

February 11, 2009

Under Secretary, Natural Resources and the Environment  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear

We are writing to encourage the flow of economic stimulus funding to the federal land management agencies within the State of Colorado. As you are well aware, the goal of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is to create jobs, restore economic growth, and strengthen America's middle class through measures that-- stimulate the economy fast. We in Colorado are well positioned to do just that.

Colorado's land base is comprised of a majority of federal land ownership which creates a unique relationship between the federal land management agencies within the state and our citizens. We rely on federal lands for tourism, jobs in the forest and ranching industries and watersheds that provide us and surrounding states with our water. A majority of the jobs in our state are directly or indirectly related to tourism, mining, oil and gas, hunting and fishing, forest products and grazing industries.

To address our ever increasing bark beetle epidemic, in northern Colorado alone, we have forest improvement projects ready to go that total \$75 million in 2009. More importantly, we can complete these projects through many means that offer jobs to the citizens of the state. Through the stimulus funding, we have broad opportunities through partnership with the various federal agencies to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, enhance the conditions of our watersheds and maintain critical portions of the nation's utility corridors.

We urge you to provide the Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service a sizeable portion of the economic stimulus funding to address the growing backlog of projects which will reduce threats created by the widespread outbreaks of bark beetles and other destructive forces. We also encourage financial resources being allocated to green projects within the state including biomass facilities and development of new capitol investment projects.

Sincerely,

Gail Schwartz  
State Senator  
Chair, Select Committee

Joe Rice  
State Representative  
Vice Chair, Select Committee

Jennifer Veiga  
State Senator  
Member, Select Committee

Liane "Buffie" McFadyen  
State Representative  
Member, Select Committee

Shawn Mitchell  
State Senator  
Member, Select Committee

Judy Solano  
State Representative  
Member, Select Committee

Mark Scheffel  
State Senator  
Member, Select Committee

David Balmer  
State Representative  
Member, Select Committee

Rollie Heath  
State Senator  
Member, Select Committee

Larry Liston  
State Representative  
Member, Select Committee

cc: The Honorable Ken Salazar  
The Honorable Mark Udall  
The Honorable Michael Bennet  
The Honorable Dianna DeGette  
The Honorable Ed Perlmutter  
The Honorable John Salazar  
The Honorable Doug Lamborn  
The Honorable Jared Polis  
The Honorable Betsy Markey  
The Honorable Mike Coffman  
Gail Kimball, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service  
Rick Cables, Regional Forester, Rocky Mountain Regions, U.S. Forest Service