

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 30, 2021

Mr. Randy Moore
Chief of the U.S. Forest Service
Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Chief Moore:

We write to thank you for the efforts the United States Forest Service (USFS) has made to suppress the ongoing wildfires and protect public safety in the Superior National Forest. As you maintain wildfire response activities in the region, we respectfully ask that you continue working closely with state and local partners on a coordinated interagency response and deploy resources and personnel to northern Minnesota as necessary.

Like many Minnesotans, we are especially concerned by the ongoing severe drought conditions that have contributed to the rapid spread of the roughly ten separate wildfires in the Arrowhead region of the state. The largest of those wildfires, the Greenwood Fire near Isabella, Minnesota, has now grown to an estimated 25,991 acres and is an ongoing threat to public health and safety. It has destroyed fourteen primary structures and 57 outbuildings, created unhealthy air quality conditions, and forced the evacuation of cabins, homes, and outdoor recreational areas.

Additionally, several wildfires in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) have prompted the first closure of the popular wilderness area in 45 years. We understand that this decision was difficult and made with public safety in mind. To minimize the economic impacts on small businesses that rely on summer tourism, we ask that you continue to reevaluate the closure and, when possible, reopen areas of the BWCAW when they become safe for visitors.

We have been encouraged by recent rainfall and reports of favorable weather conditions that will allow the 468 firefighting personnel to establish new and maintain existing fire containment lines and reduce hazardous fuels near the edge of the fire.

We appreciate your ongoing work to coordinate the emergency response and control the spread of these wildfires that are impacting our state. We stand ready to support your efforts to suppress the wildfires, recover quickly, and build more resilient forests.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator