

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/29/2023 7:00:00 AM
First name: Doug
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Organization: Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Title: Director
Comments: November 20, 2023

W. Thadd Berrett

District Ranger

Bighorn National Forest

Powder Ranger District

1415 Fort Street

Buffalo, Wy, 82834

<https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/commentimput?project=64474>

Dear Mr. Berrett,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) comments regarding the proposed Climbing Management Plan (Plan) for the Tensleep Canyon climbing area.

Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, Natural resources and quality of life. As the proposed project could affect our industry citizens, and natural resources it is important that you continue to inform us of proposed action and decisions and continue to provide the opportunity to communicate pertinent issues and concerns.

The WDA supports the Bighorn National Forest (BHF) initiating scoping to develop a Plan for the Tensleep Canyon climbing area. The area encompasses 26,537 acres in the BHF, with over 1,350 climbing routes. Increased use, overcrowding, human and health and safety from waste and parking on the highway, and protection of natural resources are major reasons for developing a Plan.

Part of the Plan area overlaps several grazing allotments. Due to increased use, there is potential for conflict with livestock grazing in the allotments. Potential impacts to livestock permittees should be considered during Plan Development. These impacts include: open gates, Damaged range improvements, potential decreased Animal

Unit Months (AMU) and introduction and spread of noxious weeds.

New proposed facilities (restrooms and parking areas ect.), should be designed to minimize reductions in AUMs to the greatest extent practicable. Additionally, the WDA urges the BHF to find ways to manage dispersed camping to reduce impacts to riparian areas and vegetative habitats in the Plan Area.

The WDA encourages the BHF to incorporate information on livestock grazing on public lands, to educate the public on the multi-use directive, and to reduce potential impacts to livestock permittees. BHF should include signage to alert the public to the presence of livestock and to keep gates closed to alleviated impacts.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Cope, Senior Policy Analyst, at 307-777-7024.

Sincerely,

Doug Miyamoto

Director

DM/LC

CC: Governor's Policy Office

Wyoming Board of Agriculture

Wyoming Stock Growers Association

Wyoming Wool Growers Association

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation

Wyoming State Grazing Board

Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Wyoming County Commissioners Association

Public Lands Council