



For Immediate Release

September 25, 2008

Contact:

Kendra Barkoff
202-228-6367

Casey Expresses Concern Over Proposed Allegheny National Forest Campground Closures

WASHINGTON, DC- U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) sent a letter to the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, Abigail R. Kimbell, expressing his concern over the recent recommendations by the Forest Service to close or decommission several campgrounds and recreation facilities in the Allegheny National Forest.

"The recreation facilities in Allegheny National Forest are an integral part of the northwestern Pennsylvania economy, and they are important on a personal level to many people throughout the state," wrote Senator Casey.

In the letter, Senator Casey seeks to find out more information about the possible closures of the campgrounds at Twin Lakes Park, Loleta Recreation Facility and Kiasutha Park.

Casey went on to write, "I request that you provide my office with some information on the Forest Service's decisions to close and/or reduce service at Allegheny's recreational facilities. I would also appreciate information on what this means for the long-term future of the facilities."

The full text of the letter is attached.

###

Ms. Abigail R. Kimbell
Chief
United States Forest Service

Sidney R. Yates Building
201 14th Street SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Chief Kimbell:

It has come to my attention that the United States Forest Service has proposed changes to the operations of recreation facilities in the Allegheny National Forest. It is my understanding that these proposals call for the decommissioning and reduction of services to many facilities, including the campgrounds at Twin Lakes Park, Loleta Recreation Facility, and Kiasutha Park.

The facilities were constructed in the late 1960s to service the expanding needs of a population interested in outdoor pursuits and to realize the economic benefits for this region. In fact, in an Impact Report released on April 22, 1960 the United States Forest Service acknowledged this economic potential by calling for an increase of funds to develop additional recreation facilities upon completion of the Kinzua Dam/Allegheny River Project.

The recreation facilities in Allegheny National Forest are an integral part of the northwestern Pennsylvania economy, and they are important on a personal level to many people throughout the state. Several of the campgrounds were constructed during the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps and my office has received many inquiries from citizens concerned about their future. It would be a shame to see them closed or neglected to the point of demolition. I would like to work with you to identify ways to keep the recreational facilities at Allegheny National Forest open to the public and in good working order. I request that you provide my office with some information on the Forest Service's decisions to close and/or reduce service at Allegheny's recreational facilities. I would also appreciate information on what this means for the long-term future of the facilities.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to our work together to find ways to keep the recreational facilities open for the enjoyment of Pennsylvanians and every visitor to the Allegheny National Forest.

Sincerely,

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senate

