

# PARTNER CAUCUS on FIRE SUPPRESSION FUNDING SOLUTIONS

FEBRUARY 10, 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,

3 LEGS COLLABORATION SERVICES  
ALAMO NAVAJO SCHOOL BOARD, INC.  
ALLEGHENY HARDWOOD UTILIZATION GROUP  
ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY TREES  
AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY  
AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION  
AMERICAN FOREST & PAPER ASSOCIATION  
AMERICAN FOREST FOUNDATION  
AMERICAN FOREST RESOURCE COUNCIL  
AMERICAN FORESTS  
AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY  
AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL  
APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB  
APPLEGATE PARTNERSHIP AND WATERSHED COUNCIL  
ARID LAND INNOVATION  
ARIZONA PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL  
ARIZONA WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES  
ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL GRASSLANDS  
BLACK HILLS FOREST RESOURCE ASSOCIATION  
BLACK HILLS REGIONAL MULTIPLE USE COALITION  
BLACK HILLS RESOURCE, CONSERVATION, AND DEVELOPMENT  
BLUE MOUNTAINS FOREST PARTNERS  
BRL LOGGING  
CALIFORNIA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL  
CALIFORNIA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION  
CALIFORNIA SKI INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

*For information regarding this letter or members of the Fire Suppression Funding Solutions Partner Caucus, please contact Cecilia Clavet, [cclavevt@mc.org](mailto:cclavevt@mc.org), 703-841-7429.*

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CENTRAL OREGON INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL  
CHOOSE OUTDOORS  
CLEARWATER RESOURCE COUNCIL  
COLORADO TIMBER INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
CONGRESSIONAL SPORTSMEN'S FOUNDATION  
CONSERVATION NORTHWEST  
CRILEY CONSULTING  
DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE  
EASTERN ARIZONA COUNTIES ORGANIZATION  
ECOSYSTEM WORKFORCE PROGRAM  
EL TESORO RETREAT CENTER  
ENDANGERED SPECIES COALITION  
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  
FOREST BUSINESS NETWORK  
FOREST ENERGY CORPORATION  
FOREST GUILD  
FOUR FOREST RESTORATION INITIATIVE COLLABORATIVE STAKEHOLDER GROUP (4FRI)  
FOURTH SECTOR STRATEGIES  
FRAMING OUR COMMUNITY, INC.  
FRIENDS OF THE URBAN FOREST  
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 FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION  
INDIANA FORESTRY & WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
INTERMOUNTAIN FOREST ASSOCIATION

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INTERMOUNTAIN ROUNDWOOD ASSOCIATION  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS  
INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION  
INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL  
JARA LAND WORKS  
KHII RADIO  
LAKE COUNTY RESOURCES INITIATIVE  
LEMHI COUNTY  
LITTLE COLORADO RIVER PLATEAU RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA  
MAINLAND PLANNING, INC.  
MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS ASSOCIATION  
MCCUTCHANVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT  
MID KLAMATH WATERSHED COUNCIL  
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  
NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF FOREST OWNERS  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FOREST SERVICE RETIREES  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY FOREST RESOURCES PROGRAMS  
NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL NETWORK OF FOREST PRACTITIONERS  
NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL  
NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION  
NATIONAL WILDFIRE INSTITUTE  
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
NATIONAL WOODLAND OWNERS  
NEW MEXICO FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
NEW MEXICO PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL  
NEW MEXICO STATE LAND OFFICE  
NORTHBROOK PUBLIC WORKS  
NORTHERN ARIZONA WOOD PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION  
NORTHWEST CONNECTIONS

# **PARTNER CAUCUS on FIRE SUPPRESSION FUNDING SOLUTIONS**

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NORTHWEST FOREST WORKER CENTER  
OUTDOOR ALLIANCE  
OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
PINCHOT INSTITUTE  
PUBLIC LANDS COUNCIL  
PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION  
QUAIL AND UPLAND WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION  
RESTORATION TECHNOLOGIES  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION  
RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY  
RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES OF CALIFORNIA  
SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL  
SALMON VALLEY STEWARDSHIP  
SAN JUAN WATERSHED WOODY-INVASIVES INITIATIVE  
SIERRA CLUB  
SIERRA FOREST LEGACY  
SIUSLAW INSTITUTE  
SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS  
SOUTH DAKOTA ATV/UTV ASSOCIATION  
SOUTH DAKOTA CAMPGROUND OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER  
SOUTHERN OREGON FOREST RESTORATION COLLABORATIVE  
SOUTHERN OREGON TIMBER INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION  
SOUTHWEST FORESTS SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP  
SPATIAL INTEREST, LLC  
SUSTAINABLE NORTHWEST  
SWAN ECOSYSTEM CENTER  
TAOS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP  
TELLER COUNTY HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION  
THE FOREST GUILD  
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RV PARKS AND CAMPGROUNDS  
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY  
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND  
THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY  
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY  
TIERRA Y MONTES SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
TREE MUSKETEERS  
TROUT UNLIMITED

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TWIN WILLOWS RANCH  
UTE MOUNTAINEER  
VAIL RESORTS  
VILLAGE OF TAOS SKI VALLEY  
WALLOWA RESOURCES  
WASHINGTON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION  
WATERSHED RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER  
WEST RANGE RECLAMATION, LLC  
WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER  
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS  
WILDLIFE FOREVER  
WINTER WILDLANDS ALLIANCE  
WISCONSIN WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION INC.  
WYOMING MINING ASSOCIATION  
WYOMING STOCK GROWERS ASSOCIATION  
ZUNI MOUNTAIN FOREST COLLABORATIVE