

North Sand Project
Bearlodge Range District
P.O. Box 680/1015, 21st St.
Sundance Wyoming 82729

1
Wes Thompson

[REDACTED]
Spearfish, S.D. 5778
April 28th, 2024

Dear District Ranger

I am part owner of the Thompson Family Ranch which lies directly north of the proposed project between Red Canyon and Thompson Gulch. It is heartening to see the USFS is finally recognizing that forest management adjacent to private land directly affects said lands. It is wrong the Pacific Northwest had to learn this the hard way.

I grew up packing salt horseback with my grandmother to our permitted cattle in this area. This was early in the 1950's just after Homestake logged this area. The forest was open with many vistas, grass knee high, springs and creeks flowing strongly, to say nothing of ~~the very~~ the very positive contribution forest products and jobs had on the local economy. Not so today with sawmills closing due to the USFS unwillingness to manage the forest properly. The forest no longer looks like this. It is no longer open and brush species such as oak and hawthorn have taken over the understorey further damaging water yield and the grazing resource. This watershed serves domestic water use and irrigated farms between Sand Creek and Newell S.D. to say nothing of the fishing resource.

This damage all started on Earth Day 1970 when young uneducated people were granted ^{a place} at the bargaining table of the Environmental Movement. Emotions trumped science and these people matured and secured power position

especiall in the public land management agencies. This is politics and emotions not sound scientific and proven land management. True, logging is not pretty nor are forest fires but there ^{are} many benefits and nature and good forest management will renew the natural aesthetics ~~and~~ beauty and productivity in a few years.

Deer and Elk are being forced to leave the forest due to lack of forage in an overly thick over-story. This is evidenced by deer problems in towns near the Black Hills. Deer and Elk forced out of the forest are causing crops and pasture damage on private lands north and east of the national forest.

My fear is projects like North land ~~projects~~ are of little use unless followed by major logging projects and sound forest management. It is criminal what the Sierra Club and like minded people are doing to our public lands in the 11 western states. No wonder there a few jobs and related tent cities in Portland Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. Scientific data from the experimental forest north of the first F.S. sale are being withheld from the public because they showed water yield increased significantly with proper forest management. Please pay attention to water yield, scientific forest practices and the contribution multiple use management has on our local economy. Do not let the deteriorating conditions of the B.H. National ~~be~~ on your watch or conscience.

Forest Very concerned & remain, Wes Thompson