



TO: USDA Forest Service, Pike and San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands

FROM: Morton County Commissioners, Morton County, Kansas

RE: Official Comment on the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Plan Revision

On behalf of the citizens of Morton County, we express our gratitude for the USDA Forest Service's formal acceptance of our request to be designated a Cooperating Agency for the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands (CCNGs) plan revision. We are committed to a collaborative and productive partnership throughout this important process.

Morton County's interest in the revision of the Land Management Plan is rooted in a direct and long-standing relationship with the Cimarron National Grassland (CNG). As the largest public land area in Kansas and located almost entirely within our county, the CNG is an integral part of our community's identity, economy, and landscape. We possess a special expertise in the local environmental conditions, historical land-use patterns, and the economic dependencies that define our community.

The grassland is a foundational element of our local economy, providing a critical supply of forage for our livestock industry and generating direct, quantifiable revenue for the county's public services. The revenue derived from grazing fees, pipeline easements, and mineral leases, a portion of which is returned to Morton County for the support of our schools and roads, underscores our vested interest in a sustainable and well-managed grassland.

Morton County's primary objectives for the revised plan are to ensure that it balances ecological health with local economic sustainability. We are prepared to work collaboratively with the Forest Service to achieve shared goals in resource management, particularly in the areas of livestock grazing, water resource conservation, recreation and mineral production.

We respectfully request that the Forest Service make all practicable effort to ensure that the revised plan is consistent with Morton County's existing land-use policies and plans. We believe that by aligning our respective management objectives, we can create a cohesive and effective strategy that benefits both the public lands and the communities that depend on

them.

Morton County stands ready to engage as a dedicated partner in the Interagency Governmental Working Group and looks forward to a successful and mutually beneficial collaboration.



J.W. Finn
Chairman



Ed Anderson
Vice-Chairman



Jim Tucker
Commissioner