



February 21, 2025

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The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of Agriculture. As you are aware, this position is very important to the Forest Service, its partners, neighbors, and employees past and present.

The National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) has always valued our positive relationship with the Secretary's office and looks forward to having a similar relationship with you and your staff. As a group, with membership in every state, we have knowledge of agency history, culture and prior efforts to reduce workforce, increase efficiency, streamline, and reorganize. We understand and respect that a new Administration means change. With our history of implementing changes during previous administrations, we offer our help and advice.

We sent a letter to the USDA transition team in December 2024. It highlights our specific thoughts and advice in the spirit of helping guide a solutions-oriented program to manage our nation's forest and grasslands. In this letter we stress the importance of maintaining a trained professional workforce. It is key to the agency successfully accomplishing its missions. The career employee's knowledge of the laws and resources will be critical to planning and implementing the desperately needed fuels treatments. They can, in fact, help the Administration address forest health and the threat of wildfire. Their payroll is also critical to the economy of numerous rural communities in which they live and work. Forest Service employees can and will help you accomplish important administration priorities.

As a highly active advocacy organization we have achieved many positive results over the years. We are a credible voice with Congress and many organizations that have profound interest and influence in natural resource issues. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us on any Forest Service issues. We would be happy to meet with you to discuss our thoughts on the critical work of the Forest Service and look forward to working with you in your new role.
Sincerely,

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Steve Ellis, Chair

Steve Ellis, Chair
National Association of Forest Service Retirees