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Trump Era U.S. Forest Service Decisions: Environmental Organizations Ask U.S. Department of Agriculture to Immediately Review

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Thirty-nine environmental organizations transmitted a January 28th letter to Kevin Shea, Acting Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA"), requesting that it immediately:

... implement a targeted, 60-day elevation of Forest Service decisions for the purposes of reviewing the questions of fact, law, and policy in light of the new administration's priorities and policies relevant to the responsible stewardship of the National Forest System's lands, waters, and resources for current and future generations.

The organizations making the request include:

- Alaska Rainforest Defenders
- Bark
- Cascade Forest Conservancy
- Cascadia Wildlands
- Center for Biological Diversity
- Chattooga Conservancy
- Cherokee Forest Voices
- The Clinch Coalition
- Conservation Colorado
- Conservation Northwest
- Environment America
- Forest Keeper
- Friends of the Bitterroot
- Friends of the Clearwater
- Georgia ForestWatch
- Kentucky Heartwood
- Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center
- The Lands Council
- MountainTrue
- Natural Resources Law
- New Mexico Wild
- Oregon Wild

- Potomac Riverkeeper Network
- San Juan Citizens Alliance
- San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council
- Sequoia ForestKeeper
- Sierra Club
- Soda Mountains Wilderness Council
- Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
- Southern Environmental Law Center
- South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership
- Virginia Wilderness Committee
- Western Environmental Law Center
- Wild Alabama
- WildEarth Guardians
- Wilderness Workshop
- Wild Heritage
- Yaak Valley Forest Council
- Yellowstone to Uintas Connection - (collectively “Environmental Organizations”)

The Environmental Organizations argue that such an action would be similar to one adopted by the United States Department of Interior through Interior Secretarial Order 3395. They state as a rationale for such an elevation the potential for Forest Service officials at the ranger district, forest, and regional forester levels to:

. . . finalize decisions based in part on the prior administration’s emphasis on increased timber harvest and unrestrained fossil fuel development, on circumventing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) public involvement opportunities, and attempts to undermine protection of inventoried roadless areas (IRAs). . .

The January 28th letter also lists a number of projects that the Environmental Organizations argue conflict with the new Administration’s policies. Such projects are stated to be potentially approvable within the next 60 days and, if so, are stated to represent irreversible and irretrievable commitments of agency resources.

A copy of the January 28th letter which includes the various listed projects can be downloaded [here](#).