

April 4, 2006

The Honorable Conrad Burns  
187 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC20510-2603  
capitol fax: (202) 224-8594

Dear Chairman Burns:

The undersigned organizations strongly support the US Forest Service Forest Inventory Analysis Program (FIA) and urge Congress to fully fund the program in FY 2007 at \$73.4 million. FIA is the only national inventory system that delivers current and consistent information about the status, condition and trends of America's forestland, crossing all ownerships.

Forests, representing 1/3 of the US land base, are faced with increasing challenges—catastrophic wildfires, insect and disease infestations, hurricane damage, invasive species outbreaks, development pressures, and a number of other threats. FIA provides important and credible information needed to measure change and to confront these challenges. It is essential to enabling land managers to continue managing and conserving the U.S. forestland base and the associated values and benefits.

Fully funding FIA will help achieve a national, annualized inventory system with 20% annual measurement consistently applied across all ownerships and reported for each state every 5 years. We fully support attaining the goals and vision of the base federal program and urge continuous improvement in data collection efficiencies. Implementation of a full inventory cycle in each state and timely public access to the data is paramount.

FIA is the nation's continuous forest census – collecting, analyzing and reporting information on the status and trends of America's forests. We must have this information in order to make sound ecological, economic, and social decisions about the current and future state of the nation's forests. We urge Congress to continue its support for FIA and fully fund the program in FY 2007.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Community Trees  
Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters  
American Forest & Paper Association  
American Forest Foundation  
American Forests  
Association of Consulting Foresters  
Bear Trust International  
Boone & Crockett Club  
Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Ecological Society of America  
Environmental Defense  
Forest Landowners Association  
Forest Resources Association  
International Society of Tropical Foresters

Mississippi Land Trust  
National Association of Forest Service  
Retirees  
National Association of State Foresters  
National Woodland Owners Association  
Northern Forest Alliance  
Pinchot Institute for Conservation  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
Society of American Foresters  
Society for Range Management  
The Nature Conservancy  
The Wilderness Society  
Tree Trust  
Wallowa Resources  
Whitetails Unlimited  
Wildlife Mississippi