



Meagher County, Montana

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS

OFFICE OF
BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

September 3, 2019

Objections Reviewing Officer
USDA Forest Service, Northern Region
26 Fort Missoula Road
Missoula, MT 59804

Notice of Meagher County Commissioners (MCC) Objection to the Castle Mountains Restoration Project, Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest

Dear Objections Reviewing Officer:

Pursuant to 36 CFR [sect] 218 Subparts (A) and (B), the MCC hereby objects to the Castle Mountains Restoration Project (project), proposed by the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest. MCC objection is submitted as support for moving the actions identified in the Draft Decision Notice to a final decision and implementation.

Connections to Prior Comments: MCC have submitted comments on the project during scoping August 2015 and draft EIS May 2018. These comments stated MCC support for the proposed treatments to reduce wildfire hazard, increases livestock grazing forage, and contributes timber products to the local timber industry. Treatment areas are identified in our Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Treatments are in the Willow Creek watershed, municipal watershed for the town of White Sulphur Springs. Treatments are within two Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas identified in the CWPP.

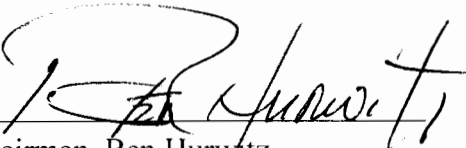
The project is not only important for the national forest system lands, but also the neighboring private landowners and Meagher County Rural Fire Department (MCRFD). MCRFD is responsible for fire suppression on the private land adjacent to the project area and will benefit from the breaking up the continuity of the fuels will increase fighter safety when ignitions occur.

Reasons for Objection: We are concerned that the treatments identified in the Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Decision may be modified prior to the final decision and implementation. If changes are requested by another party, and if the final decision differs substantively from alternative 5, the outcome may not adequately reduce wildfire risk and the restoration balance. If the current analysis is not enough to support these changes, the project

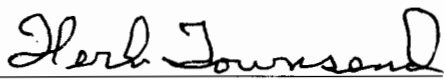
may not be implemented in a timely manner. As such we intend use the objection process to support the treatments identified in the Draft Decision.

The MCC formally requests to be included as an interested party in objection resolution for this project. As an interested party the MCC would like to be involved in objection meetings as an active participant in support of the implementation of this project.

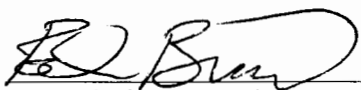
Sincerely,



Chairman, Ben Hurwitz



Vice-Chairman, Herb Townsend



Commissioner, Rod Brewer