



June 29, 2016

Mr. Jim Zornes,
Acting Forest Supervisor
United States Forest Service
Black Hills National Forest
1019 North 5th Street
Custer, South Dakota 57730

Dear Mr. Zornes:

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) comments pertaining to the United States Forest Service, Black Hills National Forest (FS) proposed changes to the Forest Monitoring Plan to comply with the 2012 planning rule (project).

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.

After reviewing the proposed changes (entitled "Proposed Disposition") we have the following recommendations for your consideration.

1. **Item 3. Revegetation:** Although we agree with the statement "revegetation is not an issue" from an ecological standpoint, projects can still have impacts to forage availability for livestock and wildlife and the lack of revegetation could lead to unintended consequences for soils. We recommend this item be kept and moved to Category VIII (as suggested) with clarification to direct Revegetation monitoring to the project level as necessary.
2. **Item 21. MIS:** While we agree that beaver are an important part of the system, we fail to understand the need to move to a Focal Species. Beaver should remain a Management Indicator Species (MIS) and not be elevated to Focal Species. Please further explain what implications this may have to monitoring and the difference, as the FS sees it, between a MIS and Focal Species.
3. **Item 33. Rec use, trend and demographics; Item 35. Off-road vehicle access:** Recreational use is listed under Category V which is concerned with visitor use, satisfaction, and recreation objectives. While we respect these as important aspects of providing the public with access to the National Forest, there must be a way for the FS to consider and track impacts of recreation. We suggest that Recreation and Access items also consider the ecological implications (Category II, the status of select ecological conditions). Category II should be added to these items where appropriate.

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In conclusion, we thank you for the opportunity to comment and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doug Miyamoto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a stylized "M".

Doug Miyamoto
Director

DM/jb

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