

Burch Family Ranch LLC  
9303 Transfer Rd.  
Olathe, CO 81425

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USDA Forest Service  
% Sean Brown  
2505 S. Townsend Ave.  
Montrose, CO 81401

May 3, 2018

Re: FOREST PLAN REVISION

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Sean Brown,

We would like you to recognize this as a comment to scoping for the forest revision plan, so that we can be recognized with all future documents regarding the Forest plan revision. We did sign up at the Pea Green meeting that we wanted this information.

We are interested in what will be the future and coordination of the use and the user of the Forest Lands.

We hope that a natural environmental plan will be considered as the health of the land must sustain the demands of the users.

Sincerely,

  
Bradley & Jeanne Burch  
Kelly J. Burch

Enclosure: Picture of a caged water source, with underground pipe to fill pond.

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During the time of the turn of the century, many stockmen brought cattle and sheep into our area. From early on, the landscape appeared to have a massive abundance of feed in which to graze these animals.

As time went on more and more animals were brought to graze. Before long overgrazing became apparent.

Permits were issued for the stockmen to graze a certain number of animals. But, as time proved, many more animals were put on these permits above the FS amounts allowed. Greed played a part in this venture also.

In 1962 Division Fences were put in place to help keep cattle separated and so that they did not all continue to congregate in certain areas. This helped many problems that had been occurring over the years. Like the cattle going up to high country to soon and eating poison larkspur and dying. Salt use to be put in parks, which then created dustbowls. Now it is used to help move cattle around.

Then Cross Fences were put in place and this gave the stockmen a better control of their cattle. This was also done to keep cattle out of the poison larkspur, which caused many lost cattle over the years, by holding the cattle back until later in the season, when the larkspur was deemed safe. It also allowed for better growth of the grasses as the season progressed. It gave the stockmen a rotation of pastures.

Areas that had been over grazed, began showing signs of re-growth. Better control of the water holes, better utilization of feed, salt placement keep cattle moving so as not to stay in one area all the time - so less cattle impact.

For the past fifty years, under the stewards care of these

allotments, the land started showing much improvement.

Over the years, old timber stands were harvested and reseeded, allowing more grass growth. However, with all the Beetle-kill of the last several years, there needs to be more harvesting and cleanup of dead trees.

Some ponds have been built with cages around the water source to keep the cattle from tramping out the main water source, keeping those areas from being swampy. This has benefited not only cattle but wildlife as well. Animals like clean water also.

For several years now, our Forest areas were showing much improvements. Many more people were starting to enjoy more of the forest areas and the recreation it provided.

Well, then came the invention of a vast variety of all the Off Road Vehicles, ATVs, dirt-bikes, big tires on jeeps, trucks etc.

Many of these people don't feel the responsibility to stay on the roads and trails that have been provided for them and our public lands are having more trails scratched upon them.

Now again we are seeing the strain on parks being torn up with the tires, spinning and digging up the grass and plants, leaving bare areas. Even the main roads are now showing signs of ruts where these vehicles have been spinning circles and more ruts are being dug out from spinning tires. Water holes are driven through - mudded up and water is splashed out, causing animals unable to drink from them.

There are numerous water sources in our mountains and with what is happening climate wise and weather wise, We should be improving on and creating clean ponds to replace swamp areas. Not only would this help all the wildlife animals and livestock, but clean ponds would make a much healthier Forest.

The health of the Forest in all aspects is going to depend on how each entity regards their actions when jointly using the land.

In order for the Forest to work for all, there must be RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY from all who spend time in our Forest.

Burch Family Ranch