

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 15, 2021

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

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

With passage of the continuing resolution (CR), we write to urge the Department of Agriculture to release Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP) funds as quickly and at the highest level possible. The recently-passed CR included \$275 million for EWPP.


As an important federal policy that helps local communities recover after natural disasters, EWPP provides critical assistance to communities to relieve imminent threats to life and property caused by fires, floods, and windstorms that impair a major watershed.

Arizona and the Western U.S. continue to face major fire disasters year after year, the effects of which often continue to be felt years down the line. One example is the Museum fire outside of Flagstaff in Coconino County, Arizona. The fire occurred in 2019, but this past summer's monsoon season saw extreme flooding from the burn scar that has imperiled lives, property, and the area's watershed. This is just one example of an Arizona community being impacted by the effects of wildfire.

As state and local officials continue to work to recover from wildfires and their long-term impacts, it is crucial that they have the resources they need as soon as possible. As such, we request that you quickly release EWPP funds in the CR at the highest level possible to help our communities recover and prepare next year's wildfire season.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on this critical program, and thank you for your attention to our concerns and those of our constituents.

Sincerely,



Kyrsten Sinema  
U.S. Senator



Mark Kelly  
U.S. Senator