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Route To:

Subject: Creating a Work Environment Free of Sexual Harassment

To: All Region 5 Employees

“Creating a culture of inclusion that awakens and strengthens all people’s connection to the land” is more than just an intention statement, it is a steadfast commitment each of us needs to make and embrace as a professional core value. We must strive to create a culture based on respect and dignity that is free of harassment, discrimination, or any form of mistreatment.

Your health and welfare are of utmost importance to me and this Agency. As such, eliminating inappropriate behavior is a priority. I want to emphasize our Chief’s own words:

I expect this stance from every leader, manager, supervisor and employee. If you see something – say something. Moreover, this stance goes beyond sexual misconduct; it includes horseplay, inappropriate touching, racial jokes, bullying, discrimination, harassment and any behavior that jeopardizes the safe and respectful environment each employee and citizen deserves. Any display of this kind of behavior is unacceptable.

Enclosed with this letter, you will find the 2015 Region 5 Annual Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy and the “What You Should Know” handout. Region 5 is in the process of updating the current standard operating procedure for handling sexual harassment allegations. The final standard operating procedure will be distributed in the near future along with appropriate training and support. In the meantime, I want to ensure that you are following our existing policy. As further explained in the enclosures, please be aware that:

- (1) Region 5 has zero tolerance for sexual harassment;
- (2) There are numerous individuals to whom you can report allegations of sexual misconduct; and
- (3) Reporting is confidential.

Your leaders in Region 5 are focused on creating a work environment that is safe, respectful and rewarding for all who work here. For us to accomplish our mission of achieving healthy, resilient and productive forests and rangelands for present and future generations, we need a workforce that is also healthy, resilient and productive, along with a workplace in which we are all treated equally, with courtesy and respect.

Over the last four years, leadership at all levels has focused its energy and resources on developing a better understanding of workplace issues with the goal of improving the work

environment in the Region. We have evaluated the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey results and are following up with a Region 5 workplace climate assessment to obtain more feedback from employees. The assessment is scheduled to begin in March 2015 and will focus on specific issues related to harassment and workplace civility. We will provide more details about the assessment as the date approaches.

We have also instituted a number of progressive measures designed to improve, enhance, and transform the work environment in our Region. Many of our leaders have attended a Civil Treatment for Managers training and we plan to roll out additional opportunities for employees in the coming year. New employees are now welcomed to the Agency with our regional Employee Orientation. Line officer skills have been recently refreshed in a three-day Civil Rights and Employee Relations training. In the coming months, a number of employees will participate in the Primary Leader Academy and engage in critical incident management “You Will Not Stand Alone” sessions. All employees will learn the skills necessary to prevent sexual harassment at the Prevention of Sexual Harassment training and reconnect with our core values in our regional Safety Engagements. These are just a few examples of our commitment to our most important resource – you.

While I’m proud of the work we’ve done and the results we’ve achieved thus far, we must continue to be mindful of our objective. As our Chief said, “This will require everyone, at every level of the Agency, to do your part.” Only by treating each other with courtesy, respect, and dignity can we achieve our full potential as an organization. We are strengthened by our diversity and are empowered in our commitment to creating an inclusive work environment. I ask each and every one of you to join me on this journey of transforming Region 5, and our agency, into a model workplace where employees feel safe, respected and valued.

/Randy Moore/

RANDY MOORE
Regional Forester Pacific Southwest Region

cc: Barry McDonald