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Comments: I am writing to express opposition to the Forest Service's Rangeland Management Directives. These changes have the potential to affect millions of acres of public land, including land designated as Wilderness, and have enormous implications for wildlife and habitat conservation.

Domestic cattle and sheep are already currently allowed to graze about 8 million acres of National Forest Wilderness in the lower 48 states. The original authors of the Wilderness Act opposed grazing in Wilderness areas because grazing is fundamentally at odds with Wilderness protections. The detrimental effects of grazing are widely understood, and include degraded water and soil quality, spread of invasive weeds, destruction of habitat, and displacement of native wildlife.

The Forest Service's proposal to expand grazing in our National Forests and Wilderness areas would exacerbate these negative consequences. This is in direct opposition to the Biden administration's pledge and plans to protect public lands and preserve 30% of the country's federal lands by 2030.

The Forest Service should allow vacant allotments to be permanently closed, and should protect National Forest land, Wilderness areas, and other public lands by limiting livestock grazing.