

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



William J. Novotny, III

Robert Perry

Jeff Shelley

February 13, 2023

District Ranger Thad Berrett
Powder River Ranger District
Bighorn National Forest
1415 Fort Street
Buffalo, WY 82834

RE: Pole Creek Vegetation Management Plan

Dear Ranger Berrett:

Proper stewardship of the Bighorn National Forest is critical. Thinning and clear cutting have their appropriate uses as you work to manage the timber, prevent wildfire, and protect private property on the mountain. We are pleased you are updating your vegetation management plan. However, we have serious concerns with the Pole Creek Vegetation Management Plan's impact on local recreation.

The year-round recreation that happens at Pole Creek is vital to Johnson County's economy and important to the quality of life for our citizens. Thousands of manhours and hundreds of thousands recreation dollars have been invested in this area. Degrading the recreational experience by removing the timber is unwise and counterproductive. The disturbance that will occur in this area will make it more susceptible to invasive weeds which we work to prevent and control. We do not want to see this area adversely impacted through your management activities.

Removing the Pole Creek Recreation Area from the proposed timber thinning is critical. As you develop your plan, please exclude the Pole Creek Recreation Area from the planned management treatments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thad Berrett" with a stylized flourish at the end.

William Novotny III
Chairman Johnson County Commissioners