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Comments: Please see the attached comment letter from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture regarding the USFS Shoshone National Forest Green Union Project.

Dear Sir/Madam, Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) comments regarding the U.S. Forest Service-Shoshone National Forest (SNF), Green Union Project (Project). Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life. As the proposed project could affect our industry, citizens, and natural resources it is important that you continue to inform us of proposed actions and decisions and continue to provide the opportunity to communicate pertinent issues and concerns. The proposed Project will encompass approximately 9,683-acres of mechanical and vegetation thinning and prescribed fire treatments in the SNF. The WDA fully supports the Project proposal to use management practices to improve the health and productivity of the forest, decrease opportunities for disease, and maintain and/or restore forest cover, degree of stocking, and rates of growth. The WDA urges the SNF to consider the benefits of proper livestock grazing management for post-project recovery. There are situations when properly timed high intensity, short duration grazing may be beneficial. In order to meet vegetative objectives, the SNF may work with permittees to develop flexible opportunities to help conditions in the Project area. If any fence-out projects are proposed they should be coordinated in advance with impacted permittees. Fence-out agreements should include agreed upon fencing, end-dates, and/or vegetation conditions for removing fence. If fencing is proposed, plans should provide flexibility and opportunities for permittees to utilize enclosed areas when needed. Permittees will not provide fencing material or maintain fencing on the SNF. As a reminder, the WDA does not support deferring or resting treated areas from livestock grazing. Grazing management and stocking rates should be based on current conditions and meet reasonable and realistic vegetation objectives, documented and agree to prior to the Annual Operation Instruction meetings. The SNF should develop a noxious and invasive weed plan as part of post-project activities. The WDA supports using effective and biologically friendly treatments, including grazing management, to help control noxious and invasive weeds on the forest. We look forward to working with your staff on this project. If you have questions, please contact Linda Cope, Senior Policy Analyst at 307-777-7024.