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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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November 18, 2010

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to respectfully request that you include in the U.S. Forest Service's FY 2012 budget request the two proposals submitted by El Yunque National Forest in Puerto Rico, namely the acquisition of (1) the 65-acre Charco Frío tract for \$1 million and (2) the 32-acre Cartagena tract for \$375,000. Both acquisitions are critical for the protection of the Forest's wildlife habitat (for example, that of the endangered Puerto Rican parrot) and its Río Grande and Río Fajardo watersheds.

As you know, the U.S. Forest Service has been working with local communities, government agencies and other stakeholders, such as the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust, in an effort to conserve and protect El Yunque and its surrounding areas. Forest Service management of the above-referenced tracts of land would help ensure that their natural characteristics are preserved and would provide increased recreational opportunities for Island residents and visitors.

I understand there is significant competition for land acquisition funds nationally. Because Puerto Rico is a rapidly-urbanizing island with a limited land base, the need to protect unique natural areas such as El Yunque is particularly pressing. In addition, I am advised that El Yunque, which is one of the 28 finalists for the "New Seven Wonders of Nature," has not received funding to acquire land in more than 10 years. It is my hope that this will change in Fiscal Year 2012.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Pedro R. Pierluisi  
Member of Congress

cc: Tom Tidwell, Chief, USDA Forest Service  
cc: Liz Agpaoa, Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service  
cc: Pablo Cruz, Forest Supervisor, El Yunque National Forest, USDA Forest Service