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First name: William

Last name: Novotny III

Organization: Johnson County Commissioners

Title:

Comments:

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

William J. Novotny, III Robert Perry Jeff Shelley

February 13, 2023

District Ranger Thad Berrett

Powder River Ranger District

Bighorn National Forest

1415 Fort Street

Buffalo, WY 82834

RE: Pole Creek Vegetation Management Plan

Dear Ranger Berrett:

Proper stewardship of the Bighorn National Forest is critical. Thinning and clear cutting have their appropriate uses as you work to manage the timber, prevent wildfire, and protect private property on the mountain. We are pleased you are updating your vegetation management plan. However, we have serious concerns with the Pole Creek Vegetation Management Plan's impact on local recreation.

The year-round recreation that happens at Pole Creek is vital to Johnson County's economy and important to the quality of life for our citizens. Thousands of manhours and hundreds of thousands recreation dollars have been invested in this area. Degrading the recreational experience by removing the timber is unwise and counterproductive. The disturbance that will occur in this area will make it more susceptible to invasive weeds which we work to prevent and control. We do not want to see this area adversely impacted through your management activities.

Removing the Pole Creek Recreation Area from the proposed timber thinning is critical. As you develop your plan, please exclude the Pole Creek Recreation Area from the planned management treatments.

Sincerely,

William Novotny III

Chairman Johnson County Commissioners

76 North Main Street \* Buffalo, WY 82834

Phone: (307) 684-7555 \* Fax: (307) 684-2195