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June 20, 2023

VIA PROJECT WEBPAGE

Mary Farnsworth
Intermountain Region Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service
324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401

Re: Daggett County's Objection to the Ashley National Forest Draft Land Management Plan and Draft Record of Decision

Dear Ms. Farnsworth,

Daggett County, Utah, has appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Ashley National Forest Plan Update as a cooperating agency. The Ashley National Forest and Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area make up more than 50 percent of the land within Daggett County's borders. Therefore, the County is directly impacted by management of the Ashley National Forest, and is interested in ensuring that the Forest Service maintains a healthy Forest to protect the resources and watersheds within and surrounding the Forest.

Daggett County has participated as a cooperating agency throughout the Ashley National Forest Land Management Plan (LMP) revision process by attending public meetings and submitting comments. The County specifically joined the written comments of the Coalition of Local Governments as it related to the review of Alternative B on June 17, 2020, and the comments on the proposal to revise the LMP submitted on November 8, 2019. Daggett County also joins and incorporates by reference the Coalition of Local Governments' objections to Forest Supervisor's, Susan Eickhoff, Ashley National Forest Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), Draft LMP, and Draft Record of Decision (ROD). The County specifically joins the objections related to the need to increase timber harvest, timber production, and overall vegetation management treatments under the LMP to ensure the Ashley National Forest can reach desired conditions and prevent catastrophic wildfires from occurring. The County also joins the objections related to the management actions associated with protection of bighorn sheep and their habitat.

The forest provides many socio-economic and ecosystem services; including clean water for agriculture, municipalities, industrial, power generation for our communities and a wide variety of recreational and employment opportunities for our citizens. Working and playing on the forest is part of the culture and custom of our communities. Improving forest health through active management is critical to the future of the forest and the well-being of Daggett County.

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The Record of Decision and proposed forest plan must be consistent with the objectives and policies of the Daggett County Resource Management Plan. If any wilderness designations were to be recommended, or if grazing management were altered, (for example) through the objection resolution process, the proposed forest plan would be inconsistent with our county plan.

Now that the objection period has commenced, we understand that Daggett County is automatically granted interested party status for all resolution meetings with objectors. This letter is to formally notify you, as the Reviewing Officer, that Daggett County is interested in any and all specific objections that may be filed and we request an opportunity to participate in resolution meetings to protect our interests. Please provide us with information on resolution meeting logistics as they are developed.

More specifically, Daggett County Requests the opportunity to participate in any objection resolution meetings that address livestock grazing, bighorn sheep, timber, recreation management areas, proposed wilderness designations, and others that are associated with the positions of the Coalition in the following objection. 36 C.F.R. § 219.57(a).

The County has appreciated the coordination and consultation efforts of the Forest Service during the LMP revision process and looks forward to continuing to work with them through this and any other objection submitted on the Draft LMP and ROD.

Daggett County Commission

Jack Lytle, Commissioner

CLG Objections referenced and attached