Opinion: Raising alarm about dead trees

By Dianne Feinstein

Next year’s fire season will be far more severe if we fail to remove the growing number of dead trees in our forests. California has already experienced how extreme drought conditions and unprecedented tree mortality heighten the strength and severity of wildfires.



Dianne Feinstein

According to the U.S. Forest Service, the mortality rate for trees in California has grown exponentially since the start of the drought.

· In 2014, the number of dead trees throughout the state was 11 million.

· In 2015, that number grew to 40 million.

· In 2016, the number of dead trees is 102 million.

This number is alarming and serves as an urgent call for swift action. The forest cannot naturally handle so many dead trees, which serve only to increase the fire risk. We need to remove these dead trees, particularly in high-hazard areas that pose a high risk to homes, roads and critical infrastructure.

I have requested from the USDA an additional $38 million to fund 19 projects in high-hazard areas identified by the Forest Service and the governor’s Tree Mortality Task Force. In response to that request, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack allocated only $11 million for 10 projects. I will call on Secretary Vilsack to provide the additional $27 million as soon as possible and if necessary will call on the White House to help provide supplemental funding for these vital projects.

The majority of the 102 million dead trees are located in 10 counties in the southern and central Sierra Nevada region. The Forest Service also identified increasing mortality in the northern part of the state, including Siskiyou, Modoc, Plumas and Lassen counties.

Several years of severe drought, a dramatic rise in bark beetle infestation and warmer temperatures are leading to the increasing rate of tree mortality. In 2015, Gov. Jerry Brown declared a state of emergency due to the unprecedented number of dead and dying trees.

Dianne Feinstein is a Democratic senator from California.

Opinion: Bill Crawford left an impression

By Kathryn Reed

A friend died Friday.

Some might be surprised I would consider Bill Crawford a friend. He was. And I hope he considered me one.

The last time I spoke to him one-on-one was just before the election. His house is on one of my dog walks. Whenever he was out front we'd chat. Ninety-six percent of the time it was about South Lake Tahoe politics, 2 percent about his kids, 1 percent about the books he was reading, another 1 percent about something entirely different.

I didn't always agree with him. But I knew he spoke from the heart and historical knowledge.

On the phone our conversations could at times get heated. We had that ability to agree to disagree. I can't remember a time when I didn't learn something from our talks. Or were they lectures?

He would often leave long messages on my voicemail. Some were telling me I got a story wrong, sometimes he added background to what I had written, other messages were suggestions for future stories.

Our conversations had diminished in recent times. We didn't agree on some things and so he stopped communicating.

At this fall's editorial board meeting for *Lake Tahoe News* someone compared one of the candidates to Bill. I took issue with their statement. I defended Bill. Ornery as he could be, his institutional knowledge was spot on. Bill really can't be compared to others.

Yes, he had his faults. We all do. He wasn't always nice. And most who knew him well knew not to take his call after about 6pm.

No one was ever left second-guessing with Bill. He was a straight shooter. Most people don't like that kind of brutal honesty. I welcomed it even when it stung. I did so because at the end of the day I knew what he said came from his heart even when it was delivered with ice cold harshness.

I admired him for his conviction. He was so against the ice rink being built that he finally convinced city officials to remove his name from the plaque noting he was on the City Council at the time.

There was a time when he was a prolific letter writer to *Lake Tahoe News*. His were the only letters I accepted that were handwritten. I did so because in some ways Bill reminded me of my dad. Neither really could type. They were the same age – only my dad died six years ago. They could both be gruff and kind; they both thought they knew it all; and they both had a hard time ever listening to me. Both also had their mental wits about them until the end, but ultimately their bodies failed them.

I was one of the people Bill would write poetry to. I felt privileged to be in that select group. (At least I want to believe it was a select group.) His poetry was about modern events, sometimes about the environment; many had a literary or historical theme. I so hope I kept a few.

South Lake Tahoe is a better city because of Bill Crawford and I am a better person for having had him in my life.

Opinion: Why hand counting votes makes every vote count

By Lisa Margonelli

Just before the polls closed on Election Night, I met with 12 of my townspeople at our town hall in Maine, raised my right hand, and took an oath to uphold the federal and state constitutions.

