



File Code: 2400

Date: **MAY 20 2014**

Honorable Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor of State of West Virginia
1900 Kanawha Street
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Governor Tomblin:

Thank you for your letter of April 7, 2014, requesting the designation of a landscape-scale area on national forests in West Virginia to address insect or disease threats under Section 602 of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591a), as added by section 8204 of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

The Secretary delegated the authority to designate landscape-scale insect and disease areas under Section 602 to me. I have determined the area you requested to be designated under Section 602 meets one or more of the following criteria in Section 602:

- The area is experiencing decline of forest health based on annual forest health surveys;
- The area is at risk of substantial tree mortality over the next 15 years based on the National Insect and Disease risk Map; or
- The area is one in which hazard trees pose imminent risk to public infrastructure, health or safety.

Based on this determination, I have hereby designated the area, excluding Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, as a landscape-scale insect and disease area under Section 602(d). A map showing the designated areas is enclosed. This letter of designation, the map showing the designated areas as well as other documents pertaining to your request will be posted on <http://www.fs.fed.us/farbill/>.

Designation under Section 602 will allow us to further evaluate these landscape areas for potential treatments to reduce the risk or extent of, or increase resilience to, insect or disease infestation in accordance with Sections 602(d).

Again, thank you for your request to designate landscape areas that are experiencing declining forest health and for your continued interest in the management of the national forests in West Virginia. If you have any questions about the designation, please contact Tony Tooke, Associate Deputy Chief, at (202) 365-5648 or by email at ttooke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

THOMAS L. TIDWELL
Chief

Enclosure

