



Mark Gordon
Governor

WYOMING Department of Transportation

"Provide a safe and effective transportation system"

5300 Bishop Boulevard, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009-3340



Darin J. Westby, P.E.
Director

June 28, 2024

Attn: Ryan Buerkle
Ashley National Forest
355 N Vernal Ave
Vernal, UT 84078

Subject: Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area Management Plan #63232

Dear Mr. Buerkle:

I am writing on behalf of the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) to provide public comment on the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area Management Plan #63232. WYDOT has reviewed the proposed plan and we appreciate the opportunity to share our concerns regarding potential impacts to transportation infrastructure, particularly where increases and changes in recreation may exhaust existing parking facilities and recreationalists may begin parking along nearby highways. Not only does this create safety and traffic hazards, it is also illegal to park along Wyoming highways, per W.S. 31-5-504.

As the agency responsible for maintaining and ensuring the safety of Wyoming's transportation system, we are concerned about the potential increase in traffic and parking demands that the increases in recreation will likely yield. It is our hope that should existing parking areas become insufficient and spillover parking occurs along highways, the Ashley National Forest will take appropriate action to ensure adequate parking and prevent illegal parking on highways. Further, should recreational access points or fee stations cause traffic slowing or congestion, we encourage the Forest to work with WYDOT on additional traffic and/or roadway modifications to facilitate smooth traffic flow and driver and pedestrian safety.

We recognize the critical role that recreation plays in the economic and social well-being of our communities, and support the efforts of the Ashley National Forest to implement the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area Management Plan to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities in the area. We simply encourage careful consideration of potential impacts to transportation infrastructure and a mutual effort to implement measures to address concerns. I want to extend my gratitude to the Ashley National Forest for the mutual effort already made in working with WYDOT District staff on improvements and modifications needed at the Henry's Fork Wetland Interpretive site.

Please feel free to call me at 307-777-4484, or District Engineer John Eddins at 307-352-3031, with any questions or to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Darin Westby, P.E.
Director