

Peter Schulman

Bradley Brei

Beulah, WY 82712

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April 26, 2024

Delivered by hand on April 26, 2024

USDA

Bearlodge Ranger District

Attn: North Sand Project

PO Box 680

101 S. 21st St.

Sundance, WY 82729

Rec'd 4/26/24 Elizabeth Kruger

Re: North Sand Forest Management Project Proposal and Opportunity to Comment

Peter Schulman and Bradley Brei are homeowners on Sand Creek Road. We, and many of our neighbors, have serious concerns about the above-referenced project, some of which are enumerated and discussed in this letter.

Our concerns include the following:

- 1) Speed and Safety
- 2) Road Damage and Remediation
- 3) Dust Control, Damage and Remediation
- 4) Project Details, Including Reduction in Forest Fire Risks
- 5) Documentation and Enforcement

A brief discussion of our concerns in each of the above categories follows.

SPEED AND SAFETY

Sand Creek Road, and many other roads in the Northern Black Hills, are narrow and have several hills and blind turns. Those of us to live here have experienced several and frequent instances of large trucks, including logging trucks, traveling at high speeds, and many of us have also experienced near misses. The proposed project will significantly increase logging and other contractor traffic, posing a wide range of threats to our community and residents. Also, a project of this scope and duration will include increased traffic during the late fall, winter and early spring, significantly increasing risks due to weather and road conditions (discussed in the next section of this letter).

ROAD DAMAGE AND REMEDIATION

Particularly during the late fall, winter and early spring, under existing conditions, the condition of Sand Creek Road deteriorates. Depending on the weather, the condition of Sand Creek Road can become hazardous. Increased traffic on Sand Creek Road by logging trucks and other large commercial vehicles will significantly exacerbate adverse road conditions.

DUST CONTROL, DAMAGE AND REMEDIATION

Currently, most of the traffic on Sand Creek Road are residents' and visitors' cars and pick up trucks. Large commercial vehicles increase dust by several orders of magnitude. We have all had the experience of being behind big commercial vehicles or having those vehicles pass in the opposite direction, and the dust can create dust "whiteouts." A significant increase in logging trucks will increase dust, significantly increasing health and safety conditions and causing property damage, particularly to homes close to the road.

PROJECT DETAILS, INCLUDING REDUCTION IN FOREST FIRE RISKS

It takes more than thinning forests to mitigate fire risks. Fuel on the forest floor must also be removed. Loggers make their money from logs, not forest floor debris.

DOCUMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Rules and regulations must accompany this project plan, if it progresses towards approval. Perhaps even more importantly, there must be efficient and functional enforcement measures in place, for reasons discussed in the next section of this letter.

OUR OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

We, and many of our neighbors, have lived through large Federal construction projects. The government makes promises and the contractors ignore them. The contractors do what is in their financial best interests and leave the residents to clean up and pay for the contractor's messes and unfinished work. That may be the way of things, but it is not acceptable.

What are you going to do to assure our communities that this project, if approved, will *fully* meet expectations, on timely and contemporaneous basis, including remedies for all foreseeable and unforeseeable adverse consequences and damages.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Peter Schulman

[REDACTED]
Beulah, WY 82712

Bradley Brei
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Beulah, WY 82712

How would you like to be contacted about this or similar projects in the future?

Contact me via e-mail

Enter your comment in the textbox below. Enter contact information in the form fields above.

Do not enter any personally identifiable information (PII) such as address or email in the text editor below. Your name and all information entered into the text box below may be published on this website.

Do not embed images in the text editor. Use **Attachments** to upload images.

Letter Text

This is an addendum to the attached letter, which was delivered to the USDA Bearlodge Ranger District's Sundance office on Friday, April 26, 2024. We understand that loggers frequently work long hours when the weather permits, in order to maximize their earnings. Our further understanding is that collectively, logging traffic can extend into the late evening and early morning hours, after sundown and before sunrise. For obvious reasons, this would be unacceptable, unsafe and disruptive to the communities affected by the proposed project. Also, the USDA is responsible for supervision of the project. The USDA cannot effectively supervise the project in the dark and/or when USDA personnel are not working. This would give the loggers and other contractors free reign for the majority of 24-hour days. Therefore, there should be strictly enforced working hours included in the project rules and regulations.

Attachments

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