We were then assigned to bipartisan pairs (Republican, Democrat, and unaffiliated) to spend the next two-and-a-half hours elbow to elbow, reading aloud each of the 350 ballots cast in our town of 419 registered voters (out of a total of 500 or so residents). With our identical red pens and tallies, along with our highly stylized reading and movements, we became the littlest moving parts in a great procedural democracy that has been part of the stable transfer of power for more than 200 years.

Fewer than 0.6 percent of U.S. ballots votes are counted by hand and those are from the small towns in Maine, New England, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Alaska that manage their own elections and cannot afford to invest in optical scanners.

Today, for federal elections in most of the country, voters use paper ballots that are optically scanned or electronic voting machines. After the 2000 crisis, when hanging chads on punch cards became an issue in the presidential election, Congress passed the 2002 Help America Vote Act providing money to buy new voting equipment for towns all across the country. But by 2020, those machines will be nearing the end of their lives, which the Presidential Commission on Election Administration described as an "impending crisis."

With so much up in the air in American voting, we hand counters offer continuity—and may play a surprising role in the future by ensuring impartiality, transparency, and trust in an increasingly sophisticated and opaque system for casting and counting votes.

Our town hall is straight out of Norman Rockwell: A spare, single story northern New England clapboard building with a floor made of worn unfinished boards. It was originally built about 1850 for the town band, relocated once in the 1880s by 42 teams of oxen, and then moved to its present position in 1949, with residents building the foundation themselves to save money. In the same spirit, we all pitch in to count

votes.

There are three overseers of this voting process: the registrar of voters, the warden, who opens and closes the polls and oversees the tally, and the town clerk, who was once in the merchant marine. In my town, all three positions happen to be held by women, each of whom is attentive to the precise procedures and to their greater purpose—which is not only to count the votes but also to reinforce the integrity of a process much older and larger than ourselves.

At 8pm on the recent Election Night, the warden declared the polls closed and the poll workers gathered up the remaining unused ballots and drew a red line across each one, rendering them useless. Then the old wooden ballot box was opened and the ballots were dumped on a large table in the center of the room. My fellow poll workers and I quickly unfolded the ballots, arranging them in piles of 50.

I found my partner, a neighbor who I know slightly. I am registered “unaffiliated.” I do not know his affiliation, and neither of us asked. Good fences, as they say, make good neighbors.

In Maine, the law requires that bipartisan pairs read the contents of every ballot in a way that is “verbal and concurrent.” In other words, we read in unison from the ballot: “For president: Donald Trump, for state representative, Chellie Pingree,” and so on, through to the uncontested candidates for registrar of probate, sheriff, and county commissioner. On our tally sheets, there were spaces for 23 options, including official candidates, official right-ins, and blanks. As we read, we made marks in red pen on our tally sheets, which are divided into vertical cells that can each hold five marks. Every five ballots, we compared tally sheets to confirm that we had the same count for each candidate. Every 10 ballots we did a verbal and concurrent report on our tally sheets. And so on until we completed all

50 ballots. Then we flipped the ballots over and did the same thing with the six ballot measures on the back of the sheets. By the end of the process we were hoarse.

Tallying is a chore. It works best when both partners use stylized movements and a slightly singsong cadence. I first did it in the 2014 election, and I've ended up with an ungainly routine where I run my left index finger down the ballot to provide a visual anchor while carefully tracking the rows on my tally sheet with my right hand. Still, it's easy to accidentally mark the wrong cell, to forget to mark it, or to get mesmerized in the chicken scratch of the hatch marks. The process is designed to prevent both accidental mistakes and collusion. And of course, everyone is in the open and easily observed.

Going through so many ballots, I get a chance to see—anonymously of course—how my townspeople have voted. I'm always surprised: Few vote a straight ticket. Many pick and chose between parties and initiatives. Some write in candidates. This time a few rejected all of the ballot measures, which included money for schools and bridges, marijuana legalization, background checks for private gun sales, and a move to ranked choice voting, which would allow voters to chose their first and second choice candidates for state offices. (Ranked choice voting passed, which may be a wonderful thing for democracy but it will add significantly to the work of us hand counters.)

I find that participating in the count is a good way to cope with the aggravating stress of election night. Instead of hitting refresh on CNN and Fivethirtyeight.com to see the latest totals, I am speaking every voter's will and turning it into a tally. I may find out that my neighbors feel very differently than I, but in the end, we'll still be neighbors. The town hall will still be standing.

