



COMMONWEALTH OF  
PUERTO RICO  
DDEC • Puerto Rico Tourism Company

November 9, 2016

Ms. Sharon Wallace  
Forest Supervisor  
El Yunque National Forest  
HC-01, Box 13490  
Rio Grande, PR  
00745-9625

**El Yunque National Forest Revised Land and  
Resource Management Plan (Draft)  
Environmental Impact Statement (Draft)**

Dear Ms. Wallace:

The Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC) is pleased to greet you. We have reviewed the above mentioned documents. As you know, El Yunque National Forest (EYNF) is one of Puerto Rico's main tourist attractions. As the public corporation tasked by the Puerto Rico Legislative Assembly to develop the island's tourism sector, the PRTC is very interested in the sustainable management of the Forest. *JA.*

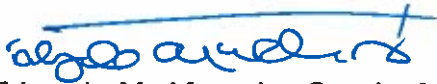
We are pleased that many of the short and long term projects and goals that have been discussed and sometimes jointly proposed by the PRTC and the US Forest Service (USFS) are included in the Plan. Some of these goals are: improving access to the Forest, providing new recreational opportunities away from the PR-191 Corridor, and thinking about EYNF as an economic driver for Puerto Rico's eastern region.

We understand that the new co-management paradigm proposed by the revised Plan will benefit not only the natural environment but the livelihoods of those that rely on EYNF to meet their social and economic needs. The PRTC looks forward to working together with local communities, local entrepreneurs, and the USFS to develop sustainable tourism operations in the areas identified as Community Interface Resource Management Area (CIRMA) by the Plan.

As for the draft Environmental Impact Statement, the PRTC concurs with USFS' determination that the selected course of action is the most desirable (Alternative 2). The selected alternative allows for the protection of the forest's ecosystem while allowing for the sustainable and responsible delivery of social and economic benefits for EYNF surrounding communities.

We appreciate USFS efforts in the sustainable stewardship of the natural wonder that is EYNF. We commend the staff at the EYNF for their efforts to engage not only local government agencies but the community at large in this novel planning process. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please contact me, or our planner William Pitre-Cipolla at 787 721-2400, extension 2063.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edgardo M. Afanador-García", with a horizontal line drawn above it.

Edgardo M. Afanador-García, M.Arch  
Acting Director  
Planning and Development Office

WP/mrd