



Wyoming
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture

Matthew H. Mead, *Governor*
Jason Fearneyhough, *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 23, 2014

Mr. Steven Calkum
Bureau of Land Management
Kemmerer Field Office
312 Hwy 189 North
Kemmerer, WY 83101-9711

Dear Mr. Calkum:

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) scoping comments pertaining to the Kemmerer Bureau of Land Management Field Office's (BLM) proposed Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the Albert Creek Allotment #11202 (Allotment) and associated management plans from the Uinta County Conservation District and Natural Resource Conservation Service (Conservation District).

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 incorporating the Conservation District plan as it is complete with goals, objectives and has been developed with the cooperation of the permittee(s). Due to the large size of the Allotment and the intermingling of private, state and federal lands it is important the BLM uses as much on-the-ground knowledge from the permittees and the Conservation District as possible. In the scoping notice, the BLM identifies some key issues, many of which are accounted for with the Conservation District plan. BLM should tier the AMP to the proposed management methods and tools as laid out by the Conservation District plan in conjunction with the permittees.

We do have some concerns regarding the following identified issues:

- 1) *Protection of Sage-grouse lekking and nesting habitat.* The WDA believes any protection should be determined using the best available science and on-the-ground knowledge regarding recent fluctuations in bird numbers or lek attendance. We strongly suggest the BLM avoid blanket statements or prescriptions pertaining to sage-grouse management on the Allotment. We urge the BLM to make rational decisions on a site-by-site basis and work closely and early with permittees to identify areas for improvement and areas where improvements are unnecessary or unfeasible.
- 2) *Impacts from Haystack Mine.* In regard to Comment 1 above, BLM should consider impacts from Haystack Mine to Sage-grouse. We strongly urge the BLM to address these possible impacts when considering management strategies pertaining to livestock grazing and insist no changes are made to Animal Unit Months or season of use.
- 3) *Trespass by cattle or sheep from neighboring allotments.* We urge the BLM, and permittees, to resolve any trespass issues in order to properly discern use levels from permitted livestock versus trespass animals. This is especially important to keeping in line with Allotment goals and objectives.

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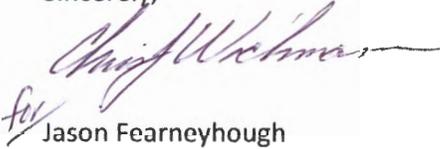
Albert Creek Allotment AMP

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We have also attached the response form/interest statement included in your letter. We thank you again for the opportunity to comment and participate and look forward to working with you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jason Fearneyhough", written in dark ink on a light background.

Jason Fearneyhough
Director

JF/jb

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

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming State Grazing Board
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association

**Albert Creek Allotment Management Plan
Public Interest Response**

Instructions:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help the Bureau of Land Management – Kemmerer Field Office understand your level of interest in actively participating in the planning process for the Albert Creek Allotment Management Plan (AMP). Please complete this short questionnaire and return it to:

Bureau of Land Management
Kemmerer Field Office
c/o Steven Calkum
312 Highway 189 North
Kemmerer, WY 83101

Please note that if you do not return this form to the BLM – Kemmerer Field Office, then we will assume that you do not wish to be involved in the Albert Creek AMP process, and that you do not wish to receive a copy of the plan, once completed.

Name: _____

Organization: Wyoming Department of Agriculture

Please check one:

- I would like to directly participate in developing the AMP
(Please notify me of all public meetings, and include me in all mailings)
- I don't need to be involved in developing possible alternatives for the AMP, but I would like to be involved in meetings that discuss what will go into the final AMP.
- I don't need to be involved directly in developing the AMP, but I would like to see the AMP and have the opportunity to comment on it before it is finalized
- I don't need to be involved at all in the developing the AMP, but please send me a copy of the plan, once it is completed
- I do not wish to be involved in the Albert Creek AMP process, and I do not wish to receive a copy of the plan, once it is completed
- Other (Please explain): _____

Preferred method of contact:

- Mail
- Phone (Number: _____)
- Fax (Number: _____)
- Email (Address: justin.williams@wyo.gov)