



The Mountain Pact

September 17, 2014

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker of the
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-3508

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-2803

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0512

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-1702

Dear Speaker Boehner, Senator Reid, Senator McConnell, and Representative Pelosi:

I am writing to introduce you to the Mountain Pact and present a number of letters from mountain communities in support of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992].

The Mountain Pact is a coalition of high-profile mountain towns in the American West working together to build economic and environmental resilience through a shared voice on federal policy. The Mountain Pact represents approximately 250,000 permanent residents and forty million visitors each year. Our communities are experiencing both economic loss and environmental degradation as a result of climate change; increases in catastrophic wildfire, reduced snowpack, and the spread of beetle kill forests are among the effects of climate change compromising our communities.

The Mountain Pact coalition towns and cities aspire to build resilient communities with strong economies, healthy landscapes, and world-renowned tourist destinations that nurture positive relationships with the environment. We value economic prosperity as integral to meaningful environmental sustainability – particularly through tourism. Tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment and economy. It contributes to environmental protection and conservation, raises awareness of environmental values, and can serve as a tool to finance protection of natural areas and increase their economic importance. A large part of this recreation occurs on the federal lands that surround our communities.

In our efforts to build resilient communities, supportive federal policies and resources are essential. The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act is one such policy as it would ensure funding for both wildfire first responders and for land managers who care for public forests and streams. This Act would not only provide emergency relief funding to protect our communities from more frequent and severe wildfires, but it would also provide urgently needed resources for wildfire prevention, recreation infrastructure, and conservation initiatives. Attached you will find the letters several Mountain Pact coalition members presented to their Congressional representatives urging their support for this proposal.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Diana Madson
Executive Director
The Mountain Pact

Mountain Communities for Environmental & Economic Resilience

 Diana Madson, Founder & Executive Director  diana@themountainpact.org  916.288.7580



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Contact
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Fax: 775-588-4527
www.trpa.org



August 27, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2803

Dear Senator Reid,

The purpose of this letter is to urge your support of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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An incredibly broad spectrum of 160 conservation, timber, tribal, recreation, sportsmen, ranching, and employer groups support the bipartisan Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. As a mountain community in the West facing high wildfire risk, we also respectfully urge you to support the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, S. 1875 and H.R. 3992.

Sincerely,



Joanne S. Marchetta
Executive Director



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August 27, 2014

The Honorable Dean Heller
United States Senate
324 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2806

Dear Senator Heller,

The purpose of this letter is to urge your support of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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Joanne S. Marchetta
Executive Director



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REGIONAL
PLANNING
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August 27, 2014

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0504

Dear Senator Feinstein,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your support as a cosponsor of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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August 27, 2014

The Honorable Mark Amodei
United States House of Representatives
222 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2802

Dear Congressman Amodei,

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August 27, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0505

Dear Senator Boxer,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your support as a cosponsor of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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August 27, 2014

The Honorable Tom McClintock
United States House of Representatives
434 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0504

Dear Congressman McClintock,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your support as a cosponsor of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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Sincerely,



Joanne S. Marchetta
Executive Director

1212 S.W. Simpson Ave.
Bend, Oregon 97702
(541) 322-6300
FAX (541) 322-6320



LARRY HUHN
Fire Chief

August 20, 2014

The Honorable Greg Walden
United States Congress
2182 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Walden,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your support as a cosponsor of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

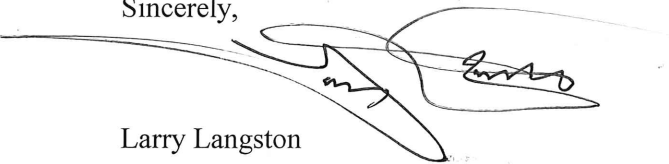
The City of Bend and the Deschutes County Rural Fire Protection District #2 have experienced two devastating fires in the past 24 years: the Awbrey Hall Fire and the Skeleton Fire, and we have benefitted from many sources of assistance, notably Federal resources. We feel strongly that the passage of the WDFFA will ensure the continuity of that assistance and the high level of cooperation that we enjoy with the Deschutes National Forest.

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Sincerely,

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Larry Langston
Fire Chief, City of Bend

1212 S.W. Simpson Ave.
Bend, Oregon 97702
(541) 322-6300
FAX (541) 322-6320



LARRY HUHN
Fire Chief

August 20, 2014

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate 221
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Dear Senator Wyden,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your sponsorship of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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Larry Langston
Fire Chief, City of Bend

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LARRY HUHN
Fire Chief

August 20, 2014

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Dear Senator Merkley,

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Sincerely,

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Larry Langston
Fire Chief, City of Bend



August 28, 2014

The Honorable Michael Bennett
United States Senate
458 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Mayor
Sweetie Marbury

Mayor Pro Tem
Dean Brookie

Councilors
Christina Rinderle
Keith Brant
Dick White

City Manager
Ron LeBlanc

Dear Senator Bennett,

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August 28, 2014

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Respectfully,

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Sweetie Marbury
Mayor



August 28, 2014

The Honorable Mark Udall
United States Senate
Hart Office Building Suite SH-730
Washington, DC 20510

Mayor
Sweetie Marbury

Mayor Pro Tem
Dean Brookie

Councilors
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August 28, 2014

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The Honorable Scott Tipton
United States Congress
218 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20510

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Mayor

August 27, 2014

The Honorable Michael Bennett
United States Senate
458 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510



Dear Senator Bennett,

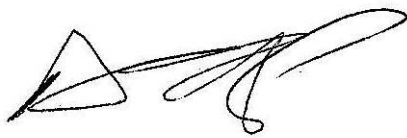
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Sincerely,



Ashley Perl

City of Aspen Canary Initiative

August 27, 2014

The Honorable Scott Tipton
United States Congress
218 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20510



