

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 24, 2021

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senate Dirksen Building 142
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senate Hart building 125
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully ask that you fund the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) at fully authorized levels outlined in the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill.

Since its enactment in 2009, CFLRP has successfully brought people together to support forest health, mitigate wildfires, and support rural economies and local voices. CFLRP works best when various local stakeholders collaborate, resulting in stronger relationships on the ground, better projects, and a decreased risk of conflict and litigation.


In its first 10 years, 23 CFLRP projects in 14 states sold more than 3.3 billion board feet of timber, created \$2 billion in local labor income; improved 900 miles of trails for sports enthusiasts and recreation, and enhanced over 3.5 million acres of wildlife habitat. CFLRP also supported an average of 5,440 jobs annually. In addition, CFLRP has attracted more than \$470 million in partner investments and has reduced the risk of very large fires on more than 3.8 million acres.

At the end of June 2021, a technical group of experts and the United States Department of Agriculture will recommend several new projects in states across the country. However, if CFLRP is not funded in full, these projects will not have the resources necessary to restore millions of acres of forest restoration, reduce wildfire risk, and create new jobs in rural communities.

As wildfire season becomes increasingly severe, Congress has a responsibility to protect communities in high risk areas from wildfires destroying their homes and jeopardizing their health and safety. The CFLRP has a proven track record of collaborative decision making among diverse stakeholders, local, and state government for closely monitoring high priority areas and reducing the risk of wildfires.

As you draft the FY2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bills, we respectfully request that you fully fund CLFRP. Thank you for considering this request.

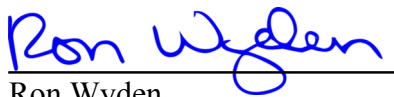
Sincerely,

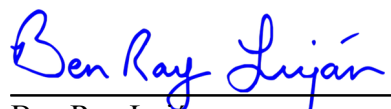

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