

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/16/2021 5:22:07 PM

First name: John

Last name: Kersting

Organization: JustUs Productions

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service Staff Members:

I have been a teacher, journalist and involved in environmental action and research for over 50 years, watching my mother fight city councils to clean up our rivers and parks. We have been out of doors people all our lives and love our lands.

Many of the communities I belong to in Olympia, WA and Milwaukee, WI as well as my Nonprofit Organization Justus Productions, my friends, family and I have been monitoring the appropriate use and stubborn misuse of our nationally owned lands guided by antiquated laws that should be either eliminated or made more, not less restricted. In 2021 vast numbers of studies and a shift in public opinion has informed us that the exploitation of federal lands threatens our environment, the health of living beings and our survival as a species depends on decisive action now.

We strongly oppose proposed revisions that would expand grazing across our National Forests and within Wilderness by directing vacant allotments to be fully restocked and by returning grazing to the excessive levels permitted in the 1960s, despite conditions that cannot support increased grazing.

This is the opposite direction the FS should take-instead of increasing livestock grazing on public lands, the agency should allow vacant allotments to be permanently closed and should protect Wilderness, other public lands, and wildlife by limiting, rather than increasing, inappropriate livestock grazing in National Forests.

Mining, fishing and grazing have significant negative impacts on our lands that cannot be any longer ignored with faulty science or emotionally driven decision-making not in the public interests. Claims that family or native operations deserve undue latitude disguise the facts showing the changes needed are long, long overdue and perpetuate unacceptable values that could have long lasting effects due to climate change or irreversible erosion damage.

Please take the strongest actions possible to protect our ever-smaller still salvageable or unprotected lands from damage. These lands belong to all the people of the United States and that should be kept at the forefront of every decision. Our communities, families and I have had to adapt to many difficult and disappointing changes and putting them off does not make it easier or better.

Please protect OUR lands properly with every fiber of your being.

Thank you.