

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0309

June 14, 2021

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Secretary Haaland:

I am writing to encourage you to take swift action to deploy Burn Area Emergency Response teams to the Telegraph Fire and Mescal Fire in Arizona as soon as practicable. I also request that emergency watershed protection and rangeland recovery programs be deployed via the Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

To date, both fires have burned more than 170,000 acres of Forest Service and BLM land, plus a substantial amount of reservation land that belongs to the San Carlos Apache Tribe. More than 1,200 fire personnel were deployed to both fires and heavy air tankers were part of the response. Governor Doug Ducey and the San Carlos Apache Tribe have issued state of emergency declarations.

I have toured both fires, including by air, and met with incident command staff, local-elected officials, tribal leaders, and emergency responders. Based on the information I've received, it is clear that summer monsoon rains expected later this month could increase the risk of post-fire flood events on the reservation due to the loss of vegetation in the fire. Additionally, the fires damaged tribal livestock operations and consumed significant cultural resources, including medicinal plants and Emory Oak trees.

This is an urgent matter and I thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" and the last name "Kelly" clearly distinguishable.

Mark Kelly  
United States Senator