

May 30, 2014

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol H-232
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
U.S. Capitol S-221
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Reid:

The undersigned organizations represent millions of hunters and anglers across the United States who are united in seeking your support for the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (WDFFA), S. 1875 and H.R. 3992, in the Interior Appropriations bill. Many of our members and supporters hunt and fish on federal public lands, particularly on national forests and BLM land. Yet, each year, funding for crucial programs that impact recreation or habitat management on public lands is transferred to pay for unavoidable wildfire suppression activity. Even when those programs are repaid, the delay is often many months. WDFFA fixes these chronic delay problems by funding 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.

Longer, more severe, wildfire seasons; increased development in the wildland-urban interface; and millions of acres of forests with fuel loads exceeding the historic range of forest variability are among the many factors contributing to the repeated need to transfer funds from non-fire programs to pay for wildfire suppression. The last decade has seen several large, very expensive wildfires, which has increased the USFS wildfire management costs from 13 percent of the agency's FY 1991 budget to nearly 50 percent over the last several fiscal years. Consequently, habitat management activities and outdoor recreation programs have been negatively impacted across national forests and DOI lands.

As the nation experiences longer wildfire seasons, the practice of transferring funds from non-fire programs to pay for emergency wildfire response will continue, which is why we respectfully urge you to include the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, S. 1875 and H.R. 3992 in the Interior Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Archery Trade Association

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Boone and Crockett Club
Bowhunting Preservation Alliance
Catch-A-Dream Foundation
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Dallas Safari Club
Ducks Unlimited
Masters of Foxhounds
Mule Deer Foundation
National Rifle Association
National Shooting Sports Foundation
National Wild Turkey Federation
North American Grouse Partnership
Pope & Young Club
Public Lands Foundation
Quality Deer Management Association
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Ruffed Grouse Society
Safari Club International
Sand County Foundation
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
TreadLightly!
Wildlife Forever