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Organization: WY Department of Agriculture

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Comments: Please see the attached comment letter from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture regarding the draft Record of Decision for the Bighorn National Forest Invasive and Other Select Plant Management project.

August 29, 2022 Reviewing Officer

USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region 1617 Cole Blvd. Bldg. 17

Lakewood, CO 80401 Attention Reviewing Officer:

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) comments regarding the draft Record of Decision (dROD) for the Bighorn National Forest (BNF) Invasive and Other Select Plant Management project. The dROD for the Project: File Code 1900, signed July 13, 2022, was published in the Casper Star Tribune on July 14, 2022.

The WDA is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life. We have served as a Cooperating Agency and regularly provided comment letters and suggested changes throughout the review of the Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and dROD process.

The WDA has concerns with language in the prescribed burn section (A.4.5) that may impact grazing through decisions regarding rest or deferment for an extended/unknown period of time. Additionally, language in the dRod includes the following unsupported statement with regards to deferment and rest: "It is often that more time and/or growth cycles will be necessary".

The WDA supports the BNF goal to progressively identify management options to treat increasing invasive plant species across the entire forest. We support an adaptive management approach by allowing flexible management options to address future invasive species infestations.

The WDA requests the opportunity to participate as an interested party for all future objection meetings and discussions with regards to the BNF Invasive and Other Select Plant Management project

We look forward to continuing to work closely with your staff on this project. If you have questions, please contact Linda Cope, Senior Policy Analyst at 307-777-7024.

Doug Miyamoto Director

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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