



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.*

December 1, 2011

Richard A. Cooksey, Deputy Forest Supervisor  
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest and Thunder Basin National Grassland  
Douglas Ranger District  
2250 East Richards Street  
Douglas, WY 82633

Dear Mr. Cooksey:

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to the Scoping Notice for the Environmental Assessment (EA) proposing to authorize Peabody Powder River Mining, LLC right-of-entry to National Forest System land to conduct sediment dewatering activity by USDA Forest Service (USFS).

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 authorization and associated 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 the opportunity to express pertinent issues and concerns.

This project will impact grazing permittees, agriculture producers, landowners, and other citizens, as well as our natural resources. For these reasons, we are request the USFS consider and analyze the following specific effects upon livestock grazing and management in the EA: increased off- and on-road traffic, increased number of speeding vehicles, construction of new roads and modifications to existing roads, increased number of vehicles causing death or impairments of livestock, cut fences, opened gates, damaged range improvements, decreased palatability of vegetation and forage from road dust and development activities, potentially unsuccessful reclamation of disturbed areas, introduction and spread of noxious weeds, and other detrimental social and economic impacts on livestock operators and livestock management operations.

We strongly encourage USFS staff to work closely and consistently with affected grazing permittees regarding this project. It is imperative that BLM officials continuously inform all livestock grazing permittees who are directly or indirectly affected of the issues, decisions, and resulting actions regarding this proposal.

Decisions in the proposed authorization should allow USFS officials, grazing permittees and Peabody Powder River Mining, LLC the opportunity to work cooperatively. Flexibility to make the best site-specific, case-by-case decisions in the best interest of the affected resources and citizens should also be addressed.

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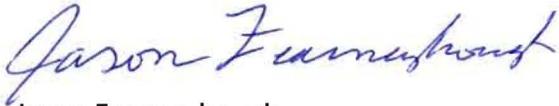
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USDA Forest Service  
Peabody Powder River Mining, LLC  
Scoping Notice  
12/1/2011

In conclusion, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the scope of the proposed actions. We encourage continued attention to our concerns and look forward to hearing about and being involved in proposed actions and decisions.

Sincerely,



Jason Fearneyhough  
Director

JF/jc

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