



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

December 4, 2025

THE HONORABLE JARED HUFFMAN
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Member Huffman,

Thank you for your August 25, 2025, letter to Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins regarding the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) planned reorganization efforts, including for the USDA's Forest Service. I am responding on behalf of the Secretary.

The Department is dedicated to refocusing its core operations to better align with its founding mission of supporting American farming, ranching, and forestry. I appreciate your feedback during this process.

Secretary Rollins made it clear that the Department will be transparent and use a common-sense process in this effort. The Secretary also directed me in Secretarial Memorandum SM 1078-015¹ ("Secretary's Memorandum") to lead the implementation of the USDA Reorganization Plan, and to make changes or adjustments to the Plan as needed.

As I testified before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry at the end of July, the Secretary's Memorandum is the first step, not the final step in this process. On August 1, 2025, USDA announced a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders to provide feedback on the Department's planned reorganization efforts. This window was extended to September 30, 2025. All stakeholders—including Capitol Hill offices, USDA employees, and members of the agricultural community—are encouraged to share their input during the open comment period.

Many of your questions have been addressed by my responses back to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry's "Questions for the Record." A copy of them is attached

¹ Secretarial Memorandum SM 1078-015 (July 24, 2025), available here: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>.

for your convenience. Meanwhile, I continue to meet and consult with Members of Congress and stakeholders nationwide regarding the Department's planned reorganization efforts.

Again, thank you for your letter and commitment to agricultural stakeholders. Please note this letter will be included as an official comment. If you have any further questions, please contact USDA's Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095 or ocr@usda.gov.

Sincerely,



Stephen Alexander Vaden
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Enclosure