

From: [Rutherford, Tait - FS](#)
To: [Waterston, Beth Ann - FS](#)
Cc: [Nelson, Monique L -FS](#); [Prosser, Chadley W -FS](#)
Subject: New comment on Thunder Basin plan amendment DEIS
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 1:54:14 PM
Attachments: [JHarshbarger_120519.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Hi Beth,

Please see the attached comment letter from Jean Harshbarger about the DEIS for the Thunder Basin plan amendment. We received it here at the office in Laramie today. I filed it in Pinyon at [Box\...\ThunderBasinPlanAmendWorking\07DEISComments.](#)

Regards,

Tait



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Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests
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Caring for the land and serving people

Thunder Basin Plan Amendment Comments 12/5/19
Thunder Basin Grassland Supervisor's Office
2468 Jackson Street,
Laramie, Wyoming 82070


Alternate 3 in the Draft EIS, with some modification, comes closest to what is needed on the grasslands, but does not fully protect the rights of ranchers. For example the Forest Service must have funds available to do the controls and monitoring needed. No more than 2% of grassland acres on any ranch unit can be impacted by prairie dogs. Boundry management zones are not wide enough. The "up to 1 mile" in South Dakota would be more acceptable. Economic impacts must be addressed. The ranches in this area have many expenses. Most of these, such as repairs, groceries, feed, medical services all add to local and state income, both directly to suppliers and also by taxes. Children go to local schools. These may not mean much in large cities, but our small towns depend on these revenues.

Another thing to be addressed is this--rules, regulations and guidelines are SUGGESTIONS. The things that need to be adhered to are the laws. Some of those important to those of us on the ground are Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act and National Forest Management Act. Some applicable parts of BJFTA are controlling erosion and promoting secure occupancy of farms. NFMA addresses economic impact and defines a viable population. In this area all associated species are expected to persist. Nowhere in the draft are economic impacts covered.

One must also remember that the laws which determine how these lands will be used all say "subject to all previous/valid existing rights. The ranches here were established before any such acts were passed and all had RIGHTS to grazing and water. Most of the ranches here were running livestock before Wyoming was a state. WE HAVE PREEXISTING RIGHTS.

The Forest Service needs to drop all restrictions on lethal control products that are registered for use in Wyoming. Chances of secondary poisoning are quite rare. Control of prairie dogs near Sage Grouse habitat needs to be very strict. No dusting should be allowed as that is detrimental to plovers.

In conclusion, we do not need to "study" this any longer. We have done that for decades. Prairie Dogs must be controlled now, while we have a chance to keep them within manageable numbers.


Jean Harshbarger
1162 Lynch Road
Newcastle, WY 82701

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 12/9/2019 12:00:00 AM

First name: Jean

Last name: Harshbarger

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

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