



November 30, 2015 *The Wyoming Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life.*

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests
Laramie Ranger District
Attn: Frank Romero
2468 Jackson St.
Laramie, WY 82070

Dear Mr. Romero,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest's (MBNF) Scoping Notice regarding the future Environmental Assessment (EA) for Pole Mountain road system.

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

WDA appreciates MBNF efforts to develop a revised road system on Pole Mountain. The area has significant multiple use throughout the year. We support the Proposed Travel System including truncating, closing, decommissioning, and restoring roads in areas where sensitive resources are damaged from motor vehicles and off-highway vehicles. We urge MBNF work closely with grazing permittees to identify roads they use for administrative purposes and where they have on-going damage to range improvements.

WDA is aware of instances where fences are cut, gates are continuously left open, stock tanks are shot, and in some cases, loss of livestock, causing thousands of dollars of damage. We believe MBNF should consider closing roads to the public in areas identified by grazing permittees where they experience property damage.

WDA strongly supports MBNF collaborating with interested agencies, organizations, and individuals to reclaim all closed roads. Reclaiming these roads will reduce soil erosion, increase forage for livestock and wildlife, as well as reduce continuance of unauthorized use by motorists.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and request MBNF include WDA in all future planning efforts as a cooperating agency, providing us as interested party status to the objection process upon issuing a Proposed Final Decision. If you have any questions, please contact Justin Williams, Senior Policy Analyst at 307-777-7067.

Sincerely,

Doug Miyamoto
Director

DM/jw

CC: Governor's Policy Office
Wyoming Board of Agriculture
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation

Wyoming State Grazing Board
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
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