

March 30, 2026

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman  
Chairman, Senate Committee on  
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on  
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Securing the Future of the USDA Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program in the *Fix Our Forests Act***

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Boozman, and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

We the undersigned, representing a diversity of organizations deeply invested in the health and productivity of America's forestlands, are writing today in support of the USDA Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program. As activity continues in the Senate on S. 1462 *Fix Our Forests Act*, we ask for your support to include Senator Angus King's amendment to establish a Blue Ribbon Panel to secure the future of this critical program. This amendment is based on the bipartisan King-Wicker bill in the 117th and 118th Congresses. A Blue Ribbon Panel will be crucial in informing subsequent Congressional action on FIA program support.

The Forest Service's FIA Program is the nation's only forest census, serving as the backbone of scientific knowledge on the current state of America's forestlands. Having been delivered by the Forest Service for over 75 years, it is globally recognized as the gold standard for nationwide forest inventory and monitoring. Its data on both forests and forest utilization combined with its rigorous analyses are used by a myriad of stakeholders – including the Forest Service itself – to drive forest management on all lands, ranging from the implementation and monitoring of forest health activities in the National Forest System to the assessment of the risks and impacts of catastrophic wildfire throughout the country.

The FIA Program stands as a uniquely user-driven program within the Forest Service. Historically, the Forest Service has been informed by FIA Blue Ribbon Panels at critical times during program development. These have helped the agency and Congress navigate policy and funding decisions by providing thoroughly-vetted recommendations from the full breadth and

expertise of the user community. With the agency currently engaging in a large scale reorganization to achieve greater effectiveness, accountability, and efficiency, now is the pivotal time for Congress to facilitate an expert convening to ensure decisions around the structure and resourcing of the FIA Program are right-sized, facilitate the incorporation of new processes and technologies, and ultimately increase the utility of the program to serve the health and prosperity of America's forests resources over the coming decades.

Sincerely,

American Forest Foundation

American Forests

CTrees

Forest Landowners Association

Green Diamond

National Alliance of Forest Owners

National Association of Forest Service Retirees

National Association of State Foresters

The Nature Conservancy