



Date: April 8, 2020

Requesting Party:

Sean Chambers
Director of Water Utilities
1001 11th Ave. Ste 200
Greeley, Colorado 80631
970-397-4215 | Sean.Chambers@Greeleygov.com

Representing collaborative wildfire recovery for efforts for the City of Greeley, City of Fort Collins, Northern Water Conservancy District, City of Loveland, and Grand County, of Colorado

Request: Programmatic Funding

Account: USFS Vegetation and Watershed Management

Agency: USDA

US Forest Service

Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Existing Acct. Funding Level: \$ 30,000,000.00 (USFS Vegetation and Watershed Management Acct.)
Requested increase to the Acct.: \$200,000,000.00

Background and Context of Appropriations Request:

Watershed recovery and vegetation restoration is critical to the severely burned forest watersheds across the West. A warming climate and aridification of our forested watersheds has led to record wildfire seasons. The burn areas continue to plague communities with flooding, water supply and water quality challenges. Sedimentation and debris is filling rivers and reservoirs and causing havoc on water treatment infrastructure. The process for recovering forested watersheds is costly but shown to be effective, and the funding needs remain very large and urgent with a short window for mitigating work in the watersheds while they are not snow covered. Local communities, municipal water utilities, State governments and the federal Emergency Watershed protection program have all stepped up with significant recovery resources, but our National Forest burn areas remain largely untreated and these forested watersheds are in urgent need of recovery. Resolving the funding gap is time sensitive and I urge you to prioritize the appropriation of funds to the USFS Vegetation and Watershed Management budget where the resources can be promptly deployed towards the restoration of watersheds and rehabilitation of our forests.

Specific Funding Language Requested:

The Committee has provided an increase of \$200,000,000 in the Vegetation and Watershed Management activity to address wildfire recovery efforts for fires occurring between August 1st of 2020 and January 1, of 2021. The Committee expects the entirety of this funding be utilized for on the ground impact mitigation activities such as mulching, seeding, debris management, debris removal, sedimentation encashments and other watershed protection activities in coordination with existing recovery partners to protect drinking water supplies

Additional Information:

Wildfire recovery efforts across the Rocky Mountain West remain an urgent matter. Climate change is driving the aridification of our forests, rangeland and the watersheds our communities and agriculture depend upon. The majority of critical watershed lies on federal lands, and a sound long-range strategy must include both wildfire prevention measures and rehabilitating programs with funding to recovery critical forested watersheds.

Request submitted April 8, 2022

Sean P. Chambers, Director of Water Utilities