

Knowing of your interest in forest management issues, I wanted to let you know that I took part in a community forum this week regarding the inability to implement balanced forest management and its resulting impacts on our rural forested communities. Held at the Plumas County Fairgrounds, the discussion focused largely on the [recent closure](#) of the Sierra Pacific Industries' (SPI) small-log mill in Quincy. The forum, organized by Rep. McClintock (R-CA), also included Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT), the Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands. The panel received statements from representatives of the Forest Service; Plumas County government; Sierra Pacific Industries; members of the Quincy Library Group (QLG); and a local scientist.

By way of brief background, Congress passed the *Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act* in 1998, establishing a strategic forest management pilot project in three Northern California national forests. The plan represented an opportunity to break free from the timber battles of the past and come together for the benefit of the community and the protection of the environment. It enjoyed virtually unanimous support in the House, passing by a margin of 429-1. SPI built a small-log mill in Quincy on the expectation of a reliable and sustainable supply of material from HFQLG thinning projects. Unfortunately, relentless lawsuits and appeals have stalled or blocked the implementation of many Quincy Library Group fuels reduction projects. By stymieing projects designed to turn these problems around, increased levels of hazardous fuels remain in our forests, large fires continue to plague the area and the economies of our timber dependent communities continue to suffer. These delays, in conjunction with an ailing economy, led SPI to close the small-log mill. I'm deeply saddened that 150 jobs have been lost in Quincy, in addition to the loss of other jobs indirectly associated with the mill's operation, in a town of 450 families.

There are a several reasons why we need to engage in smart and effective forest management. Catastrophic wildfires threaten our safety and our property and the situation only continues to worsen in the absence of forest management. The timber industry, crucial to the North State economy, continues to struggle resulting in more and more job loss at a time of serious economic difficulty. We have to find a way to move the QLG pilot project forward at the scale and pace originally envisioned by Congress. I'm glad that we were able to further discuss this issue with those directly affected and further raise awareness of this serious problem, and I'm committed to continuing to work in a bipartisan manner to protect our communities and put people back to work.