

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

March 13, 2025

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20250

The Honorable Tom Schultz
Chief of the U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Forest Service
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins and Chief Schultz:

We write regarding the General Services Administration's (GSA) apparent plan to close at least twelve U.S. Forest Service facilities nationwide.¹ Working families rely every day on the services that the Forest Service provides from these facilities. The House Natural Resources Committee has jurisdiction under House Rule X.1(m) to conduct oversight and investigations of matters related to the Forest Service, including public forest lands and public lands generally.

The Forest Service plays a vital role in managing our 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands and provides support and technical assistance to state, tribal, and local partners in their forest management and firefighting efforts. The agency is still reeling from recent firings of 10% of the agency's staff and subsequent temporary reinstatement order.² Compounding that with closure of the facilities that are close to the people they serve could be disastrous for the communities who depend on the Forest Service's technical expertise and disaster response capabilities.

Wildfires are becoming more frequent and more severe. Recent tragedies like the wildfires that ravaged Los Angeles County underscore the need for a strong, stable Forest Service that can respond to the growing threat of wildfires. Two of the twelve Forest Service facilities listed for termination on the Department of Government Efficiency's (DOGE) website are fire training or dispatch centers.^{3,4} Other Forest Service field facility closures could result in wholesale closures of national forests. Critical forest restoration and wildfire mitigation could be halted. Trail

¹ *Savings*. Department of Government Efficiency. March 5, 2025. <https://www.doge.gov/savings>

² Daniel Wiessner and Nate Raymond, "US board reinstates thousands of USDA employees fired by Trump administration." Reuters. March 5, 2025. <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-civil-service-board-reinstates-thousands-fired-usda-employees-2025-03-05/>

³ Patrick Lohmann, "Albuquerque center housing 'critical' wildfire dispatch on DOGE termination list as fire risk grows." Tri-City Record. March 5, 2025. <https://www.tricityrecordnm.com/articles/albuquerque-center-housing-critical-wildfire-dispatch-on-doge-termination-list-as-fire-risk-grows/>

⁴ U.S. Forest Service Tonto National Forest <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/tonto/home/?cid=stelprdb5414577>

maintenance could stop. Recreational access could be at risk. The economic implications alone could be devastating for communities across the country.

Publicly available information on the DOGE website indicates that the Forest Service facilities listed below are slated for lease termination:

1. Southern Region/Region 8 Office in Atlanta, Georgia
2. Tombigbee Ranger District Office in Ackerman, Mississippi
3. Tonto National Forest Phoenix Interagency Fire Training Center in Mesa, Arizona
4. Cibola National Forest National Grasslands Supervisor's Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico
5. Tonto National Forest Supervisor's Office in Pheonix, Arizona
6. National Forests in Alabama Supervisor's Office in Montgomery, Alabama
7. Chugach National Forest Supervisor's Office in Anchorage, Alaska
8. Umatilla National Forest Pomeroy Ranger District in Pomeroy, Washington
9. Shasta-Trinity National Forest Mount Shasta Ranger District in Mount Shasta, California
10. Gila National Forest Silver City Ranger District in Silver City, New Mexico
11. National Forests in Florida Supervisor's Office in Tallahassee, Florida
12. Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland in Fort Collins, Colorado

Reports suggest that additional facilities are slated for closure, but are not included in the DOGE website data, raising concerns that the DOGE data is inaccurate or incomplete.^{5, 6} There is further reason to doubt the consistency and completeness of DOGE data.^{7, 8, 9, 10}

To assist the Committee's oversight responsibilities, please provide the following documents by no later than March 27, 2025:

1. All communications sent between January 20, 2025 and the date of this letter

⁵ Jory Heckman, "GSA prepared to end about 1,000 federal office space leases nationwide." Federal News Network. February 27, 2025. <https://federalnewsnetwork.com/facilities-construction/2025/02/gsa-prepares-to-cancel-about-1000-federal-building-space-leases-nationwide/>

⁶ Carol McKinley, "Doge terminates leases for 18 federal offices in Colorado." The Denver Gazette. March 5, 2025. https://denvergazette.com/news/government/doge-lease-terminations-federal-offices-colorado/article_b0b97468-f950-11ef-8c99-335c228b7c37.html

