



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

August 10, 2020

[REDACTED]
Regional Forester
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]:

The USDA Forest Service serves the American people as stewards working to improve the health of our national forests and grasslands. The 193 million acres of public lands managed by the Forest Service provide important resources and recreational opportunities to the people of this great Nation and are critical for the prosperity of rural communities. It is the duty of each of us to ensure our national forests and grasslands are healthy and productive so they can continue to meet the needs of citizens and communities, both now and into the future.

I am proud of our progress together to promote active management, reduce hazardous fuels, and improve the health and resiliency of our nation's forests and grasslands. In furtherance of our shared mission, I issued a Memorandum (memo) to the Chief of the Forest Service on June 12, 2020, setting forth a vision for:

- Increasing the productivity of National Forests and Grasslands;
- Valuing our Nation's grazing heritage and the National Grasslands;
- Increasing access to National Forest System Lands; and
- Expediting environmental reviews to support active management.

As senior leaders of the USDA Forest Service, Regional Foresters play a key role in implementing the vision laid out in the memo. By now you have had the opportunity to read the memo, ask questions of your leadership and begin operationalizing the memo to the Forest Service. I want to hear from you directly on how you are progressing in implementing the vision. Specifically, I am interested in hearing:

- Which aspects of the memo will be most impactful to your region and the communities you serve and why?
- How are you utilizing Shared Stewardship to implement the vision of the memo?
- Since the memo was issued, what actions have you taken in your region to implement the direction laid out in the memo?
- What future actions will you be taking to implement the vision and direction of the memo? Specifically, I want to hear your timeline and key milestones for implementation. What are the metrics by which you will measure your success and when do you expect to start seeing results?
- What more can be done by the Forest Service, the Department or our external partners to support implementation of the memo?

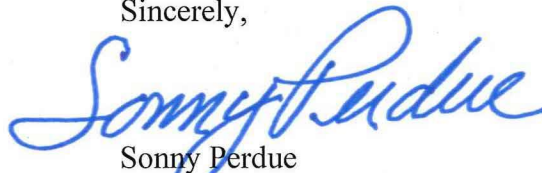
As we work together to address the challenges before the Forest Service as a whole, and the unique challenges facing each of your regions, we also have a responsibility to do so with a focus on delivering results for our customers – the American people. Our customers want a Forest Service that is accessible, responsive and solutions oriented toward achieving the greatest results for our lands and the greatest number of customers. To that end, I would like you to tell me:

- What are you doing as a manager to ensure a culture of customer service extends through every level of your operation?
- Who are the key stakeholders in your region and what are you doing to improve your staff's, your region's and your personal relationships with them?
- What customer service best-practices have you implemented in your region that you would like to share with the Department and your colleagues across the country?
- What barriers stand in the way of achieving full success in being the most efficient, effective and customer focused organization in the federal government?

I look forward to learning firsthand from you about the work you are doing in your region and to receiving your response to this letter by **August 31, 2020**. I have no doubt this will be a continuation of the important work we are already doing together.

We must never forget that we are the fortunate beneficiaries of past generations, who put a premium on shared stewardship, improving, conserving, and entrusting us with the valuable resources we now steward. I thank you for the work you do every day on behalf of millions of Americans to promote the health of our National Forests for our customers today and for future generations to come.

Sincerely,



Sonny Perdue
Secretary