

THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE: (406) 444-2074
PO BOX 201601



1539 ELEVENTH AVENUE
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-1601

GOVERNOR GREG GIANFORTE

DNRC DIRECTOR AMANDA KASTER

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Josh Connors , District Ranger Madison Ranger District
5 Forest Service Road
Ennis, MT 5972

Re: Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Comments on the
Greenhorn Vegetation Project Supplemental Environmental Assessment

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Greenhorn Project. The project is located in the northwest corner of the Gravelly Mountains, approximately ten miles south of Virginia City and five miles east of the Ruby Reservoir. Approximately 70 percent of the area is within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) identified in the Madison County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

DNRC has fire protection interests in this area and manages state trust lands in the vicinity. Our agencies share the common goals of reducing fire risk and improving forest health in Montana's forest landscapes. The project is not only important for the national forest system lands but also for the state and private landowners in the area. The project aligns with the goals in the Montana Forest Action Plan (MFAP) which emphasizes actions across boundaries to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health, and retention of a forest industry.

Forest stands in the project area have experienced high mortality from insects. Approximately 80% of the stands in the project area are at high risk for additional Douglas-fir beetle mortality. The project was developed to restore and maintain the structure,

