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Comments:

Concerning the Draft Revised Forest Plan, I am referring to Chapter 2: Proposed Forest wide Direction. 2.4.5 Permitted Livestock Grazing Standards have been particularly of interest for me. In the third section, alternatives B, C, and E allow targeted grazing by domestic sheep or goats for weed control on I a risk assessment has been conducted and the risk is not glaring for transmitting disease to bighorn sheep. Alternative D does not allow the use of target grazing by domestic sheep or goats.

I would like to speak towards this issue from a weed management perspective. Invasive weeds pose a large decline to the land's economics because of degraded range and forage, losing productivity to producers. Sheep and goats have proven to be an effective tool in managing some invasive species. There is a definitive risk to livestock habitation adjacent to wildlife populations. However, with proper management and monitoring of the livestock herds, it declines the risk of disease transmission and will be more effective in terms of weed control. Practices of using small herds of sheep with a temporary electric fence powered by solar energy have been used in many instances across Montana for targeted grazing. Although this depends on the topography and ecosystem distribution, there are methods to managing sheep and goat herds that ensures targeted grazing effectiveness while minimizing risks of disease transmission.