And when I look at individual ballots with their quirky un-

ideological votes I know that they are deliberate—I can't pretend that voter didn't know what he or she was doing—and I wonder about my own inconsistencies. Still, by revealing our differences, the elaborate ritual of the count reaffirms the deep ideals that hold us together. I'm not surprised that our town has voter turnout of 83.5 percent, compared to national rate of 57 percent. (Maine's laws also encourage voting: Voters can register to vote at the polls. No ID is required to vote once you're registered. And people who've committed crimes retain their right to vote.)

Part of the reason the tallying process is so arduous is that it makes it easier to recheck each batch of 50 ballots. Hand counts are frequently contested, and have to be rechecked often. Before we left the town hall we separately totaled our tally sheets, cross-checked that they accounted for all ballots in all cells, and completed a final verbal and concurrent check to see that they agreed. We presented one sheet to the warden and wrapped the other around our ballots, secured both with a rubber band and tucked them in a metal box that was then locked and ready for a recount.

Ever since the first mechanical voting machines were introduced in the 1880s, voters have feared that their votes were getting lost. More recently, voters have feared that electronic voting machines might get hacked, or crash without backup. In response, some people have suggested that all ballots in the country should be hand-counted, with thousands of new precincts containing 1,000 voters each.

Are we due for a return to hand-counts? I talked with David Kimball, professor of political science at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, who has studied how votes get lost, either on the ballot or in the counting process.

"If you want to know exactly how many more votes A got than B, then machines are more reliable," he said. Hand-counting national elections would be expensive and potentially

inaccurate. But hand-counting does offer something to the institution of elections—albeit in small doses. Both scanned paper ballots and electronic voting machines (which Kimball cautions should provide paper receipts) need to be audited regularly. How do we assure everyone that these audits are transparent and fair? Hand counts.

The long life of hand counting, even in the face of modern improvements, suggests the deeper truth of elections, which is that we're not merely counting votes today, but building trust and continuity into a larger system that we hope to carry far into the future.

Lisa Margonelli writes the Small Science column for Zócalo Public Square, where she is the science and humanities editor.

Letter: SUP lawsuit is not the right answer

To the community,

I was saddened to read in the *LTN* that the family of Carlos Diamond Francies plans to sue the Stand Up PaddleBoard Company because their son drowned in Lake Tahoe while trying to rescue his sister and friend who fell out of their kayak.

I did not read that any of them were wearing water safety vests, which is the smart thing to do while recreating in Lake Tahoe. I am particularly surprised at this, because Carlos (age, 30 years old) was a law enforcement officer, who likely had been trained in personal safety. They were all adults, who must understand there are risks with any water activity, skiing, hiking, bike riding, boating, kayaking, SUP, and more.

People are expected to be aware of their surroundings and be proactive in their engagement of same. Folks are responsible to check weather, conditions and all hazards that are not in the control of vendors.

I think it is wrong for this family to place blame on the SUP vendor. They rented them equipment that was in working order; the responsibility of the customer to know their ability(s) and take precautions while engaging in any sport is incumbent on them. Lake Tahoe is a special place for recreation, which is a wilderness environment.

Renting skis does not come with a guarantee you won't get hurt; likewise with renting a bike, or camping equipment, etc. Small business companies work hard at making safe equipment available to visitors and residents who elect to enjoy Lake Tahoe's recreational opportunities – and should not, and can not survive the costs of lawsuits that seek to create new laws, and/or place blame.

This accident was indeed a tragedy, and I cannot begin to understand the grief of the family. However, I think it would be far more productive and honor Carlos' memory, to provide an educational legacy for visitors who engage in outdoor activities in Lake Tahoe – and to do so, without causing the well-run, well-regarded, family-run Stand-Up PaddleBoard Company undue harm. This was an accident, that should not result in further harm.

Judi Allen, South Lake Tahoe

Editorial: Calif. roads worsen as legislators make excuses

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the Nov. 21, 2016, Sacramento Bee.***

Once again, California lawmakers are proving themselves unable to carry out that most basic function – filling potholes.

A special session called by Gov. Jerry Brown to focus on raising billions to fund road maintenance will end a week from Wednesday with a whimper. There are plenty of excuses.

