



Wyoming
DEPARTMENT OF *Agriculture*

Dave Freudenthal, *Governor*
Jason Fearneyhough, *Director*
2219 Carey Ave. • Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307) 777-7321 • Fax: (307) 777-6593
Web: agriculture.wy.gov • Email: wda1@state.wy.us

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

December 3, 2009

Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.
Attn: Robert Quinlan
707 17th Street, Suite 2300
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Mr. Quinlan:

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to the Scoping Notice for the proposed Duncan Lake Communications Site Environmental Assessment on the Tongue Ranger District of the Bighorn National Forest (BNF).

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 project 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.

We understand the WYOLINK communications project includes 3.5 acres of surface disturbance and 18,534 feet of underground power line. The project as proposed will create minimal impacts to livestock grazing in the area. However, we offer the following comments on the proposal.

Specific individual effects upon livestock grazing needing analyzed include: increased on- and off-road traffic, increased number of vehicles in the area causing death or impairments of livestock, cut fences, gates left open, decreased palatability of vegetation and forage from road dust and development activities, unsuccessful reclamation of disturbed areas, and the introduction and spread of noxious weeds.

The WDA strongly encourages BNF staff to work closely with affected grazing permittees to learn of their concerns and recommendations regarding this project. It is imperative that BNF officials continuously inform livestock grazing permittees who are directly or indirectly affected by the WYOLINK communications site development of the issues, decisions, and resulting actions regarding this proposal. In addition, timely and successful reclamation is needed and should be required on the proposed pipeline.

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

Sincerely,



Jason Fearneyhough
Director

JF/jc

CC: Governor's Planning Office
Guardians of the Range
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
Wyoming Board of Agriculture
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming State Grazing Board
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