

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 1, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke  
Secretary  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

We write to request your assistance and attention in addressing an issue that threatens the health of Northeastern forests, the arrival of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.

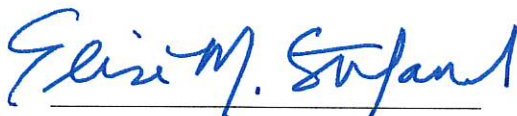
As you know, the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid wreaks havoc on the Eastern Hemlock which is found in large quantities along the Northeast, including the Adirondack Park and southern Vermont. The ecological destruction wrought by these invasive insects not only threatens native forests but the economy of New York State and Vermont.

An effective response is essential during the time immediately following detection. As you are aware, the National Invasive Species Council has identified key steps for the government to take after a new invasive species has been detected. These steps include providing technical and financial support along with additional support on the ground. We would like to know what strategies the Department has identified to combat the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, if these strategies are being shared with officials in New York State and Vermont, and what funding opportunities are available through the Department for state and local agencies and organizations.

As Representatives of states that are dependent upon healthy forest ecosystems for agriculture, energy production, sporting, and tourism, it is vital that we reign in the invasive species already in our backyard while doing what we can to prevent the spread of new invaders. We urge you to respond rapidly, deploy available resources, and work with states and local communities to prevent a widespread infestation.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you on issues related to invasive species moving forward.

Sincerely,



Elise M. Stefanik  
Member of Congress



Peter Welch  
Member of Congress