Democrats, who control the Legislature, haven't had the two-thirds majority needed to approve new gasoline taxes. So they can blame Republicans.

Republicans insist the California Department of Transportation is bloated and must become more efficient, and they seek relaxation of labor and environmental regulations. So they can blame Democrats.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Calif. not built to become its own nation

By Joe Mathews

California may have the size and economy of a good-sized

country. But California is not a nation. Which is why it would be self-destructive to seek to become one.

It’s understandable why the election of an evil white supremacist swindler as president has given the idea of California independence such currency. A secession movement has taken hold in the media, made its intentions known on billboards, and begun planning a referendum. Many Californians are renewing objections to how America’s outdated 18th century governing system, from the Electoral College to the U.S. Senate, works against California’s interests.



Joe Mathews

Last week, I was constantly asked about the possibility of California’s independence while running a global forum on democracy. The conference was in Spanish Basque Country, whose people have sought their own nation within the Iberian Peninsula for centuries.

So I answered California independence questions with my own query: Do you think we would be better off trying to go our own way? The responses were sobering: the process of winning independence is always costlier than secessionists think. Basques said they’ve sustained their effort because of a political culture that prizes stubbornness, protecting the nation’s distinctive culture, and a willingness to fight.

Such feistiness is inspiring. But it is not very Californian.

We are an un-nation. The word nation, after all, comes from Latin and old French words for “birth” (naissance). But more

than a quarter of Californians were born in some other country, and millions of us entered the world in some other state. Nations are defined by common descent, history, language or culture, but Californians pride ourselves on the lack of shared history that makes us so diverse.

It is our inclusive un-nationhood, and not just our political preference for Democrats, that makes California the natural opposition to the prospect of a federal government peddling racist and xenophobic nationalism. Which is precisely why the idea of an independent California country—so long discussed—is now newly serious. And newly dangerous.

To be blunt: Do we really want to answer Trumpian nationalism with our own? For our un-nation to pursue its own nationalist project would be nothing less than a betrayal of ourselves, a suicide of the universalist California idea.

It also would be a nasty business. The conflict could last decades, and the costs would mount financially and politically—and in blood.

We'd have to battle Congress and other states to get their support if we wanted to leave peacefully, and we'd certainly have to take more than our share of America's debts with us. And if things got so bad that we chose to leave without permission? Do you really think a country as violent and war-prone as the United States would let its greatest province exit without a fight? (Just ask the Confederate States of America).

Inevitably, the fighting would pit Californian against Californian. Many of us would not want to leave the U.S. Don't forget: While Hillary Clinton won California by 29 points and more than 3.5 million votes, one third of California voters cast ballots for Trump—an uncomfortably large Fifth Column.

Taking on an independence war of choice makes no sense when we already face so many other consequential fights? Climate

change threatens like the big waves that I watched splash over the top of Basque sea walls. The world confronts regional wars and stagnant incomes.

Californians shouldn’t waste another second contemplating independence. We must instead focus on defending our nation and protecting its people, regardless of race, religion or legal status, against whatever horrors the haters in Washington, D.C., might send our way.

But in doing so, we must be careful to avoid escalating the conflict. Ours will have to be a strategy right out of the Cold War. Contest every incursion of the Orange-Haired Empire, while carefully avoiding rhetoric or actions that lead to greater conflict or violence. Build our own alliances and collaborations with states and countries that share our values.

We will have to be especially disciplined about not impugning the motives of those who support the new American regime. Instead, we must relentlessly urge them to change their minds, and assure them that when they realize their nationalist path is mistake, we will welcome them back, like the sanctuary we’ve always been.

So, on this Thanksgiving weekend, let’s avoid rancor at the family table. Instead let’s give thanks for the United States, and for the fact that we’re its biggest, most powerful state, with plenty of weight to throw against Washington.

America, for better and for worse, is California’s nation. Why would we ever surrender it?

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

Opinion: Tahoe needs to focus on transportation

By Joanne Marchetta

By now, most people have heard: Federal courts upheld the 2012 Regional Plan for Lake Tahoe, affirming the blueprint that maintains development caps and strengthens environmental protections while encouraging community revitalization, redevelopment, and updated infrastructure.

