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September 28, 2009

Dr. Rob Mangold
Forest Health Protection Director
USDA-Forest Service
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090

Dear Rob:

On behalf of the National Plant Board (NPB), I am urging you to consider funding the Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread Program at the level of \$11 million annually. Based on continuing program review, it is expected this funding level will ensure that an effective program can be implemented for the near future.

The Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread Program, as jointly implemented by the USDA, Forest Service and the Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread Foundation is considered to be one of the most biologically and economically justified programs implemented by the USDA, Forest Service. Since its incorporation from a pilot project in 2000, agency support for this program increased from \$8 million to approximately \$10 million. At this stable level, the program was able to effectively reduce the rate of spread of gypsy moth to 3 kilometers per year, a reduction of more than 85% of the historic spread of 21 kilometers per year. However, in 2007, funding for the project was reduced by 20%. This funding reduction further coincided with significant outbreaks of the gypsy moth in the mid-Atlantic states, increasing project costs, and the need to expand to incorporate new state partners. These factors led to an overall decrease in the number of program treatments and as such, areas that would have normally been treated, remain untreated. These untreated infestations continued to expand leading to increased rates of spread during the 2007-2009 period. As such, if funding for the program is not increased, it is expected moth spread rates will increase, ultimately exceeding the minimum thresholds established for the project.

Funding at approximately \$11 million would enable the program to monitor and treat all high priority infestations and return to a biologically sound level where the rate of spread remains below the target level.

Dr. Rob Mangold
September 28, 2009
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I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to share the concerns of the National Plant Board regarding this critical funding issue with you. If I can provide additional information or support the initiative in any way, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carl P. Schulze". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "C".

Carl P. Schulze
NPB President

cc: Geir Friisoe, President, GM STS Foundation
Donna Leonard, USFS
NPB Regional Plant Board Presidents