

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 26, 2022

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce:

We are writing to request that the Subcommittee include no less than \$7.5 million in FY23 to support the important services of the three Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI) authorized by Congress in PL 108-317 at \$15 million.

The work of the SWERIs is critical for reducing the threat of wildfire to communities, forests, and watersheds. The three institutes – the Ecological Restoration Institute (ERI) at Northern Arizona University, the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) at Colorado State University, and the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWR) at New Mexico Highlands University – mobilize practical forest restoration and fuels reduction science and technical services for application by land management agencies and stakeholders who care about the future of our Nation’s forests and water.

While all the Institutes develop, translate, and transfer information to achieve land management goals, each is known for different strengths. Each institute leverages state and external grants to expand its impact. The SWERI’s provide value to the federal government by applying research and service to prevent wildfires, restore forest health, safeguard water supplies, and create forest sector jobs, as well as develop methods and tools that can be applied nationally.

A funding level of \$7.5 million in FY23 will allow the SWERIs to sustain a parity in funding at \$2.5 million per institute, while expanding new and existing programs to accelerate science-based solution to reducing the threat of wildfire, the importance of which is underscored by the unprecedented recent fire seasons and ongoing, severe drought conditions in the West. This funding level will further allow the SWERIs to deepen local connections and extend capacity to assist forest and fire managers throughout the West.

The SWERIs are important, effective, and making a difference for land managers and communities. Their work reducing the threat of wildfire saves taxpayer dollars and lives. We greatly appreciate their work and urge you to support this request on behalf of our communities.

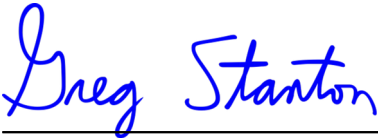
Sincerely,



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



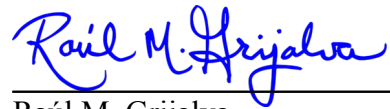
Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress
Chair, Committee on Natural
Resources

Melanie A. Stansbury

Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress