



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

November 26, 2021

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service estimate of anticipated wildland fire suppression costs for fiscal year (FY) 2022, as required in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-88), as a part of the Title V – FLAME Act of 2009.

This estimate is pursuant to Section 502(h)(3) of the Act, which requires the Secretary of Agriculture to submit an estimate of the anticipated wildfire suppression costs by the first week of October. This forecast predicts, with 90 percent confidence, that fire suppression costs will be between \$371 million and \$2.518 billion in fiscal year 2021, with a median forecast of \$1.439 billion.

These estimates are based on the best climate and weather data currently available, as well as the most effective analytical tools and models used to estimate fire suppression costs. The accuracy of the forecast increases over the course of the fiscal year as data inputs improve with the incorporation of year-to-date weather data and the most recent climate modeling outputs.

In compliance with Public Law 111-88, after 45 days, this report will be posted to the Forest Service website at: <https://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/budget-performance>.

If you have any questions, please have a member of your staff contact the Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095. A similar letter is being sent to Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Thomas J. Vilsack", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

Enclosure