Capturing the most attention these days is the traffic in our small communities from millions of people who drive up to enjoy our lake. And the transportation system is where TRPA is giving more focused attention to benefit Tahoe's environment, economy, and quality of life.



Joann
Marchetta

TRPA is working on its transportation plan, Linking Tahoe, as an essential foundation to maintain Tahoe's quality of life. We have reached out to residents, visitors, and government partners, and heard from all of them that Tahoe's transportation system needs major improvements.

Recent project approvals just outside the Tahoe basin have

heightened public scrutiny of the region's transportation shortcomings. During peak times, roadways are clogged, parking areas are full, there's a shortage of places to charge electric vehicles, and transit service is limited.

And that's not the whole of it. Population growth in Reno, Sacramento, and the Bay Area means tens of thousands more people will be traveling to our region to enjoy the lake and mountains on any given day in years to come. Finding ways to better handle this visitation is a reality that needs to be addressed.

As these metro areas grow, we cannot simply build a wall to keep people out or build bigger roads to accommodate more traffic. We need a mix of solutions: targeted road and parking projects, transit services and transit priority lanes, bike and pedestrian routes, better technology, and creative strategies to manage traffic volumes. We need to make it easier and more rewarding for people to get to, from, and around the Tahoe basin without having to get in a car at all.

The biggest question is how to pay for these improvements. November election results on transportation funding measures give us a better sense of what the public is willing to support.

All around California, voters both supported and rejected sales tax and bond measures to pay for transportation projects. In the Bay Area, voters overwhelmingly passed ballot measures to raise billions of dollars in funding for roads, trails, affordable housing, and transit where they live and work.

Nationwide, voters passed 34 of 49 local and statewide ballot measures for transit funding, measures that will raise nearly $200 billion for their home districts. This was the largest number of ballot measures and the largest collective amounts for transit funding in an election in the country's history,

according to the American Public Transportation Association.

More counties are working on their own sales taxes and other measures to pay for transportation. That's because state and federal fuel taxes are not raising enough money to pay for the transportation repairs and upgrades communities want and need.

With limited exceptions, funding successes in our visitors' metropolitan home districts were not matched here at Lake Tahoe this election. Yet we know there is widespread support for building bike and pedestrian trails that serve our communities by linking neighborhoods and tourist lodging to schools, jobs, shopping centers, and recreation areas. Tahoe has made tremendous progress on this front, building 150 miles of bike and pedestrian routes over the last 20 years. But the bigger game changers for the transportation system will require much more. We know many residents and visitors want more transit routes and more frequent service. When providers offer free and more frequent service, people use it.

Transportation projects are one of the best ways to achieve our many goals for Tahoe. They can enhance recreation opportunities, revitalize communities, reduce stormwater pollution, and get people out of cars to reduce emissions. Going forward, the hard question is how we'll pay for these transportation improvements.

Recent changes to federal transportation laws recognize the heavy visitation to Lake Tahoe and we expect to see more federal funding. This new funding will help, but it will not be enough. We must have a broad discussion on this important question, involving all our partners and communities in the Tahoe Basin. TRPA is reaching out to partners in neighboring metro areas to involve them as well.

What transportation costs should be paid by residents, businesses, second-home owners, or the millions of people who drive up to Lake Tahoe? What share should be paid by gasoline

taxes, sales taxes, or other innovative funding measures? The answers to these questions are not yet clear at Tahoe. But the discussion is necessary and the need is urgent. As with all success at Tahoe, like that of the 2012 Regional Plan, by working together and bringing forward our best ideas, we can find solutions. And our communities and our lake will be all the healthier for it.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Editorial: The digital virus called fake news

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the Nov. 19, 2016, New York Times.***

This year, the adage that "falsehood flies and the truth comes limping after it" doesn't begin to describe the problem. That idea assumes that the truth eventually catches up. There's not much evidence of this happening for the millions of people taken in by the fake news stories — like Pope Francis endorsing Donald Trump or Mr. Trump pulling ahead of Hillary Clinton in the popular vote — that have spread on social media sites.

Most of the fake news stories are produced by scammers looking to make a quick buck. The vast majority of them take far-right positions. But a big part of the responsibility for this scourge rests with internet companies like Facebook and Google, which have made it possible for fake news to be shared nearly instantly with millions of users and have been slow to block it from their sites.

