

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 30, 2012

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
The Capitol, H-307
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Norm Dicks
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Chairman
House Agriculture Subcommittee
2372 Rayburn
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr
Ranking Member
House Agriculture Subcommittee
1126 Longworth
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members,

As you consider emergency supplemental funding for communities recovering from natural disasters such as Hurricane Sandy, we urge you to include \$19.8 million for Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program funding to ensure the safety of Colorado communities recovering from destructive wildfires this past summer.

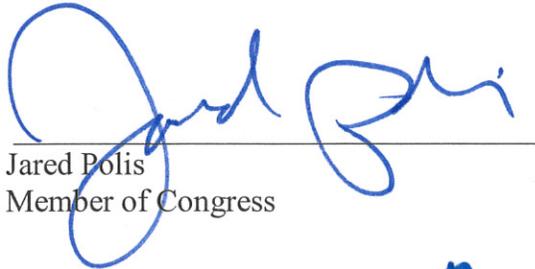
This summer, the President declared a major disaster in accordance with section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act for the High Park and Waldo Canyon wildfires. Communities dealing with the aftermath of these fires are confronting challenges in stabilizing burned slopes and protecting drinking water infrastructure for their citizens. For example, the watershed supplying municipal water to Fort Collins is susceptible to water quality degradation, flooding, and road washouts—hazards that represent a substantial risk to life and property.

The EWP program, administered by the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service, is essential to safeguarding the drinking water infrastructure of affected communities. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that the Colorado needs approximately \$19.8 million in EWP funding to help communities repair watershed damage caused by the Waldo Canyon and High Park fires. It is our understanding that the Budget Control Act (BCA) provided for exemptions to the discretionary spending limits for disaster funding.¹ As such, disaster relief funding for the EWP does not add to the deficit nor does it necessitate an offset.

¹ Pub. L. No. 112-55, 125 Stat. 240, 244-45 (2011).

We respectfully request that the House Appropriations Committee move to consider emergency supplemental appropriations measure to help protect and repair watersheds of Colorado communities dealing with the aftermath of the High Park and Waldo Canyon fires.

Sincerely,



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



Cory Gardner
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress