

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

November 20, 2025

Dear Chair Collins and Vice Chair Murray:

We write to request that any emergency disaster appropriations bills drafted this year include funding for wildfire recovery on federal lands. Repairing wildfire damages to National Parks, National Forests, and Bureau of Land Management lands is vital for the safety and economy of the entire country. Just as our forests and parks require restoration, so too do the surrounding counties and communities that bear the economic and infrastructure impacts of these disasters; their recovery is inseparable from that of the federal lands themselves.

Unfortunately, federal lands in each of our states have recently experienced the damaging and widespread effects of wildfire. This year, the Dragon Bravo and White Sage fires devastated over 200,000 acres in the North Rim of the Grand Canyon and the Kaibab National Forest, destroying structures including the historic Grand Canyon Lodge.¹² Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park in Colorado, Joshua Tree National Park in California, the Gila National Forest in New Mexico, and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area in Oregon have all had wildfires this year as well.³⁴⁵ Across the West, nearly a million acres of BLM land burned this year alone.⁶ While each of these fires has unique response needs, all will require mitigation activities such as removing hazard trees, road and bridge assessment, structural replacements, and trail repairs.

As you know, unlike wildfire response activities on state, tribal, or private lands which are coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), wildfire response on federal land is managed by the land agencies themselves. In the past, Congress has appropriated the funds our public land agencies require for their critical response, remediation, and mitigation activities.

¹ <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-publication/azgcp-dragon-bravo-fire/dragon-bravo-fire-update-last-update-unless-significant-activity-occurs-09-17-2025>

² <https://www.kjzz.org/fronteras-desk/2025-08-01/400-employees-were-displaced-by-grand-canyon-wildfire-new-housing-is-almost-ready>

³ <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/cobcp-south-rim>

⁴ <https://www.desertsun.com/story/news/environment/wildfires/2025/10/12/black-rock-fire-in-joshua-tree-national-park-location-size-evacuations-containment/86662310007/>

⁵ <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/nmgf-trout-fire>

⁶ <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/abdca2762e41406c91aa6076eaf228c8>

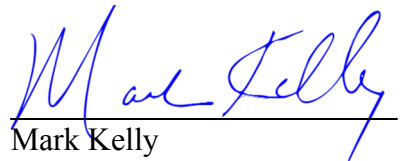
Our nation's public lands have tremendous intrinsic, economic, and ecological value. Gateway communities rely on the tourism generated by National Parks and other federal lands for economic development and employment opportunities. Many federal lands include sacred tribal sites that must be preserved to uphold federal trust responsibilities. Our watersheds originate in national forests and on public lands – promoting wildfire recovery on these lands helps mitigate water pollution for communities downstream. Ensuring that federal lands are restored after wildfires is a responsibility to our shared, national heritage.

We will continue to work closely with federal land management agencies and local officials in our states to assess specific wildfire reconstruction needs and to identify the most urgent priorities for recovery. We stand ready to provide any additional information or support that the Appropriations Committee may require to ensure that our federal lands, surrounding counties, and gateway communities receive the resources necessary to recover fully and build long-term resilience. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



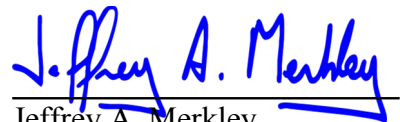
Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



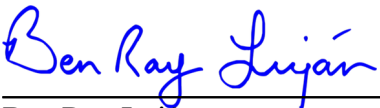
Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



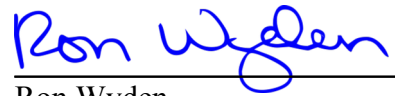
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator