



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2017

Mr. G. Sam Foster
Executive Director
National Association of Forest Service Retirees
Post Office Box 273362
Fort Collins, Colorado 80527

Dear Mr. Foster:

Thank you for your letter of October 31, 2017, cosigned by James Caswell, regarding the future of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers, and specifically the potential closure of the Golconda Center.

On September 26, 2017, through a notice published in the Federal Register (82 FR 44842), the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) proposed to permanently close the Golconda Center. This proposed closure was based on chronic low performance over the last 5 years. The comment period for this proposed closure ended on October 26, 2017. DOL will issue a final decision on the future of the Golconda Center.

While the comment period on the proposed closure of the Golconda Center has passed, Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta and I are working hard to accomplish the important missions of both Departments to deliver the best possible benefits to the youth and the communities we serve. As such, we continually assess and monitor the performance of USDA centers to ensure they provide the quality education and experiences students deserve.

The collective experience of the National Association of Forest Service Retirees with this program is invaluable support to ensure high-quality program delivery. I have asked Robert Velasco, Acting Deputy Chief for Business Operations, to follow up with you to explore this and other opportunities for your involvement.

Again, thank you for writing and for your interest in the Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers program. If you have any further questions, please have a member of your staff contact Mr. Velasco at (202) 205-1707. A similar response is being sent to Mr. James Caswell.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Perdue". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light gray rectangular background.

Sonny Perdue
Secretary