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Organization: Wyoming State House

Title: Representative

Comments:

Dell Creek and Forest Park Elk Feedgrounds: Long-Term Special Use Permits #60949

To whom it may concern:

I have lived and recreated in Western Wyoming for nearly 4 decades. Currently I have the honor of serving in the Wyoming State House representing District 22 which includes the Forrest Park Elk Feedgorund and is very close to the Dell Creek Feedground. Recently I have had the opportunity to meet with many constituents in Lincoln and Teton Counties to discuss Long-Term Special Use Permits #60949. In each of those meetings the has support has been a continuation of the long-term use (at minimum 20 years) as well as support of the current Wyoming Game and Fish Elk management plan.

The economic impact of any alternative but to extend the Long-Term Special Use Permit 20 years would be catastrophic. Livelihoods dating back generations depend on a healthy and stable elk population in these areas. It is more than economics though, a healthy elk population in NW Wyoming allows for sportsman to enjoy public lands as well as viewing of wildlife by visitors and locals alike. Elk on feedgrounds during Wyoming's challenging winter months helps minimize conflict with agriculture as well as impacts to private landowners. Furthermore, continuing with current proper elk management reduces risk to life and safety related to vehicle VS elk collisions. Wyoming has lived with CWD for decades and closing elk feedgrounds where traditional winter ranges existed decades ago is not part of the solution.

Extending the long-term special use permits on the Forest Park and Dell Creek feedgrounds is imperative for preserving the cultural, economic, hunting, and agricultural way of life while supporting wildlife and conservation.

Sincerely,

Andrew P Byron