

Wyoming Department of Agriculture

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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.



Dave Freudenthal, Governor
John Etchepare, Director

June 22, 2009

Congresswoman Cynthia Lummis
House of Representatives
1004 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lummis:

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture has reviewed your Opening Statement on May 5, 2009 to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands as well as the letters you received by a number of constituents at the county, state and federal level.

From our understanding the H.R. 980, Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act is still in review. We wish to send you our concerns regarding H.R. 980 for this current session and for the future should the Act come before the legislature again.

We support your Opening Statement as well as the opposition by the others, including Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Sublette County Conservation District, or the Wyoming Weed and Pest Council to name a few. As you know, these public lands are vital to the local economy of the community and the livestock producers in the area proposed for Wilderness designation. We strongly oppose legislators from outside of the Rocky Mountain region to create legislation impacting our state and who fail to include the community members and citizens impacted.

Your opposition to H.R.980 with a ranch perspective is very much appreciated. The inability for permittees to graze livestock, check their livestock using a motorized vehicle, supply mineral and salt using motorized vehicles, etc. are all reasons for not supporting this legislation. In addition to the loss of grazing permits, the surrounding ranches cannot support their operations on private lands alone. This leads to subdivisions, urban sprawl and the demise of corridors for wildlife.

According to a recent poll sponsored by the Building the Wyoming We Want committee, agriculture, open spaces and wildlife are a top priority to maintain in our state and the main reasons citizens of Wyoming stay. We must continue to fight for agriculture producers to retain ownership, stay in business and refrain from selling to subdivisions.

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We sincerely appreciate your time and effort to oppose H.R. 980. Please keep us informed of the status of this legislation.

Best Regards,

Jason Fearneyhough
Director

JF:jw

Cc: Governor's Planning Office
Senator Mike Enzi
Senator John Barrasso

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