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Comments: To the Decision Makers at the Forest Service:

The proposed rules in the Rangeland Management Directives are antithetical to the the existence of a robust Wilderness. The rules have the potential to adversely impact millions of acres of Wilderness and also public lands and wildlife.

These rules serve livestock owners by expanding grazing activities but for those of us who are stakeholders in public lands, there are legitimate concerns including degraded water quality and soils, the spread of invasive weeds, destruction of riparian and other important habitats, reduced forage for and displacement of native wildlife, and other detriments.

Additionally, the allowance of increased grazing would not only fuel livestock grazing's contribution to the climate and biodiversity crises but conflicts with the Biden Administration's 30x30 land conservation agenda by sacrificing what could be protected lands to the commercial livestock industry.

Impacts from grazing must be fully examined and addressed through a transparent, public process that complies with federal laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act.

Any revisions to Forest Service grazing policies should encourage and prioritize voluntary grazing permit retirement to reduce permitted livestock grazing across the National Forest system, including within Wilderness, so as to protect Wilderness, other public lands, and wildlife.

The Forest Service should not return grazing to the excessive levels permitted in the 1960s when it is clear conditions oftentimes cannot support increased, or even current, grazing levels. The climate has changed in the last 60 years so practices and policies should reflect the conditions of the current times.

The Forest Service must develop policies that ensure the agency will maintain authority for grazing management decisions and hold grazing permittees accountable for the impacts their livestock has on public lands.

Furthermore, the recovery of imperiled or threatened species needs to be prioritized on National Forests and livestock grazing managed so as not to jeopardize species' recovery.

In conclusion, the Forest Service must do the right thing for Wilderness, other public lands, and wildlife by dropping its proposed Rangeland Management Directives.

If the Forest Service wishes to amend its directives, the Forest Service must undertake a more comprehensive rulemaking process that complies with the National Environmental Policy Act.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my comments.