

CROW TRIBE EXECUTIVE BRANCH



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Darrin Old Coyote

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Office of Chairman Darrin Old Coyote

May 16, 2016

The Honorable Steve Daines
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Daines:

I am writing, on behalf of the Crow Tribe, to express our support for the Tribal Forestry Participation and Protection Act of 2016 (the "Act"). The Act appears to present an improvement over existing federal legislation, which would more than likely present a "win-win" situation for all parties involved in the administration and management of tribal and federal forests by streamlining the process, providing clear deadlines for approval and denials of tribal proposals, and overall providing additional opportunities to tribes interested in managing forests to which they are culturally and historically connected.

The Crow Indian Reservation, located in southeastern Montana between Billings and Sheridan, Wyoming, covers an area of over 2,226,000 acres. The Tribe, in conjunction with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), cooperatively manages approximately 27,395 acres of managed forestland, 19,627 acres of woodlands, and over 60,000 acres of tribally reserved forest.

The Crow Tribe knows that tribal management of tribal forests is not only best practice, but an important expression of our tribal self-determination. It enhances our ability to stimulate the local tribal economy and provide employment opportunities, and income, for the Tribe as well as individual tribal members. The Act serves to provide additional opportunities to perform the above by authorizing tribal contracts with the federal government to manage federal forests within their former homelands as tribal forests.

As you are likely aware, according to the 2013 Indian Forest Management Assessment Team Report to Congress, Tribes have proven they are more capable of carrying out active forest management than their similarly situated federal counterparts. Specifically, the report indicated that Tribes were able to accomplish more, on their forests, with far less funding, than other federal managers, even while complying with the same federal laws that national forests are currently subject to.

The Great Apsáalooke Nation: "Teepee Capital of the World"

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As such, the Crow Tribe is happy to send this letter in support of the Tribal Forestry Participation and Protection Act of 2016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Darrin Old Coyote". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a stylized "Coyote".

Darrin Old Coyote, Chairman
Crow Tribe of Indians