THE CITY OF ASPEN

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City of Aspen Canary Initiative

August 27, 2014

The Honorable Mark Udall
United States Senate
Hart Office Building Suite SH-730
Washington, DC 20510



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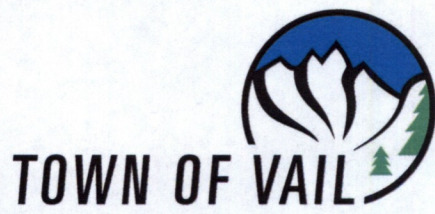
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Sincerely,



City of Aspen Canary Initiative



75 South Frontage Road West
Vail, Colorado 81657
vailgov.com

Town Council
970.479.2106
970.479.2157 fax

August 27, 2014

The Honorable Jared Polis
United States House of Representatives
1433 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0602

Dear Congressman Polis,

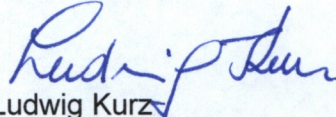
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Ludwig Kurz
Mayor Pro Tem , Town of Vail



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August 27, 2014

The Honorable Mark Udall
United States Senate
Hart Office Building Suite SH-730
Washington, DC 20510

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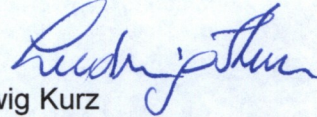
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August 27, 2014

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United States Senate
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Washington, DC 20510

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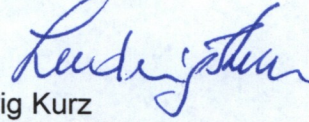
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Mayor Pro Tem , Town of Vail



August 14, 2014

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
United States Congress
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Office of Sustainability

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Sincerely,

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August 14, 2014

The Honorable Mike Lee
United States Senate
316 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Office of Sustainability

Dear Senator Lee,

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August 14, 2014

The Honorable Rob Bishop
United States Congress
123 Cannon Building
Washington, DC 20515

Office of Sustainability

Dear Congressman Bishop,

The purpose of this letter is to urge your support of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act seeks to improve the way the USDA Forest Service and the Department of Interior funds emergency fire suppression efforts in response to the explosive growth of wildfires experienced by the West in recent years. The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act ensures funding for both wildfire first responders and for land managers who care for public forests and streams. For the first time it would create an emergency funding process for fire response, mirroring the funding mechanism FEMA depends on to respond to other natural disasters. When the USFS and DOI wildfire suppression expenses exceed 70% of the 10-year average, W DFA would provide funding from disaster funding sources (similar to FEMA). This would likely eliminate the need to transfer funds from non-fire suppression accounts when fire suppression funds run out.

The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act offers a common-sense approach to managing emergency wildfire suppression costs without impacting other priority programs within the responsible agencies. Critical landscape management activities are often postponed or canceled as a result of fire transfers from non-suppression agency accounts once annual wildfire suppression funds are depleted. Currently, USFS and DOI are the only agencies required to pay for natural disaster response out of their annual discretionary budgets. Since 2000, these agencies have run out of money to fight emergency fires eight times and in the last two years, more than \$1 billion was 'borrowed' from Forest Service programs to cover fire suppression shortfalls. This structure would significantly reduce the 'borrowing' from other USDA Forest Service and Department of Interior programs, which disrupts a wide variety of projects, many of which help reduce the risk and cost of future wildfires.

An incredibly broad spectrum of 160 conservation, timber, tribal, recreation, sportsmen, ranching, and employer groups support the bipartisan Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. As a mountain community in the West facing high wildfire risk, we also respectfully urge you to support the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, S. 1875 and H.R. 3992.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "A.W.", written over a horizontal line.



City of Ketchum

City Hall

Mayor
Nina Jonas

City Council
President
Michael David
Anne Corrock
Baird Gourlay
Jim Slanetz

City Administrator
Suzanne Frick

Assistant to the
City Administrator
Lisa Enourato

September 17, 2014

The Honorable Mike Crapo
United States Senate
239 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1205

Dear Senator Crapo,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your support as a cosponsor of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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An incredibly broad spectrum of 160 conservation, timber, tribal, recreation, sportsmen, ranching, and employer groups support the bipartisan Wildfire Disaster Funding Act.

As a mountain community in the West facing high wildfire risk, we are grateful for your support of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, S. 1875 and H.R. 3992.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nina Mayor Jonas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nina Jonas,
Mayor, City of Ketchum



City of Ketchum

City Hall

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City Administrator
Suzanne Frick

**Assistant to the
City Administrator**
Lisa Enourato

September 17, 2014

The Honorable James E. Risch
United States Senate
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1206

Dear Senator Risch,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your support as a cosponsor of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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Nina Jonas,
Mayor, City of Ketchum



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City Administrator
Suzanne Frick

**Assistant to the
City Administrator**
Lisa Enourato

September 17, 2014

The Honorable Mike Simpson
United States House of Representatives
2312 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-1202

Dear Congressman Simpson,

The purpose of this letter is to commend your support as a cosponsor of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act [S. 1875 and H.R. 3992]. It is not news to anyone living in the Western United States that wildfires have become a major threat to our communities. Many factors contribute to the increase in wildfire frequency and severity, including build-up of hazardous fuels, increasing populations in the wildland urban interface, and ongoing drought. This past decade fires have burned 50% more land than in the previous four decades; the fire season has expanded by two months; and the average size of fires has increased by a factor of five since the 1970s. The frequency and severity of these wildfires has and will have a disastrous effect on local economies, natural resources, and our communities and needs to be matched by significant levels of funding to protect people, water, and wildlife.

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Nina Jonas,
Mayor, City of Ketchum