

# JOHNSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



William J. Novotny, III

Robert Perry

Jeff Shelley

February 2, 2024

Linda Walker, Director  
Ecosystem Management Coordination  
United States Forest Service  
201 14<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Mailstop 1108  
Washington, DC 20250-1124

Re: Comments on December 20, 2023, Federal Register Notice FR 88, No. 243 88042 – 88048

Dear Director Walker,

Johnson County, Wyoming wishes to submit the following scoping comments regarding the United States Forest Service's (USFS) Federal Register Notice FR 88, No. 243 88042-88048 (Old Growth Plan Amendment). Johnson County is home to the Bighorn National Forest and utilized our cooperating agency status to participate in the forest planning process.

Based on the proposed scoping:

1. Your Old Growth Plan Amendment Notice failed to invite Johnson County to participate as a cooperating agency.
2. Your proposed timeline is not achievable and will prohibit proper engagement of cooperating agencies, forest users, and the general public.
3. The Old Growth Plan Amendment fails to consider Johnson County's Natural Resource Plan as we as the overall forest plan for the Bighorn National Forest.
4. This rule should be withdrawn and individual concerns regarding Old Growth Planning should be addressed through the local planning process.

Decisions pertaining to the Bighorn National Forest should be made on the local and reflect the unique forest needs, not guided by unrealistic edicts from Washington. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (307) 684-7555 or [bnovotny@johnsoncowy.gov](mailto:bnovotny@johnsoncowy.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William J. Novotny, III".

William J. Novotny, III  
Chairman, Johnson County Board of Commissioners

CC: The Honorable Governor Mark Gordon  
The Honorable United States Senator John Barrasso  
The Honorable United States Senator Cynthia Lummis  
The Honorable United States Congressman Harriet Hageman