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Comments: The Forest Service's proposed new rules have huge implications for wildlife and Wilderness on millions of acres of our public lands. Instead of increasing livestock grazing on public lands, I urge the agency to allow vacant allotments to be permanently closed and protect Wilderness, other public lands, and wildlife by limiting, rather than increasing, inappropriate livestock grazing in National Forests.

The negative impacts of livestock grazing are much more clearly understood today than when the Wilderness Act was written. Negative impact examples include 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 more.

Livestock grazing on National Forests, including millions of acres of Wilderness, significantly degrades our public lands. 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 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.

Thank you for your consideration.