

Wyo. Game & Fish Dept.
P.O. Box 67
Jackson, WY. 83001

June 13, 1994

Mr. Walt Rogers
U.S. Forest Service
Greys River R.D.
P.O. Box 339
Afton, WY. 83110

Dear Walt,

My staff and I are in the initial phases of planning summer work schedules. Much of this planning focuses on issues that we have been working with your agency on since last summer and through the winter. To my knowledge several of these issues, most notably the conflicts between the Deadman area domestic sheep grazing allotment and crucial elk winter range and conflicts between big game winter range and winter recreation throughout the district remain unresolved. I am unclear what your schedule is to address these issues. I would like to direct my staff to assist you in seeking a resolution to these complex issues through the work schedule process.

Last August, Gary Fralick and Duane Hyde surveyed the Deadman winter range and domestic sheep grazing allotment with members of your staff and permittee Fred Roberts. It is my understanding that a commitment was made by your predecessor, John Newcom, to revisit the issue with Fred Roberts regarding the location of the loading corrals on Deadman Creek and domestic sheep grazing on crucial elk winter range that appears to be contrary to the Deadman S & G allotment management plan (AMP). Naturally, we have serious concerns regarding domestic sheep grazing on crucial elk winter ranges when the AMP calls for saving these areas for wildlife use.

We believe it is important to address this issue in a timely and satisfactory manner so that all affected parties can work toward a desirable win-win solution. As I stated in my November 29, 1993 letter, I would like to explore all possible scenarios in a spirit of cooperation between our agencies and Mr. Roberts to find a solution to this complex issue. My staff is prepared to assist in whatever way possible.

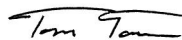
The second issue that we raised last fall was the location of the Afton snowmobile hillclimb and the commitment you made to form a local task force or ad hoc committee to develop and implement a winter travel plan for the Greys River Ranger District, especially as it may apply to the crucial winter ranges along the Star Valley Front. I am uncertain what your timeline is regarding this issue and how future requests of this nature will be addressed on the Greys River Ranger District.

As you know, my staff and I are very much opposed to unrestricted snowmobile activity involving crucial winter range on National Forest system lands. The Star Valley Front provides crucial winter range for elk, deer, and moose. In my December 7, 1993 letter, I expressed a concern that snowmobile activity on crucial wildlife winter ranges could possibly render the winter range ineffective. This is especially true along the Star Valley Front where wildlife are concentrated at lower elevations during winter and vulnerable to human disturbance.

As one possible solution to this matter, I encourage you to recommend to Afton area snowmobilers to continue to utilize City of Afton property, as they did in 1994, or private property to conduct future hillclimbs. However, this recommendation does not deal with the issue of unrestricted snowmobile activity in this area or in portions of the Greys River.

My staff and I are prepared to assist you in order to insure that these issues are resolved in a manner that is agreeable to all affected interests. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Tom Toman
District Supervisor