

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 31, 2009

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II  
Chairman  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and  
Public Lands  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rahall and Chairman Grijalva:

Numerous cabin owners in our respective districts have recently contacted us regarding the recreation residence permit appraisal guidelines currently being implemented by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) as a result of the Cabin User Fee Fairness Act. We write to respectfully request that you hold a hearing on this issue of affordability and fairness currently impacting our constituents.

As you know, CUFFA was signed into law on October 11, 2000. This act was intended to allow families with cabins on USFS land to maintain private ownership of those structures by ensuring that fees remain reasonable, through a fair appraisal process. When passing this act, Congress specifically directed the USFS to consider the many regulations and restrictions on U.S. Forest Service cabins when calculating user fees.

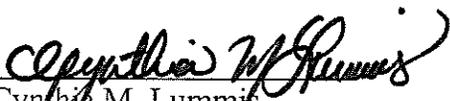
The current appraisal protocol being employed by the USFS, however, does not adequately consider the myriad of restrictions placed on cabin owners that depress market value, or the limited rights of cabin owners. In fact, the USFS has communicated that it believes CUFFA specifically prohibits such consideration – an assertion with which we strongly disagree. As such, significant permit fee increases are being assessed, driving out many cabin owners with multi-generational ties to their respective areas.

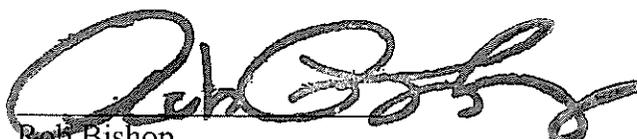
The attached bicameral letter was sent to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Vilsack on May 6, 2009, requesting that the USFS adhere to Congressional intent by updating its regulations and appraisal protocol for special use cabin permits. Such action is necessary to alleviate the negative impacts faced by forest cabin owners across the country and to prevent the removal of countless private stewards from our public lands. As you can see from the attached response our offices recently received from USDA, the USFS believes it is following CUFFA's intent and has no intention of revising their current appraisal protocols.

With significantly increased fee levels already being assessed to individual cabin owners, we hope you agree this issue warrants further review by this committee. It is of utmost importance that Congress act quickly to review and address this misinterpretation of law.

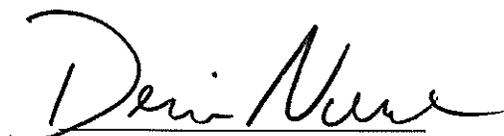
Thank you both in advance for your timely consideration of our request.

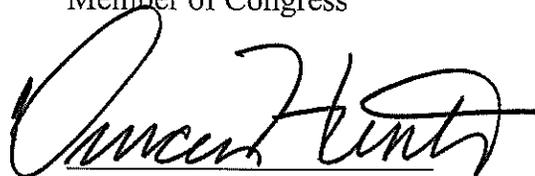
Sincerely,

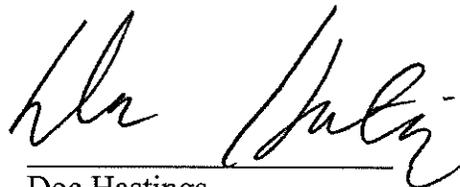
  
Cynthia M. Lummis  
Member of Congress

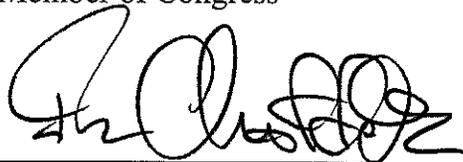
  
Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress

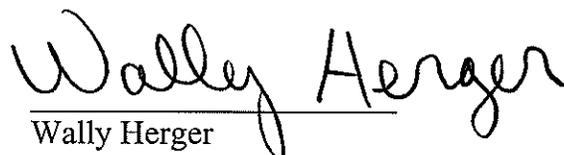
  
Denny Rehberg  
Member of Congress

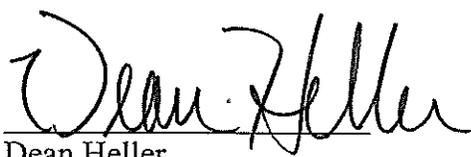
  
Devin Nunes  
Member of Congress

  
Duncan Hunter  
Member of Congress

  
Doc Hastings  
Member of Congress

  
Jason Chaffetz  
Member of Congress

  
Wally Herger  
Member of Congress

  
Dean Heller  
Member of Congress