



The Wyoming Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life.

October 11, 2018

United States Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Leavitt Reservoir EIS Project Lead
Cody Field Office
1002 Blackburn Street
Cody, Wyoming 82414

To whom it may concern,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) comments regarding the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (dEIS) for the Leavitt Reservoir Project.

Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources, and quality of life. As the proposed project could affect our industry, citizens, and natural resources it is important that you continue to inform us of proposed actions and decisions and continue to provide the opportunity to communicate pertinent issues and concerns.

WDA previously commented on the Preliminary dEIS and appreciates the BLM's attention to our comments. While most of our comments were addressed, we still have concerns with the analysis; especially with regard to agricultural uses, existing uses, and private lands.

We are supportive of this project as it can have benefits to local communities and agricultural producers.

One example is found in Chapter 5, Section 5.1.14.1 where the dEIS states *"...other past actions that have affected current availability and quality of wildlife habitat include operation of Leavitt dam and reservoir, grazing, irrigation, and agricultural activities. These activities have removed vegetation, changed water availability, destroyed or altered wildlife habitat, and displaced terrestrial wildlife species in the analysis area."* The analysis continues in this fashion with numerous speculative or biased statements characterizing any land use as detrimental and even goes so far as to say that *"most species that are now common in the existing shrubland and grasslands of the analysis area would likely decline in number."* We have seen no data to uphold any of these statements; BLM is analyzing any and all land uses, including those on private lands, for negative impacts, yet rarely makes a proper connection to the project and fails to include positive impacts.

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The BLM should focus on the issues for analysis within their purview, and those that are truly expected to occur rather than speculate. We suggest the BLM review the document and remove bias and speculation throughout.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doug Miyamoto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Doug" being particularly prominent.

Doug Miyamoto
Director

DM/jb

CC: Governor's Policy Office
Wyoming Board of Agriculture
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Wyoming County Commissioner's Association

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming State Grazing Board
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