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Agriculture

Forest  
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The Honorable Norm Dicks  
Ranking Member  
House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20215

Dear Ranking Member Dicks:

This letter and the enclosed appendices are in response to the Surveys and Investigations Staff Report to your committee on the Forest Legacy Program released June 14, 2002. The Forest Service would like to voice our appreciation to the Committee for an open investigation process and a communicative Surveys and Investigations Staff during that process. We believe that the report will have a beneficial effect on the Forest Legacy Program.

The Forest Service response to the report is enclosed. The Forest Legacy Program is an important conservation program that has worked well in accordance with the authorizing legislation and Implementation Guidelines to ensure that environmentally important forests threatened by the conversion to non-forest uses are effectively protected and managed. We concur that the strength and success of the program to date, as indicated in the report, are based on its partnership and cooperative implementation with States and other partners. We also acknowledge that improvements can be made in the areas of program structure and funding, program oversight and financial management. Enclosure A is a matrix of issues raised in the report and a list of actions currently underway or planned to address those issues and Enclosure B shows updates of projects identified in the report.

We believe this response and attached material demonstrate our commitment to continuing improvement of this program. This is our aim and our goal.

Sincerely,

/s/ Sally Collins  
DALE N. BOSWORTH  
Chief