⁷ Aatish Bhatia, Emily Badger, David A. Fahrenthold, Josh Katz, Margot Sanger-Katz, Ethan Singer. "DOGE's Only Public Ledge Is Riddled With Mistakes," The New York Times. February 21, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/21/upshot/doge-musk-trump-errors.html>

⁸ Dan Ruetenik, "DOGE releases updated "wall of receipts" with more discrepancies." CBS News. February 26, 2025. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/doge-wall-of-receipts-more-discrepancies/>

⁹ Stephen Fowler, "DOGE's savings page fixed old mistakes – and added new ones." NPR. March 1, 2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/03/01/nx-s1-5313853/doge-savings-receipts-musk-trump>

¹⁰ Brad Heath, Tim Reid, "DOGE website offers error-filled window into Musk's government overhaul." Reuters. March 4, 2025. <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/doge-website-offers-error-filled-window-into-musks-government-overhaul-2025-03-04/>

- a. between the General Services Administration and individuals with a U.S. Forest Service or U.S. Department of Agriculture email address relating to the potential closure of any facilities that were occupied as of January 21, 2025 by U.S. Forest Service personnel or contractors;
 - b. among individuals with a U.S. Forest Service or Department of Agriculture email address relating to potential closure of any and all facilities that were occupied as of January 21, 2025 by U.S. Forest Service personnel or contractors;
 - c. between individuals with a U.S. Forest Service or Department of Agriculture email address and contractors relating to potential closure of any and all facilities that were occupied as of January 21, 2025 by Forest Service personnel or Forest Service contractors; and
2. All documents relating to the potential closure of any and all facilities that were occupied as of January 21, 2025 by Forest Service personnel or contractors.

Please contact the Natural Resources Committee Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee minority staff at (202) 225-6065 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jared Huffman
Ranking Member,
House Committee on Natural Resources



Maxine Dexter
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Responding to Committee Document Requests

In responding to document requests from the Committee on Natural Resources, please apply the instructions and definitions set forth below:

Instructions

1. In complying with the request, you should produce all responsive documents that are in your possession, custody, or control, whether held by you or your past or present agents, employees, and representatives acting on your behalf. You should also produce documents that you have a legal right to obtain, that you have a right to copy, or to which you have access, as well as documents that you have placed in the temporary possession, custody, or control of any third party. Requested records, documents, data, or information should not be destroyed, modified, removed, transferred, or otherwise made inaccessible to the Committee.
2. In the event that any entity, organization, or individual denoted in this request has been, or is currently, known by any other name than that herein denoted, the request should be read also to include them under that alternative identification.
3. Documents must be provided in electronic form (i.e., memory stick, thumb drive, or internet-based). Documents produced should also be organized, identified, and indexed electronically. Documents should be produced in their native file format. For example, emails from Microsoft Outlook should have a “.pst” file extension, Excel files should have an “.xls_” or similar extension, and Microsoft Word documents should have a “.doc_” extension. Consult with the Committee to determine the appropriate format in which to produce the information.
4. Each document produced should be produced in a form that renders the document capable of being copied.
5. Documents produced to the Committee should include an index describing the contents of the production. To the extent more than one CD, hard drive, memory stick, thumb drive, or folder transmitted through the internet is produced, each should contain an index describing its contents.
6. Documents produced in response to this request should be produced together with copies of file labels, dividers or identifying markers with which they were associated when this request was issued. To the extent that documents were not stored with file labels, dividers, or identifying markers, they should be organized into separate folders by subject matter prior to production.
7. When you produce documents, you should identify the paragraph in the Committee’s schedule to which the documents respond.
8. It shall not be a basis for refusal to produce documents that any other person or entity also possesses a non-identical or identical copy of the same documents.

