

March 22, 2016

Cambria Armstrong  
U.S. Forest Service  
2150 Centre Avenue, Building E  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80526

Re: Comments Supporting the Proposed Forsythe II Forest Project

Dear Ms. Armstrong:

Denver Water supports the Forsythe II Forest Project that is proposed by the Boulder Ranger District on National Forest System lands. The health of Colorado's forests and watersheds has a strong influence on Denver Water's municipal water supplies as well as other downstream beneficiaries, including homes, businesses and agriculture. Restoration also will help the forests become more resistant to future insect and diseases thereby reducing wildfire risks and maintaining habitat for fish and wildlife.

Denver Water serves 1.3 million people in the metropolitan region, a quarter of the State's population, with two percent of the State's water. The major portion of this water comes from rivers and streams fed by mountain snowmelt that is stored in reservoirs. Severe forest fires in the late 1990s and early 2000s led to forest degradation and substantial sedimentation in Cheesman and Strontia Springs reservoirs. Denver Water has spent more than \$26 million on water quality treatment, sediment and debris removal, and reclamation after these fires. In response to this concern about the risk of additional forest fires and decline in forest health due to bark beetle outbreaks, Denver Water and the Forest Service entered into the Forests-to-Faucets partnership to jointly fund forest restoration and watershed protection. The proposed Forsythe II Project is part of this partnership, and the forest treatments will help to reduce wildfire risk in the critical watershed area surrounding Gross Reservoir.

The recent wildfires, insect and disease, and diminished overall tree stand health of Colorado's forests has identified that forest management needs to be conducted on a landscape scale. Denver Water believes taking this landscape approach to planning and implementation is critical to effectively managing forests at an appropriate scale.

Please contact me if you need additional support information at (303-628-6524 or [paula.daukas@denverwater.org](mailto:paula.daukas@denverwater.org)).

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Paula Daukas  
Environmental Planning Manager