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First name: Patrick
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the US Forest Service:
This is my comment for the management of our public lands when it comes to allowing ranchers to graze cattle, sheep, goats and/or other livestock - even bison - on our public lands. First of all, there should be NO GRAZING ALLOWED IN AREAS THAT ARE DESIGNATED WILDERNESS AREAS. It is hard to see why domestic animals should be allowed to alter the wilderness in herds or by single animals. These areas have been set aside by our laws to be wilderness in perpetuity so that every generation hence can enjoy what our forefathers found when they explored this country. They didn't find domesticated sheep, cattle, goats and pigs. They didn't find overgrazed stretches of prairie and juniper forests and trampled stream beds and riparian pollution. They didn't find thousands of acres of juniper, white ash and other trees denuded of their bark by overzealous domesticated animals, nor hillsides lay bare by overgrazing, which strips the land of its nutrients and ground cover and bleeds top soil into clean and clear flowing streams, rivers and lakes. So, please allow wilderness to be wilderness and quit trying to find a way for private citizens and/or corporations - whether privately or publicly owned - to destroy the ecology that our forefathers found intact and working.
This includes stopping the killing of predators of all kinds. Our forefathers did not find bait traps with poison or explosives in them. Our forefathers didn't find steel traps sitting around in the forests, grasslands, meadows, etc. It was a live and let live environment, where all of the animals fit into niches and none overran the others' territories for the economies of the rest.
And, that is how the Wilderness Areas should remain - intact and unencumbered by humankind's ideas of values.

Other Federal Lands: Since there is no designation on the shelf at our grocery stores that indicates whether or not the meat that is being sold is raised on public or private property and, since the price of meat and other products that come from the animals grazed on the public's lands cost less to produce for the ranchers and farmers, etc.(that are permitted to graze their livestock on the public's land, because it has, thus far, lacked the requirements of upkeep, like they encountered on their private land - upkeep which empowers and serves the marketable value of such private land), then I contend that the public doesn't reap the proper benefits for allowing our land to be utilized for private profit. Therefore, the US Forest Service is failing to watch out for the benefits of the public in most of the ways that its policies and practices are written and that means you are failing at your jobs. You see, grass fed beef and range raised beef actually capture a higher premium price than does the beef raised in stockyards and CAFOs, so it is benefitting the people and corporations that graze there animals on the public's land far more than it does benefit the public! Another way it does this is that all of the animals graze much closer to the headwaters of streams and rivers and all of that waste and silt must be dealt with downstream, where the public live in our cities and towns and we must pay higher taxes to clean this water prior to drinking it and using it for irrigation, etc. So, again, the public is being cheated out of the benefits that an unspoiled water source would be for us.
The aforementioned are just 2 examples of why we should altogether stop animals from grazing on public land. However, if the US Forest Service offered permits for grazing and, in return, required the ranchers, herders, farmers, etc. to repair the damage these animals cause to the public's lands and waterways and return them to the their natural ecological conditions and kept them that way each and every year, and, in addition, if the US Forest Service required that those who own permits bear the cost of removing all noxious weeds and invasive plants and the cost of replanting and repopulating native plant and animal species to the environment from which they gain so much, then I can see the public being in favor of the way your government agency operates, because it would be operating for the good of all the people, not just a few hundred or a couple of thousand people or just one industry.
I understand that this would take a massive rewriting of the rules that govern grazing permits. But, these are very unique times. "We the People" are in charge and "We the People" recognize that all of us, including those privileged enough to be using our lands to enrich themselves, are under the threat of climate change. And, if

things are not totally altered to address that one threat, then you, the US Forest Service, are turning your backs on your responsibility to "We the People". And, if you can't recognize, as yourselves being members of "We the People", that we are getting screwed by the way the regulations are written, both before and after the rules you have proposed, then you are stuck in an old economic paradigm and class consciousness, wherein all profits and benefits 'stream up' to the people who already have money and they, in turn, 'tinkle down' on the public below. You have a chance to change all of that and you have the people in power to back you up.
Please, seriously consider what I am suggesting.

If, on the other hand, you are too afraid to confront the future you could be creating and decide to play down your power or to confront it in a cowardly fashion, because you're to afraid to rock the proverbial boat, then please consider the following points of view - some of which I have already delineated:
1)The Rangeland Management Directives 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 "untrammeled";
2) 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 and all 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;
3) The FS should not return grazing to the excessive levels permitted in the 1960s when it is clear that conditions in our landscapes oftentimes cannot support increased, or even current, grazing levels;
4) 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;
5) The recovery of imperiled or threatened species needs to be prioritized in National Forests and livestock grazing managed so as not to jeopardize species' recovery. 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;
6) 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.
I appreciate you for taking the time to read my input. I look forward to the possibility that you will address my concerns and provide the public, "We the People" with the public benefits we deserve.