9. If compliance with the request cannot be made in full, compliance should be made to the extent possible and should include an explanation of why full compliance is not possible.
10. In the event that any document or part of a document is withheld on the basis of privilege, provide a privilege log containing the following information concerning any such document or part of a document: (a) the privilege asserted; (b) the type of document; (c) the general subject matter; (d) the date, author and addressee; and (e) the relationship of the author and addressee to each other.
11. If any document responsive to this request was, but no longer is, in your possession, custody, or control, you should identify the document (stating its date, author, subject and recipients) and explain the circumstances by which the document ceased to be in your possession, custody, or control.
12. If a date or other descriptive detail set forth in this request referring to a document is inaccurate, but the actual date or other descriptive detail is known to you or is otherwise apparent from the context of the request, you should produce all documents which would be responsive as if the date or other descriptive detail were correct.
13. This request is continuing in nature and applies to any newly-discovered information. Any record, document, compilation of data, or information not produced because it has not been located or discovered by the return date should be produced immediately upon location or discovery subsequent thereto.
14. All documents should be Bates-stamped sequentially and produced sequentially.
15. Documents produced to the Committee in response to this request should be delivered to majority staff in Room 1324 of the Longworth House Office Building or directly through the internet.

Definitions

1. The term "**document**" means any written, recorded, or graphic matter of any nature whatsoever, regardless of how recorded, and whether original or copy, including, but not limited to, the following: memoranda, reports, expense reports, books, manuals, instructions, financial reports, working papers, records notes, letters, notices, confirmations, telegrams, receipts, appraisals, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, prospectuses, interoffice and intra-office communications, electronic mail (e-mail), contracts, cables, notations of any type of conversation, telephone calls, text messages, MMS or SMS messages, other mobile-to-mobile messages, instant messages or online chat messages, meetings or other communications, bulletins, printed matter, computer printouts, teletypes, invoices, transcripts, diaries, analyses, returns, summaries, minutes, bills, accounts, estimates, projections, comparisons, messages, correspondence, press releases, circulars, financial statements, reviews, opinions, offers, studies and investigations, questionnaires and surveys, and work sheets (and all drafts, preliminary versions, alterations, modifications, revisions, changes, and amendments of any of the foregoing, as well as any attachments or appendices

thereto), and graphic or oral records or representations of any kind (including without limitation, photographs, charts, graphs, voice mails, microfiche, microfilm, videotape, recordings and motion pictures), and electronic and mechanical records or representations of any kind (including, without limitation, tapes, cassettes, disks, computer server files, computer hard drive files, CDs, DVDs, memory sticks, and recordings) and other written, printed, typed, or other graphic or recorded matter of any kind or nature, however produced or reproduced, and whether preserved in writing, film, tape, disk, videotape or otherwise. A document bearing any notation not a part of the original text is to be considered a separate document. A draft or non-identical copy is a separate document within the meaning of this term.

2. The term "**documents in your possession, custody, or control**" means (a) documents that are in your possession, custody, or control, whether held by you or your past or present agents, employees, or representatives acting on your behalf; (b) documents that you have a legal right to obtain, that you have a right to copy, or to which you have access; and (c) documents that you have placed in the temporary possession, custody, or control of any third party.
3. The term "**communication**" means each manner or means of disclosure or exchange of information, regardless of means utilized, whether oral, electronic, by document or otherwise, and whether face-to-face, in a meeting, by telephone, facsimile, mail, e-mail (desktop or mobile device), text message, MMS or SMS message, other mobile-to-mobile message, instant message or online chat, telexes, releases, personal delivery, or otherwise.
4. The terms "**and**" and "**or**" shall be construed broadly and either conjunctively or disjunctively to bring within the scope of this request any information which might otherwise be construed to be outside its scope. The singular includes plural number, and vice versa. The masculine includes the feminine and neuter genders.
5. The terms "**person**" or "**persons**" means natural persons, firms, partnerships, associations, corporations, subsidiaries, divisions, departments, joint ventures, proprietorships, syndicates, or other legal, business or government entities, and all subsidiaries, affiliates, divisions, departments, branches, and other units thereof.
6. The term "**identify**," when used in a question about individuals, means to provide the following information: (a) the individual's complete name and title; and (b) the individual's business address and phone number.
7. The terms "**referring or relating**," with respect to any given subject, means anything that constitutes, contains, embodies, reflects, identifies, states, refers to, deals with or is in any manner whatsoever pertinent to that subject.
8. The term "**employee**" means agent, borrowed employee, casual employee, consultant, contractor, de facto employee, independent contractor, joint adventurer, loaned employee, part-time employee, permanent employee, provisional employee, subcontractor, or any other type of service provider.

