



STATE OF NEW YORK  
**EXECUTIVE CHAMBER**  
ALBANY 12224

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
GOVERNOR

April 8, 2014

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

I request the Finger Lakes National Forest (FLNF) be designated as a Section 8204 "Insect and Disease Treatment Area," under the 2014 Farm Bill. This designation will give New York State access to funding for combating the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) infestation in the FLNF, as identified in the 2012 U.S. Forest Service Northeastern Annual Report.

The Finger Lakes National Forest is New York State's only National Forest and is home to 3,000 acres of at-risk hemlock trees. The park's hemlock trees prevent erosion and provide food and shelter for wildlife and shade for fish during the summer months, which make the trees indispensable to the park's ecosystem.

Funding from this designation will protect the FLNF from further HWA devastation and other rapidly spreading infestations in the surrounding areas. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and other invasive species are serious threats to New York's \$5.4 billion agriculture industry, \$3.2 billion forest products industry, and the State's \$9.2 billion wildlife recreation industry.

I urge your expeditious designation of FLNF as an "Insect and Disease Treatment Area."

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to our partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew M. Cuomo".

ANDREW M. CUOMO

Cc: Thomas Tidwell, Chief for the U.S. Forest Service  
Tony Tooke, Associate Deputy Chief for the National Forest System  
Jennifer Yezak, Director of External and Intergovernmental Affairs for USDA  
Senator Charles Schumer  
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand  
Congressman Tom Reed

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