

United States Senate

October 4, 2021

Ms. Leanne Marten
Regional, Supervisor
Region1, U.S. Forest Service
P.O. Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59807

Dear Ms. Marten,

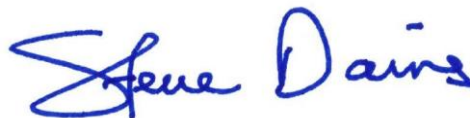
Thank you for your leadership throughout another catastrophic wildfire season in the West. As Montana's wildfire season and this fiscal year come to a close, I write to you regarding Region One's fiscal year 2021 timber sale volume accomplishments which fall far below the scheduled sale volume. I respectfully urge you to account for this missed volume during fiscal year 2022 in addition to the scheduled program of work. I stand ready to partner with you to this end.

National calls for a paradigm shift in forest management ring hollow as Montanans experience a 30% shortfall in timber volume this year. It should be noted as well, that the scheduled timber volume target was already 100 million board feet below allowable sale quantity within Montana. Rural communities are still reeling for the economic consequences of the pandemic and labor shortages. This makes it even more critical that the Region make up the shortfall of volume during this next fiscal year.

I understand the backlog of consultation due in large to the precedent set by the *Cottonwood* decision has contributed to the shortfall in volume and that the board feet encumbered in litigation now exceeds sale volume in Region 1. While these dynamics are outside of your direct control, making up the volume lost in fiscal year 2022 would provide significant relief to Montanans and ensure needed hazardous fuel reduction projects move forward before it is too late. Furthermore, I stand ready to partner with you to address these litigation and regulatory challenges that plague the agency and prevent you and your staff from doing the work needed to manage our forests for current and future generations.

Thank you for your consideration. I stand ready to assist you in bringing this paradigm shift in forest management to the state of Montana.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator