



January 20, 2010

Ms. Rhea Suh  
 Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget  
 United States Department of the Interior  
 1849 C Street, N.W.  
 Washington DC 20240

Mr. Jay Jensen  
 Deputy Undersecretary of Natural Resources and Environment  
 United States Department of Agriculture  
 217E Whitten Bldg  
 Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ms. Suh and Mr. Jensen:

On behalf of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) I would like to thank you for your support in addressing the rising costs of emergency wildland fires and your sustained interest in wildland fire issues. The Administration's proposal and your subsequent testimony on partitioning the emergency costs from the non-emergency fire costs helped lead to the much-needed first step with the passage of the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement (FLAME) Act in the 2010 Interior Appropriations bill. We can now turn our focus to moving forward with the development of a Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy.

In order for the FLAME Act to pass, NASF worked diligently to not only provide leadership but to build a coalition for its support and passage. However, our work is not done with the passage of FLAME. The costs of wildland fire and its far-reaching impacts is only one piece of the wildland fire problem in our nation. For this reason, the Interior Appropriations bill also included language requiring the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of the Interior to craft a Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy.

Addressing wildland fire is a complex land management and societal issue. This is why NASF believes that, like the passage of FLAME, it is only through effective partnerships, with shared responsibility held by all stakeholders of the wildland fire problem in our nation, that we can successfully address this issue. It is only together, in a cohesive manner, that we will create well-prepared, fire-adapted communities and healthy, resilient landscapes at the most efficient cost.

NASF and the International Association of Fire Chiefs have provided the leadership for an intergovernmental approach in developing a wildland fire framework guided by the 2009 Quadrennial Fire Review and the 10-year Strategy Implementation Plan. These important documents can provide the building blocks to this new cohesive approach to wildland fire

**Executive Director**  
 Jay Farrell

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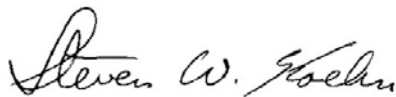
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management and reporting. The drafting of the 2009 QFR was handled through a successful intergovernmental process that could serve as a model for the Cohesive Strategy formulation process. Further, the new Cohesive Strategy can build upon our past successes under the National Fire Plan and the 10-year Comprehensive Wildfire Strategy. Our engagement and input in this new process is imperative from the beginning of the drafting of the Cohesive Strategy.

The congressionally-required Cohesive Strategy must be completed no later than October 30, 2010 and the legislative language provides guidance on what the Strategy should address. Wildfire “knows no boundaries” nor should the developing of a strategy for its management. NASF strongly encourages an intergovernmental approach in developing this strategy – a true cohesive strategy must take an all-lands approach. NASF stands ready to partner with the Department of Agriculture and Interior, along with key intergovernmental partners such as the International Association of Fire Chiefs, in developing this Cohesive Strategy.

We urge you to support a “no-boundaries” drafting process. With less than 10 months remaining, we look forward to a response from your office indicating upcoming engagement points for State Foresters to ensure the creation of a successful and useful Cohesive Strategy for Congress, the agencies and stakeholders across the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steven W. Koehn".

Steven W. Koehn  
President and Maryland State Forester

cc: Tom Tidwell, Chief, USFS  
Kirk Rowdabaugh, Director, Office of Wildland Fire Coordination, DOI  
Jeffrey D. Johnson, President & CEO, IAFC  
Bob Roper, Wildland Fire Committee Chair, IAFC  
Vicki Christiansen, Chair, NASF Forest Fire Protection Committee