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

June 13, 2017

Mr. Mark Booth  
District Ranger  
United States Forest Service  
Powder River Ranger District  
1415 Fort Street  
Buffalo, WY 82843

Dear Mr. Booth,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) scoping comments regarding the proposed Buffalo Municipal Watershed 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.

We support the proposed project and believe it will benefit the entire watershed. The United States Forest Service (FS) should consider impacts to forage for livestock and wildlife when considering available tools. FS should also consider access to alternative forage for livestock grazing permittees whose allotments overlap areas proposed for prescribed fire. Alternative forage allocations could create more flexibility during post-fire recovery without reducing livestock grazing. Following prescribed fire, the FS should allow grazing as soon as possible on treated areas. We do not support a blanket prescription of "two years rest following fire" and suggest the FS set reasonable goals for vegetation re-establishment following fire.

FS should consider the likelihood of cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) or other invasive species when considering the use of prescribed fire. We noticed many of the proposed prescribed burn areas are on south-facing slopes, potentially increasing the chances of cheatgrass establishment. Ventenata grass (*Ventenata dubia*), Medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*), and Bulbous Bluegrass (*Poa bulbosa*) have also been reported near the project area and we highly recommend the FS reach out to Brian Mealor with the University of Wyoming Extension Office for more information. Weed and Pest

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districts should also be utilized when considering the likelihood of increased invasive or non-desirable species in or near the project area. Post-fire monitoring for invasive or undesirable species must be a part of the project.

In conclusion, we thank you for the opportunity to comment and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Doug Miyamoto  
Director

DM/jb

CC: Governor's Policy Office  
Wyoming Game and Fish Department  
Wyoming Board of Agriculture  
Wyoming State Grazing Board

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