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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH,  
EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

## United States Senate

October 8, 2010

The Honorable Tom Tidwell  
Chief, U.S. Forest Service  
Yates Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
201 Fourteenth Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Chief Tidwell:

On October 6, 2010, a highly unusual and severe weather system passed through northern Arizona damaging multiple homes and leaving many of them uninhabitable. According to the National Weather Service, most of the damage was caused by four tornadoes touching down in the rural community of Bellemont which is located 15 miles from Flagstaff, Arizona. The severity of this storm system was so intense that one tornado derailed 28 parked freight train cars.

I recently toured the Bellemont area with Arizona Governor Jan Brewer and saw firsthand homeowners left sifting through debris fields to piece together their family belongings. As you may know, the Bellemont area is surrounded by lands managed by Coconino National Forest and the Kaibab National Forest. Many area residents require special assistance to recover their possessions from a several square mile area on these two national forests. Therefore, I respectfully request that you assign Forest Service personnel and resources to assist in the search and salvage of these personal belongings and that you coordinate your efforts with state and local emergency management agencies.

Thank you for your timely attention to this matter. The recovery process for this tornado event will take time, but I believe we can and must take immediate steps to assist these affected homeowners.

Sincerely,



John McCain  
United States Senator

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