Read the whole story

Letter: Kirkwood team shines at Bread & Broth

To the community,

An “awesome group” from Kirkwood Mountain Resort’s food and beverage department was on hand on Nov. 7 to donate their time at Kirkwood’s Adopt A Day sponsorship.

“We want to start off by thanking Bread & Broth for giving us the opportunity of giving back to the community,” wrote Jamie Welch on behalf of her fellow sponsor crew members. “While some of us are from out of town, we appreciate the hospitality Lake Tahoe’s community members have shown us. This has been a heartwarming experience and we hope to help again in the future.”

Welch is the general manager of the Sun Rise Grill and her fellow crew members were Justin Husley, general manager at Timber Creek; Emily Hancock, assistant general manager at Timber Creek; and Brad Lodge, food and beverage administrator. With all of their experience in food service, these folks were a very welcome addition to the volunteers who make the evening meal event happen. They were a fun, enthusiastic and energetic group that just added to the general feel good atmosphere at the dinner.

With the funds provided by Kirkwood, the dinner guests were served baked chicken and sauce over noodles, roasted veggies, salad and a great assortment of pies and cakes donated by local stores. Bread & Broth would like to give a special thank

you to Kirkwood Mountain Resort and their four sponsor crew members for making this nutritional and filling meal possible for the community's hungry, at risk population.

For more B&B information, go online www.breadandbroth.org.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Letter: Governors call for end to 'fire borrowing'

Publisher's note: ***The following letter was sent Nov. 15, 2016, to Rep. Paul Ryan, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Sen. Mtich McConnell and Sen. Harry Reid from governors in the West.***

Dear Sen. McConnell and Reid, and Rep. Ryan and Pelosi:

Western governors wish to once again express support for congressional efforts to end the so-called "fire borrowing" practice employed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Department of the Interior to fund wildfire suppression activities. We strongly urge Congress to resolve this enduring issue as among its highest priorities when it returns to complete the business of the 114th Congress.

Responsible management of federal lands is a significant concern for western governors. Western states include more than 75 percent of our national forest and grassland system. These public lands serve as critical economic drivers, and they provide numerous conservation benefits, water supply, and

recreational opportunities for Western communities and the nation.

States have a particular interest in improving the active management of federal forest lands. State governments possess trust authority over water, wildlife and forest resources, along with primary authority and expertise to protect community health and safety. Poorly managed forests can create significant problems for the landscapes and communities of the West, including: negative effects on air quality and public health, degradation of rivers and streams and associated water quality, including drinking water; reduced forage for domestic livestock; impaired habitats for wildlife and fish; and the loss of forest products and associated jobs. This also has impacts on local fire protection districts, which often bear the brunt of costs associated with first response to wildfire, and state budgets that are also burdened by the costs of wildfire response.

Our views are summarized in Western Governors' Association (WGA) Policy Resolution 2016-01, National Forest and Rangeland Management. This issue is also the subject of the current WGA Chairman's Initiative. The initiative is examining many of the management practices of federal, state and private landowners to assess their effectiveness and evaluate the need for regulatory and/or statutory changes to improve them.

Restoration and wildfire mitigation work in western forests has been negatively affected by fire borrowing for years. We recognize that Congress is responsible for maintaining process controls to ensure a responsible use of taxpayer dollars. Further, western governors understand the budgetary challenges posed by wildfire funding and the need for agency accountability.

We also assert that changes are needed, as the current funding situation has allowed severe wildfires to burn through crippling amounts of the very funds that should instead be

used to prevent and reduce wildfire impacts, costs, and safety risks to firefighters and the public. This represents an unacceptable set of outcomes for taxpayers and at-risk communities, and does not reflect responsible stewardship of federal land.

Western governors are on record as strong supporters of ending the practice of fire borrowing. Congress should pass legislation to fund federal wildfires off-budget (as many states already do), and ensure the USFS budget for forest restoration, recreation, road maintenance, hazardous fuels reduction, funding to states to treat Wildland-Urban Interface areas, insect and disease response activities, and wildlife/watershed protection is fully restored. We are hopeful that you find an avenue to accomplish this result before the adjournment of the 114th Congress.

Sincerely,

Steve Bullock, governor of Montana

Dennis Daugaard, governor of South Dakota