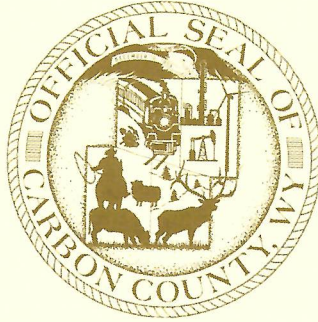


BOARD OF CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Sue Jones, Chairman
R. Travis Moore, Vice Chairman
Willing "John" Johnson
Garrett Irene
John Espy



P.O. Box 6, 215 Buffalo Street
Rawlins, WY 82301
(307) 328-2668 or 800-250-9812
www.carbonwy.com
E-mail: commissioners@carbonwy.com

January 18, 2024

Director, Ecosystem Management Coordination
United States Department of Agriculture
201 14th Street SW, Mailstop 1108
Washington, DC 20250-1124

RE: Seeking Cooperating Agency Status for Carbon County regarding the Environmental Impact Statement Process for the Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System

Dear Director:

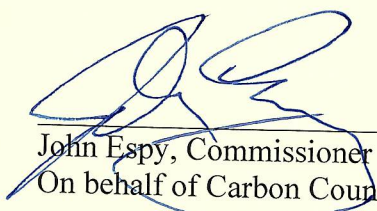
The Carbon County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) is aware that the United States Department of Agriculture (Department), Forest Service is preparing a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and accepting scoping comments for the Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System. The Department has identified the Forest Service as the Lead Agency for this amendment, and invited State agencies and Federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations to indicate an interest if they would like to participate as Cooperating Agencies. However, the Department has not extended the invitation to counties or conservation districts.

Carbon County is concerned that it has not been invited to participate as a Cooperating Agency during the EIS process. As identified by 40 CFR §1501.8, "(a) the purpose of this section is to emphasize agency cooperation early in the NEPA process. Upon request of the lead agency, any Federal agency with jurisdiction by law shall be a cooperating agency. In addition, upon request of the lead agency, any other Federal agency with special expertise with respect to any environmental issue may be a cooperating agency. *A State, Tribal, or local agency of similar qualifications may become a cooperating agency by agreement with the lead agency. . .*". A large portion of the Medicine Bow National Forest is located within Carbon County, and the resulting EIS may have a significant impact on Carbon County. Carbon County and our local conservation districts have extensive knowledge of the portions of the National Forest located in Carbon County and are likely to be helpful partners in information sharing and collaboration as the EIS is developed. Carbon County is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of its residents, and is regularly tasked with determining whether zoning and development requests have a deleterious effect upon the local environment. It has been incumbent upon Carbon County to balance the need for industrial growth and progress against the importance of conservation. Carbon County regularly participates as a cooperating agency with the Bureau of Land Management on the NEPA process and is certainly qualified to participate as a cooperating agency during this process.

Management on the NEPA process and is certainly qualified to participate as a cooperating agency during this process.

This letter is notice that Carbon County is requesting cooperating agency status in the Environmental Impact Statement Process for the Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System. In addition, I would request that all notices regarding this EIS document development be sent to the attention of Kristy Rowan, Carbon County Planning and Development Coordinator, as primary contact at Carbon Building, 215 W. Buffalo, Suite 317, Rawlins, WY 82301. Ms. Rowan's email is kristyrowan@carbonwy.com and she can be reached by phone at (307) 328-2651. I would also request that all correspondence related to this document development be sent to the Carbon County Board of County Commissioners at P.O. Box 6, Rawlins, WY 82301, and email commissioners@carbonwy.com, and that we be listed as alternate point of contact. On behalf of Carbon County, I would like to thank you for your consideration of this request to be recognized as a participating cooperating agency. Please feel free to contact me at your convenience with any questions or concerns. I will look forward to hearing from you as this matter progresses.

Very truly yours,



John Espy, Commissioner
On behalf of Carbon County Commissioners

cc: Carbon County Board of County Commissioners
Gwynn Bartlett, Carbon County Clerk
Kristy Rowan, Planning & Development Coordinator
Ashley Mayfield Davis, Civil Deputy County Attorney