Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 31, 2014

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
The Capitol, H-307
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2372 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug and and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1126 Longworth
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

As the House Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies begins consideration of its Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 appropriations bill, we urge you to include robust funding for the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program. The EWP program, administered by the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), helps public and private landowners address imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, and severe storms. EWP funding is essential to protecting citizens' lives and critical infrastructure in the wake of a natural disaster.

In total, nineteen states, including Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah, are awaiting EWP funds. Critical EWP funding will help communities affected by the 2013 Colorado flood complete critical restoration projects that will stabilize river banks, remove debris in streams, and relocate rivers. These funds will also help Utah citizens recover from last year's floods and fires that swept the state. It will provide relief to residents of Galena, Alaska who are awaiting $8,100,000 to recover from ice jams that caused river waters to surge more than 15 feet last May. And it will help Florida communities who desperately need to address damage caused by Tropical Storms Debby and Isaac before this year's storm season begins.

Funding for EWP must be authorized by Congress. Unfortunately no recent spending measure has provided such funding for the numerous natural disasters that occurred across the country in 2013. NRCS needs at least $120,305,334 to fund recovery projects on its EWP waitlist. Importantly, this estimate does not include recent natural disasters such as the mudslides in

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Washington, or critical funding to mitigate and plan for the risk of future disasters. Consequently, we respectfully request that this Subcommittee provide robust funding in its annual appropriations measure to provide for communities dealing with the aftermath of natural disasters.

Thank you for consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Jared Polis
Member of Congress

Cory Gardner
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress

Scott Tipton
Member of Congress

Mike Coffman
Member of Congress

Bruce Braley
Member of Congress

Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress

Steve Pearce
Member of Congress

Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

Cedric Richmond
Member of Congress

Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress

Joe Garcia
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress