



General Assembly
State of Colorado
Denver

March 7, 2014

Governor John Hickenlooper
State Capitol Building
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80203

RE: Designation of Treatment Areas in Colorado for Forest Health Projects in National Forests

Dear Governor Hickenlooper:

On February 7, 2014, President Obama signed the 2014 Farm Bill. This law includes important measures to help Colorado and other states address forest health on U.S. Forest Service lands. According to this law, the Secretary of Agriculture, must, if requested by a Governor, designate as part of an insect and disease treatment program one or more landscape scale areas in at least one national forest in each state that is experiencing an insect or disease epidemic. This request, and the Secretary's designation, must occur within 60 days of the enactment of the 2014 Farm Bill (by April 8, 2014). We, the undersigned members of the Joint Senate Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Energy Committee and the House Agriculture, Livestock, and Natural Resources Committee, respectfully request that you designate at least one treatment area in a Colorado national forest in time for the Secretary to make his designation. The process and criteria for submitting this designation to the Secretary of Agriculture is specified in Section 8204 of the Forestry Title (Title VIII) of the 2014 Farm Bill. We trust the Colorado State Forester will be able to help you identify U.S. Forest Service lands that are most appropriate for this designation.

The U.S. Forest Service owns over 11 million acres of land in Colorado. These lands provide numerous benefits to Colorado's residents and visitors, including fresh water, clean air, wildlife habitat, and wood products, and enables many forms of outdoor recreation. In addition, Colorado's headwaters play a crucial role in meeting the water supply needs of 19 downstream states and the Nation of Mexico. Nearly three-quarters of the state's high-elevation species, such as spruce-fir, lodgepole pine, and aspen, are found on lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service. Many of these forests have experienced significant insect and disease impacts in recent years. For example, according to the 2013 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forests, approximately 3.4 million acres of forests in Colorado have been damaged by the Mountain Pine Beetle and over 1 million acres of Colorado's forests have been damaged by the Spruce Beetle. These lands are vulnerable to wildland fires and pose a major threat to Colorado's economy and quality of life.

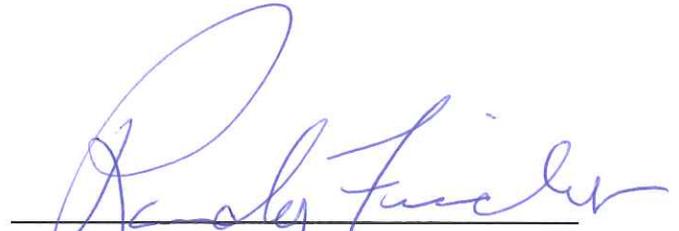
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Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

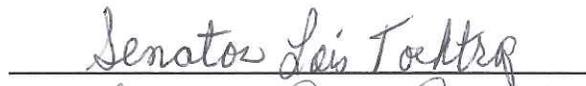
Sincerely,



Senator Gail Schwartz, Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Natural
Resources and Energy



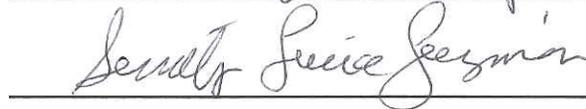
Representative Randy Fischer, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture, Livestock
and Natural Resources



Senator Lois Toedtgen



St. J. L.



Senator Bruce Jermolov



Edward W.



Senator Matt Jen



Mike Myer



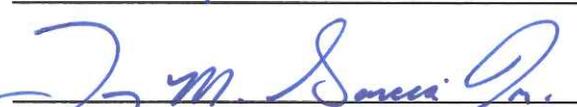
Senator Ellen Roberts



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J. M. Sanchez



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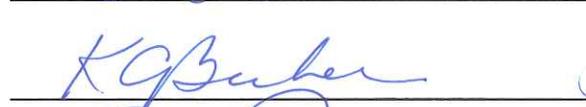
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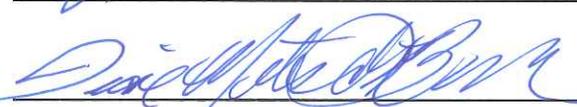
Al Cowan



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K. G. Baker



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Jerry Bush



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c: Daniel Jirón, Regional Forester, Rocky Mountain Region, U.S. Forest Service
Mike King, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Michael B. Lester, State Forester and Director, Colorado State Forest Service