The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House and Representatives  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman McCollum:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as a part of the Title V - FLAME Act of 2009.

This estimate is pursuant to section 502(h)(3) of the Act, which requires the Secretary of Agriculture to submit an estimate of the anticipated wildfire suppression costs by the first week of July. The delay in the availability of certain data elements required for the development of the report presented challenges in preparing the report.

This forecast predicts, with 90 percent confidence, that fire suppression costs will be between $869 million and $1.529 billion in FY 2015, with a median forecast of $1.199 billion. These estimates are based on the best climate and weather data currently available as well as the most effective analytical tools and models used to estimate fire suppression costs. The median forecast for the FY 2015 fire season is nearly $200 million over the appropriated suppression and FLAME funds available and elucidates the need for a new funding strategy for wildfire suppression. If the median is met this fiscal year, the Forest Service will halt work and initiate transfers of funds from other budget line items. This is a destructive practice in many ways and I urge you to act quickly to pass fire suppression cap adjustment legislation so the largest and costliest fires do not erode the Forest Service’s ability to support landscape and community resilience through forest restoration.

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A similar letter and a copy of the report are being sent to Senator Tom Udall, Senator Lisa Murkowski, Senator Ron Wyden, Senator John Barrasso, Senator Jon Tester, Congressman Tom McClintock, Congresswoman Niki Tsongas, Congressman Glenn Thompson, Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham, and Congressman Ken Calvert.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

Enclosure
The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as a part of the Title V - FLAME Act of 2009.

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

Enclosure
The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
United States Senate  
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as a part of the Title V-FLAME Act of 2009.

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

Enclosure
The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
United States Senate  
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Barrasso:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as a part of the Title V - FLAME Act of 2009.

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
Enclosure
Dear Senator Udall:

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

Enclosure
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
125 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  

Dear Madam Chair:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as a part of the Title V - FLAME Act of 2009.

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

Enclosure
The Honorable Glenn Thompson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as part of the Title V - FLAME Act of 2009.

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  

Enclosure
The Honorable Niki Tsongas  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1329 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.  20515

Dear Congresswoman Tsongas:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as a part of the Title V - FLAME Act of 2009.

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
Enclosure
The Honorable Tom McClintock  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Sincerely,

[Signature]

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

Enclosure
The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman  
Committee on Indian Affairs  
United States Senate  
838 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2015, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as part of the Title V - FLAME Act of 2009.

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Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

Enclosure
The Honorable Jon Tester  
Vice Chairman  
Committee on Indian Affairs  
United States Senate  
838 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Tester:

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Sincerely,  

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  

Enclosure
The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1305 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  

Dear Congresswoman Grisham:

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Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  

Enclosure