

 **COCONINO**  
COUNTY ARIZONA  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

April 28, 2025

The Honorable Eli Crane  
Congressman  
United States House of Representatives  
307 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Patrice M. Horstman**  
District 1  
Vice-Chair

Dear Congressman Crane,

**Jeronimo Vasquez**  
District 2

The Coconino County Board of Supervisors would like to provide an update on two critical projects that are currently being held up by the Department of Government Efficiency. The Bill Williams Mountain Forest Restoration Project, a hazardous fuels reduction project that reduces the threat from wildfire and post-fire flooding to the City of Williams and the PROTECT Grant – U.S. Highway 89 Flood Mitigation Project that reduces post-wildfire flooding impacts to a critical highway in northern Arizona.

**Tammy Ontiveros**  
District 3

The Bill Williams Mountain Forest Restoration Project is a collaborative effort between the Coconino County Flood Control District, the Kaibab National Forest, and The Nature Conservancy. This hazardous fuel reduction project aims to treat 400 acres of steep, fire-prone terrain above the City of Williams. If left untreated, then a wildfire followed by monsoon rains could trigger catastrophic flooding, with potential regional economic damages estimated at \$800 million (in 2025 dollars).

**Judy Begay**  
District 4  
Chair

**Lena Fowler**  
District 5

The project is funded with \$2.8 million from the Flood Control District and \$5.2 million from the Kaibab National Forest and is being managed by The Nature Conservancy under a Master Stewardship Agreement. However, this agreement has been pending a signature from the federal government since January 20, 2025. Without immediate action, there is a significant risk of losing contractor availability during this logging season, which will delay the project significantly.

In addition to reducing wildfire and flood risks, the project supports the regional forest products industry, which depends on a steady supply of timber from forest restoration efforts. This industry provides over 300 direct jobs and 500 indirect jobs in Northern Arizona.

The U.S. Highway 89 Flood Mitigation Project is also awaiting a signature by the Federal Highway Administration. The project was awarded a DOT PROTECT Grant in 2024 but is still pending review. The critical need for this project resulted from the Pipeline Fire in 2022, which burned over 25,000 acres of steep sloped area on the San Francisco Peaks causing severe and repetitive post-wildfire flooding. U.S. Highway 89, which is the main transportation artery between Arizona, Utah and Colorado was closed 13 times. The closures and numerous interruptions resulted in serious impacts to not only commerce between the states, but also tourism given this is the access to Glen Canyon/Lake Powell National Recreational Area, Horseshoe Bend and the Wave as well as the Grand Canyon National Park. These destinations attract well in excess of 5 million visitors per year with over \$2 Billion in economic impact to Arizona alone.

219 East Cherry Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001-4695 ■ Phone: 928.679.7144 ■ 800.790.1990 ■ Fax 928.679.7171 ■ [coconino.az.gov](http://coconino.az.gov)

 **COCONINO**  
COUNTY ARIZONA  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Coconino County requests that you and your office take action to secure approval of the Bill Williams Mtn. Project agreement as well as approval of the PROTECT grant agreement. Please let us know if any other information is needed or if you have questions, then please contact Lucinda Andreani at [Landreani@coconino.az.gov](mailto:Landreani@coconino.az.gov).

Your action at this time is crucial to moving these critical public safety projects forward.

Thank you,

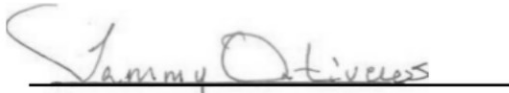
Sincerely,



Patrice Horstman, Chair  
District 1 Supervisor  
Coconino County Board of Supervisors



Jerónimo Vásquez, Vice Chair  
District 2 Supervisor  
Coconino County Board of Supervisors



Tammy Ontiveros  
District 3 Supervisor  
Coconino County Board of Supervisors



Judy Begay  
District 4 Supervisor  
Coconino County Board of Supervisors



Lena Fowler  
District 5 Supervisor  
Coconino County Board of Supervisors

