NORTHWEST FOREST WORKER CENTER
NORTHWEST YOUTH CORPS
OUTDOOR ALLIANCE
OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
PARTNERSHIP FOR RURAL AMERICA
PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS
SYSTEM
PHEASANTS FOREVER/QUAILS FOREVER
PINCHOT INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION
POPE AND YOUNG CLUB
PUBLIC LANDS COUNCIL
PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION
PUBLIC LANDS SERVICE COALITION
QUAIL AND UPLAND WILDLIFE FEDERATION
QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SERVICE, LLC
RESTORATION TECHNOLOGIES
ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION
ROCKY MOUNTAIN TREE-RING RESEARCH
RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY
RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES OF
CALIFORNIA
SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL
SALMON VALLEY STEWARDSHIP
SAN JUAN FOREST HEALTH PARTNERSHIP
SAN JUAN WOODY-INVASIVES INITIATIVE

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SIERRA CLUB
SIERRA FOREST LEGACY
SIUSLAW INSTITUTE
SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS
SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION
SOUTH DAKOTA ATV/UTV ASSOCIATION
SOUTH DAKOTA CAMPGROUND OWNERS
ASSOCIATION
SOUTHEAST YOUTH CORPS
SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER
SOUTHERN OREGON CLIMATE ACTION NOW
SOUTHERN OREGON FOREST RESTORATION
COLLABORATIVE
SOUTHERN OREGON TIMBER INDUSTRIES
ASSOCIATION
SOUTHERN UTAH WILDERNESS ALLIANCE
SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS
SOUTHWEST FORESTS SUSTAINABLE
PARTNERSHIP
SPATIAL INTEREST, LLC
SUSTAINABLE NORTHWEST
SWAN ECOSYSTEM CENTER
TAOS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION
TELLER COUNTY HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION
TEXAS FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
THE CONSERVATION FUND
THE CORPS NETWORK
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RV PARKS AND
CAMPGROUNDS
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND
THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION
PARTNERSHIP
TIERRA Y MONTES SWCD
TOWN OF LAONA, FOREST COUNTY, WI
TREAD LIGHTLY!
TREE MUSKETEERS
TRIBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY CENTER
TROUT UNLIMITED
TWIN WILLOWS RANCH
UPSTATE FOREVER
UTE MOUNTAINEER
VAIL RESORTS
VILLAGE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT
WALLOWA RESOURCES
WASHINGTON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS'
ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON WILDLIFE AND RECREATION
COALITION
WATERSHED RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER
WEST RANGE RECLAMATION, LLC
WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER
WILD SOUTH
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS
WILDLIFE FOREVER
WINTER WILDLANDS ALLIANCE
WISCONSIN OFF-ROAD VEHICLE PARK, INC
WISCONSIN WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION
INC
WYOMING MINING ASSOCIATION
WYOMING STOCK GROWERS ASSOCIATION
YORK LAND TRUST
ZUNI MOUNTAIN FOREST COLLABORATIVE