



United States Department of Agriculture  
Office of Inspector General  
Washington, D.C. 20250



May 3, 2017

Mr. Jeff Ruch  
Executive Director  
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility  
962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 610  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Ruch:

Thank you for your suggestion that the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Inspector General conduct an audit of recent timber sales from Alaska's Tongass National Forest. You indicated that these sales have been conducted in a manner that does not safeguard the taxpayer interests or forest health, with surprisingly lax oversight and in violation of the agency's own policies. While we appreciate your suggestion, we currently have no ongoing audits in this area and we do not have the resources available to initiate an audit on this issue at this time. However, we will consider the topic in future audit planning cycles.

Should have any questions, please contact Mr. Bill Burke, Assistant Director, Farm, Trade, Research, and Environment Division, at (202) 720-2887.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gil H. Harden".

Gil H. Harden  
Assistant Inspector General for Audit