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First name: Colleen

Last name: McMullen

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

As a life-long resident of the western rangelands, I am concerned that the current Rangeland Management Directives of the Forest Service have the potential to significantly affect millions of acres of public land, including Wilderness, where livestock grazing is fundamentally at odds with the mandate of the Wilderness Act that Wilderness remain "untrammelled."

Livestock grazing on National Forests significantly degrades our public lands. Therefore, 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.

Furthermore, 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 Service must also 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. This leftover Trump administration proposal to increase grazing would not only fuel livestock grazing's contribution to the climate and biodiversity crises, but runs directly counter to the Biden Administration's 30x30 land conservation agenda by sacrificing what could be protected lands to the commercial livestock industry.

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.

Thanks for your consideration.