



Wyoming
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture

Matthew H. Mead, Governor
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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.

February 19, 2016

BLM Pinedale Field Office
Attn: Brian Roberts
1625 West Pine Street
Pinedale, WY 82941

Dear Mr. Roberts,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to Pinedale Bureau of Land Management Field Office's (Pinedale BLM) Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Jonah Year-Round Development Project Area. The proposal analyzes a 5-year period to conduct year-round drilling in the northern portion of the Jonah Infill Development Project Area.

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 the opportunity to review and comment on the EA. Both alternatives; Proposed Action and the BLM Mitigation Alternative benefits livestock grazing permittees by reducing roads and reducing disturbance by over 1,000 acres compared to the No Action Alternative. However, in light of overall benefits to wildlife, including sage-grouse and pronghorn, we support the BLM Mitigation Alternative over the Proposed Alternative.

WDA urges BLM consult, cooperate, and coordinate with livestock grazing permittees in the project area to ensure impacts to their grazing operations are reduced and mitigated. We are opposed to BLM requiring livestock grazing permittees maintain fencing for reclaimed areas or other additions to the Terms and Conditions of their permit as a result of this project.

Again, we appreciate Pinedale BLM's efforts on the EA and look forward to working with you in the future on this project. Please inform us if the Final EA is protested or appealed. If you have 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
Wyoming County Commissioners Association

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