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First name: Lincoln County

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: January 16, 2025

Nathan Gassmann, District Ranger

Libby Ranger District 12557 US Highway 37

Libby, MT 59923

Re: Pine Flats project

Dear Ranger Gassman,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this critical project and provide our strong support. This project area is identified as "High Priority" within the Lincoln County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and the project area clearly meets the criteria identified within the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) for Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The project area also lies within the Kootenai Fireshed and Kootenai Complex Wildfire Crisis Strategy (WCS) Landscape.

This project was developed in coordination with Lincoln County, Montana DNRC and the Kootenai National Forest (KNF) and the leadership and collaboration from the KNF staff is greatly appreciated. Pine Phlats is a key foundational project in the implementation of our CWPP and of high importance for public safety, protection of private property, critical infrastructure as well as industrial timber lands.

The project also supports the County's Home Ignition Zone efforts by targeting private residences and critical infrastructure adjacent to the project area, a true cross boundary effort.

Lincoln County, through the new Master Stewardship Agreement with the KNF, will also assist with implementation of the project. The leadership, ingenuity, and cooperation of the KNF with the county and local stakeholders is an exceptional, meaningful, example of solving local challenges through local solutions and should be mirrored and replicated throughout the country. We value our partnership, appreciate your leadership, put our full support behind the Pine Phlats project and look forward to assisting as a partner in implementation of the proposed management.

Sincerely,

Lincoln County Commissioners