



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

February 24, 2012

Shoshone National Forest, Wapiti Ranger District
Attn: Marty Sharp, NEPA Coordinator
203A Yellowstone Avenue
Cody, WY 82414

Dear Mr. Sharp:

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to the Predecisional Environmental Assessment (EA) for Livestock Grazing Management on three allotments on the Washakie Ranger District of the Shoshone National Forest (SNF).

Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources, and quality of life. As this proposed EA affects our agriculture industry, our natural resources, and the welfare of our citizens, it's important you continue to inform us of proposed actions and decisions and continue to provide us the opportunity to express pertinent issues and concerns.

The WDA supports the proposed action (Alternative 2) to continue to permit livestock grazing by incorporating adaptive management on all three allotments to meet Forest Plan direction. This alternative allows SNF personnel the flexibility to change livestock grazing management in a timely manner to maintain and enhance rangeland conditions. Furthermore, we support the use and development of range improvement projects to achieve healthy rangelands for the benefit of livestock and wildlife.

We do not support the no livestock grazing alternative (Alternative 1). This alternative would have negative consequences on vegetative resources, wildlife habitat, and socioeconomics, as outlined in Chapter 3 of the EA. In addition, the current Forest Plan allows for grazing in each of the three allotments and has found each allotment suitable for commercial livestock grazing.

Following are the WDA's specific comments to the Predecisional EA:

Monitoring and Monitoring Plan(s), page 20:

The WDA appreciates that SNF personnel will use monitoring to determine if and when changes to livestock grazing management are needed and we strongly encourage joint cooperative monitoring continue.

Environmental Consequences

The WDA appreciates the use of references and monitoring trends in the EA. Peer-reviewed science and on-the-ground observations make the document stronger and justifies the SNF decision to continue livestock grazing with adaptive management in place on each of the allotments.

Equal Opportunity in Employment and Services

BOARD MEMBERS

Jana Ginter, *District 1* • Jim Hodder, *District 2* • Shaun Sims, *District 3* • John Moore, *District 4* • Alison Lass, *District 5*
Bryan Brost, *District 6* • Jim Puce, Jr., *District 7*

YOUTH BOARD MEMBERS

Patrick Zimmerer, *Southeast* • Dalin Winters, *Northwest* • John Hansen, *Southwest* • Bridger Williams, *Northeast*

Predecisional EA for Livestock Grazing Permit Issuance
Shoshone National Forest
2/24/2012
Page 2 of 3

In conclusion, the WDA supports the continuance of commercial livestock grazing in the Maxon Basin, South Pass and Ed Young Allotments. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed actions. We encourage continued attention to our concerns and look forward to hearing about and being involved in future proposed actions and decisions.

Sincerely,



Jason Fearneyhough
Director

JF/jc

CC: Governor's Policy Office
Rocky Mountain Farmer's Union
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
Wyoming Board of Agriculture
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association