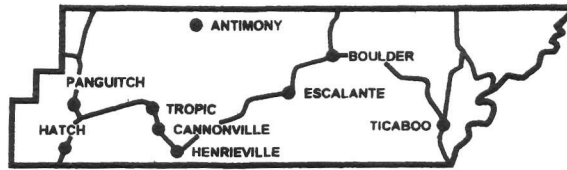


GARFIELD COUNTY



County Commissioners
Clare M. Ramsay
H. Dell LeFevre
Leland F. Pollock
Camille A. Moore,
Auditor/Clerk

55 South Main Street, P.O. Box 77 • Panguitch, Utah 84759
Phone (435) 676-8826 • Fax (435) 676-8239

Joe Thompson, Assessor
Jeannie Henrie, Treasurer
James D. Perkins, Sheriff
Barry L. Huntington, Attorney
A. Les Barker, Recorder
Russell Bulkley,
Justice Court Judge

September 3, 2013

Congressman Doc Hastings
Chairman, Nat. Res. Committee
1203 Longworth House Office Bld.
Washington DC 20515

Congressman Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member, Nat. Res. Committee
2134 Rayburn House Office Bld.
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hastings and Ranking Member DeFazio:

This letter is written in support of HR 1526. 93% of the land in Garfield County, Utah is under federal ownership, and 40% of the Dixie National Forest is within our County boundary. The Forest Service's failure to provide sustainable management has resulted in significant economic and social impacts to our county. Recently, one local mayor sadly stated the best job in his town is in North Dakota. The loss of family sustaining wages and an increasing number of absentee fathers have created hardships on the family social structure in our area. These conditions are tied directly to the lack of proper forest management and the loss of natural resource related jobs.

Abandonment of sustainable resource extraction from Forest lands can be attributed to a variety of factors, but three rise above the rest: 1) Funding to prepare timber sales, vegetation treatments and stewardship projects; 2) cumbersome environmental analysis and associated review time; and 3) litigation that shuts down viable and environmentally sound harvesting projects. Passage of HR 1526 will alleviate these problems while promoting healthy communities and restoring the nation's forest to a healthier condition.

In the past few decades our forests have become overgrown and ripe for catastrophic wildfire. Those areas that have not been burned have been ravaged by bug infestations. The decline of the nation's forests is a direct result of lack of proper forest management. The forests did not decline overnight and cannot be restored in an instant. We, therefore, support the extension of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act as bridge funding until active forest management can be fully implemented. However, the long term solution is to manage National Forests in a manner that sustains local communities and promotes forest health through environmentally sound harvesting practices.

We strongly support H.R. 1526 and will be exercising every effort to encourage its passage when it reaches the House floor.

Commission Chair

Commissioner

Commissioner