



TRINITY COUNTY

Board of Supervisors

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January 17, 2018

Secretary Sonny Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Subject: Hiring authorization policy for replacement staff

For over 5 years the Trinity County Collaborative has worked closely with the U.S. Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service to resolve forest management issues, reduce fire risk, promote recreational opportunities on federal lands, and assist private agricultural landowners - with all concurrent economic benefits. We greatly appreciate USDA's support of the collaborative process which brings together diverse viewpoints and numerous partners. Our accomplishments include post-fire salvage logging, award of Joint Chief's funding for fuel reduction, over \$5 million in grants for boat ramp improvements, and \$1 million in matching funds from the state for forest resiliency projects.

However, future progress is severely constrained by the difficulty in replacing key staff. In the past year, we have seen the retirement or departure of a District Ranger, District Conservationist, Forest Supervisor, contracting staff, and specialists needed to complete NEPA documents for on-going projects. There are long delays in filling these positions due to the need for approval from your office. As a result, your agency is struggling to be effective and to sustain the momentum of our collaborative efforts.

We urge you to return authorization for hiring to the regional (USFS) and state (NRCS) level. We look forward to working with an adequately staffed and reinvigorated USDA.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

With Best Regards,

Keith Groves, Chairman
Trinity County Board of Supervisors

cc: Chief Tony Tooke; USFS Regional Office Randy Moore; Acting Shasta-Trinity Forest Supervisor;
Congressman Jared Huffman