



**Office of the Under Secretary**

Natural Resources and Environment  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250-0108

July 21, 2026

THE HONORABLE AMY KLOBUCHAR  
*Ranking Member*  
*Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry*  
*United States Senate*  
*425 Dirksen Senate Office Building*  
*Washington, D.C. 20510*

Dear Ranking Member Klobuchar,

Thank you for your June 24, 2026, letter, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Forest Service's reorganization, potential workforce relocations, and the use of disaster-recovery funds.

The Forest Service is interested in employee retention and is actively working to minimize the impact of the reorganization on employees. The Government Accountability Project (GAP) assertion that up to 1,400 Forest Service employees may be relocated is inaccurate. As of July 15, 2026, the Forest Service has identified less than 500 positions that may involve relocation. That number could change as we continue to implement the reorganization. The Forest Service has identified additional office space in other Federal offices, State facilities, and other partner facilities within the commuting area of a number of those employee locations and is confirming its potential availability. At this time, no relocation notices have been provided to any employees.

Implementation of disaster recovery is conducted through Agency employees, contractors, and partners via grants and agreements. All three methodologies require support from USDA staff offices, ("business services staff") including, but not limited to, human resources, procurement, grants and agreements specialists, and budget analysts. The required *American Relief Act* (ARA) operating plan, transmitted to Congress on January 17, 2025, outlined the Forest Service's expectation to leverage internal capacity, including business services staff, to implement disaster recovery activities. The ARA operating plan included \$101 million for business services staff salary and expenses. This equals 1.5 percent of the total \$6.35 billion appropriated to the Forest Service in the ARA. To date, approximately 18 months after enactment, \$1.98 billion has been expended on ARA implementation. Of that amount, the Forest Service spent \$94 million on employee-related salaries and expenses, including \$20 million associated with business services staff. The Forest Service provides the required updated ARA operating plan, including obligations and expenditures to date, to the Committees on Appropriations every 60 days. The June 2026 American Relief Act Report was transmitted to the Committees on Appropriations on July 13, 2026.

Thank you, again, for your letter. If you have additional questions, please have a member of your staff contact USDA's Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095 or [ocr@usda.gov](mailto:ocr@usda.gov). We sent a copy of this letter to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MB', with a stylized, sweeping flourish extending from the bottom right.

Michael K. Boren  
Under Secretary  
Natural Resources and Environment  
U.S. Department of Agriculture