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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am commenting to request you consider writing a separate management plan for the Elkhorn Grasslands. When I asked about this at the Amidon meeting, I was told they would just be part of the overall management plan for the Dakota Prairie Grasslands. Dang!

Nearly 20 years ago, conservation organizations from across the country got together and raised nearly \$5 million to preserve these lands from being destroyed by the oil industry. The funds were used to purchase the Eberts Ranch by the Forest Service. The organizations are listed below.

The reason this was done is because these lands are where Theodore Roosevelt grazed his cattle, as he looked across the Little Missouri River from the porch of his log cabin on his Elkhorn Ranch, which is now a national park.

The Forest Service said in a 2007 press release, "The Elkhorn Ranch-located in the Badlands of western North Dakota-was the site where President Theodore Roosevelt operated a ranch in the 1880s," and quoted Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns as saying "This is a unique piece of land both historically and ecologically. President Roosevelt helped to define conservation practices throughout the 20th century. The process leading up to acquisition of the ranch embodies principles of cooperative conservation; this is a tribute to President Roosevelt's legacy as well as a symbol of a new and exciting area of conservation and stewardship."

Those involved in that effort expected that a management plan would be written for the Elkhorn Ranchlands, but it never happened. Now, 17 years later, it is time for the Forest Service to be reminded of their words: "This is a unique piece of land."

It's time for the Forest Service to write a separate plan for management of the 5,000 acres of this "unique piece of land," instead of just considering it another part of the million acres of grasslands the Forest Service manages here.

I join with the hundreds of thousands of members of the organizations responsible for acquiring this property in calling on the Forest Service to live up to Secretary Johanns' words: "a tribute to President Roosevelt's legacy as well as a symbol of a new and exciting area of conservation and stewardship."

Here is a list of the organizations.

- * Archery Trade Association
- * Boone and Crockett Club.
- * Bear Trust International.
- * Bowhunting Preservation Alliance.
- * Campfire Club of America.
- * Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation.
- * Dallas Safari Club.
- * Ducks Unlimited.
- * Foundation for North American Wild Sheep.
- * Houston Safari Club.
- * International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.
- * Izaak Walton League of America.
- * National Rifle Association.

- * National Shooting Sports Foundation.
- * National Trappers Association.
- * National Wild Turkey Federation.
- * North American Bear Foundation.
- * North American Grouse Partnership.
- * Orion, The Hunters Institute.
- * Pheasants Forever.
- * Pope and Young Club.
- * Quality Deer Management Association.
- * Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.
- * Ruffed Grouse Society.
- * Safari Club International.
- * Texas Wildlife Association.
- * The Wildlife Society.
- * Theodore Roosevelt Association.
- * Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.
- * Whitetails Unlimited.
- * Wildlife Forever.
- * Wildlife Management Institute.