

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 30, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

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

Dear Secretary Burgum and Secretary Rollins:

A dangerous and damaging wildfire season is already upon us. Our constituents deserve to know that the federal government is doing all it can to minimize the risks that wildfires on federally managed public lands and forests pose to public safety and to the electric infrastructure that powers Americans' everyday lives.

We have received numerous reports from electric utilities about the substantial delays and inconsistencies they routinely encounter with your agencies when seeking federal permitting and approvals for wildfire mitigation and essential maintenance activities in and around their rights-of-way. These permitting challenges increase wildfire risk across our nation's public lands; and as a result, they jeopardize public safety, increase electricity costs, and decrease the reliability of our electric grid.

In fact, recent Congressional hearings have highlighted the bipartisan need for our federal land management agencies to better utilize their existing authorities under Section 512 of the Federal Land Management and Policy Act ("FLPMA") to improve right-of-way maintenance for electric infrastructure on public lands and forests. Electric utilities work hard to reduce wildfire risk in and around their facilities, and they need your federal agencies to step up and ensure they have the flexibility necessary to do that important work.

The trade associations that represent America's three types of electric utilities, including the Edison Electric Institute ("EEI"), the American Public Power Association ("APPA"), and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association ("NRECA") developed the attached lists of actionable priorities that the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management could undertake pursuant to their authority under FLPMA. Implementing these actions would greatly improve utilities' ability to reduce wildfire risk in and around their rights-of-way across public lands and forests.

Addressing the threats posed by wildfires must be an all-hands-on-deck effort. Congress is working on legislation to support the effort, utilities are doing their part to mitigate the risk, and now we urge the Administration to take swift and commonsense actions to help strengthen wildfire preparedness and protect communities.

We have included the consensus priority list from the three electricity trade organizations. We fully support BLM and USFS implementing these priorities and look forward to conducting oversight over both agencies on implementation. We appreciate your consideration and action.

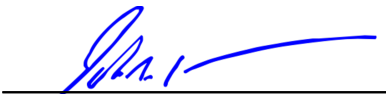
Sincerely,



Tim Sheehy
United States Senator



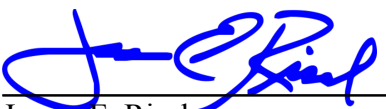
Steve Daines
United States Senator



John Curtis
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



James E. Risch
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



John Hoeven
United States Senator



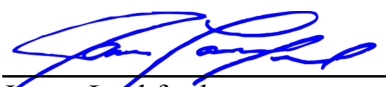
Jerry Moran
United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



Cynthia M. Lummis
United States Senator



James Lankford
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Pete Ricketts
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



Tom Cotton
United States Senator

Enclosures:

Utility Trades Wildfire Mitigation – BLM Recommended Priorities

Utility Trades Wildfire Mitigation – U.S. Forest Service Recommended Priorities