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The Honorable Mark Udall
317 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Udall:

Thank you for your inquiry of May 29 on behalf of your constituent, Kent Maxwell, regarding the Colorado Fire Camp in Salida, Colorado. The Salida Ranger District has been working with Mr. Maxwell since the initial development of his Colorado Fire Camp business. The Salida Ranger District has supported his efforts and recognizes the need for fire training that his organization provides. In years past, the Salida Ranger District has allowed its staff to serve as instructors for some of the courses offered through the Colorado Fire Camp.

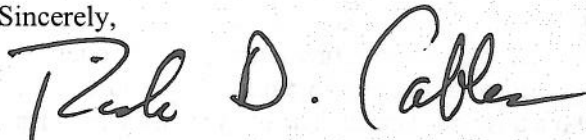
Two years ago, Salida District Ranger Bill Schuckert met with Mr. Maxwell to review the arrangement between the Colorado Fire Camp and the US Forest Service. The letter of July 20, 2007, which Mr. Maxwell provided you, documents the meeting and defines the expectations of each organization in this partnership.

Since that meeting, Mr. Maxwell has inquired several times about the need to have a field site for his trainees to "cut standing trees" for completing the certification portion of the S-212 Chainsaw course. Last year, District Ranger Schuckert had some concerns regarding liability and safety in providing a cutting area solely for the Colorado Fire Camp. Government legal counsel verified the liability and conflict of interest issues surrounding this arrangement. We cannot provide a service for one group or organization that we are not willing or able to do for another. Consequently, no cutting areas have been established by the US Forest Service for the Colorado Fire Camp. Ranger Schuckert encouraged Mr. Maxwell to explore opportunities to obtain this service from the Colorado State Forest Service or private property in the vicinity.

The Colorado Fire Camp successfully completed the S-212 chainsaw course on private land parcels near the Maxwell Park state lands. Mr. Maxwell said an added benefit of training on private property was that "we might use this to spur the development of a neighborhood CWPP (Community Wildfire Protection Plan) plan for the subdivision west of Rodeo Road." This will be a benefit for the subdivision.

The Salida Ranger District continues to support the mission of Colorado Fire Camp and Mr. Maxwell's endeavors. If you have additional questions, please contact Forest Supervisor Bob Leaverton at 719.553.1400.

Sincerely,



RICK D. CABLES
Regional Forester

cc: Bob Leaverton

