

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 22, 2014

The Honorable Tom Tidwell  
Chief, United States Forest Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
201 14th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

Neil Kornze, Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Chief Tidwell and Director Kornze:

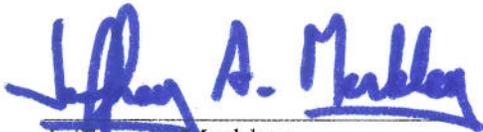
We write to thank your agencies for the sense of urgency and deployment of fire resources in Oregon over the past weeks, and to urge your continued vigilance.

As you know, the Pacific Northwest has been at the heart of the national fire situation. Oregon has been battling over 16 active wildfires, encompassing over 585,000 acres on state, private and federal lands. On July 16, 2014, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber declared a state of emergency, acknowledging that the scope, breadth and severity of Oregon's fires have overwhelmed our local capabilities and pose a threat to life, safety, and property. With more lightning storms predicted in the next 72 hours, we urge you to ensure Oregon consistently has adequate resources.

While we understand the need to balance resources not only in areas where there are active fires, but also in areas where fires may occur, Oregon remains at severe risk nationally. Protracted drought and record low fuel moisture indices exist across much of the State. This presents significant risks to rural communities, forest resources, public health, and wildlife habitat, not the least of which is that of Greater Sage Grouse. Fire mitigation efforts and habitat conservation is a top priority driving the conversation in Oregon and elsewhere over whether the Great Sage Grouse merits listing under the Endangered Species Act.

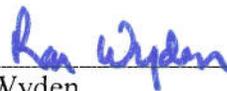
We urge you to continue to keep significant resources pre-positioned and prepared to mobilize in Oregon in order to address the above at-risk public values. We recognize that federal firefighting agencies also need additional resources. We strongly support the President's request for emergency supplemental appropriations and we are working to see that measure brought to the Senate floor. However, given that many months lay ahead in an already severe fire season in Oregon, we urge you to remain prepared to take swift action in directing existing resources to Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration and expedited action.



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator