

Garr Canyon Ranch
Congdon Family
PO Box 240085
Dell, Montana 59724-0085

Big Sky Natural Beef, Inc.
PO Box 240085
Dell, Montana 59724-0085

May 23, 2011

United States Senate
Committee Hearing, May 25, 2011

Re: S268 Forest Jobs and Recreation Act of 2011
Written Comments - Testimony – S 268

Ladies and Gentlemen;

This testimony is submitted on behalf of myself, numerous other southwest Montana persons and the Montana Cattlemen's Association.

The suggested changes are minimal in text but are substantial in issue and effect.

(1)Section 101, 3 - add "while incorporating the policies set forth in 16 USC Section 2003 (b), 16 USC, Section 2008, 16 USC, Section 1508, and 16 USC, Section 3411(5)".

This recognizes and encourages local participation and a vested interest in success, locally.
(see attached)

(2) Section 101, 5 - add "in a manner incorporating multiple use strategies where practicable".

This acknowledges the planning- management mandate that applies to USFS lands. Multiple use is very important on the ground and seems consistent with forest jobs and sustainable management.

(3) Section 105 (c), Biomass – add "firewood" after "small diameter materials". Rural communities depend on this biomass. Of 92 households in Lima, Montana, 78 heat with wood - not oil, gas or electric. This is important environmentally and economically, as much of the community is very low income.

(4) Section 204 (i), page 31, Livestock – add "(4) to facilitate the purposes set forth in this Section and Act, grazing may be allowed as a management tool."

This may be goats or sheep grazing for weed control, cattle grazing for fuel reduction, or livestock for wildlife habitat improvement, like the Fleecer Mountain project of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the Wisconsin Oak Savannah Restoration project – Wisconsin DNR.

This tool may eliminate the need for mechanical or chemical control or activities to achieve the purposes of this Act.

- (5) Section 204 (L), page 33, (1) before water storage, add “water rights”

A ditch with no water right is not useful, just as a water right with no ditch is not useful. This addition seeks to remedy this problem.

- (6) Section 204 (L)(1)(B) (i) – delete “on the non-Federal land”, as the water rights and structures are often for use on both private and public lands, for grazing, fire protection, etc. The land use and management are integrated, and the water that facilitates this should be recognized and used and managed similarly.

- (7) Section 103 (f) (2) (B) inclusions, IV, add “resources produced , maintained, and reduced or increased, including RVDs, Fish and Wildlife populations, grazing aum’s, forest products production and other quantifiable commodities or products”.

This provides users, the agency and all participants with an inventory of how and what was produced – not produced, or impacted by the activities conducted hereunder. These numbers are very real to persons on the ground and should facilitate a commitment to success. They will also facilitate a broader evaluation of the total impact of this bill and related management activities.

- (8) Section 101 (1) - add “restore” after “preserve”,

Management is a needed activity to accomplish the benefits contemplated by this Act and other Federal laws. Utilization of the forest products produced requires infrastructure. Much

of the infrastructure needs to be rebuilt, and recognizing this should help facilitate doing so. This may be rebuilding small sawmills that no longer exist machine shops that manufacture equipment for processing forest products, or machine shops to maintain rolling stock.

I appreciate, on behalf of myself, Montana Cattlemen's Association and others, the opportunity to comment. We also appreciate the changes you have made on this bill since last year, and believe that you have all responded to many of the concerns we expressed. With these or similar changes, we support this act and hope that this will facilitate a local, on the ground commitment to success. We believe this is the first effort to address Wilderness issues with consideration of multiple uses and hope for the success of this management strategy.

Respectfully submitted,
s/Wally

Walter E. Congdon

attach.

16 U.S.C. Section 2003 (b)

“Recognizing that the arrangements under which the federal government cooperates through conservation districts with other local units of government and land users have effectively aided in the protection and improvement of the nation’s basic resources, it is declared to be the policy of the United States that these arrangements and similar cooperative arrangements should be utilized to the fullest extent practicable”

16 U.S.C. Section 1508

“The Secretary [of Agriculture] shall, in addition to appropriate coordination with other interested federal, state, and local agencies, utilize the services of local, county, and state soil conservation committees.”

16 U.S.C. Section 3411 (5)

Congress finds solutions to “chronic erosion-related problems should be designed to address the local social, economic, environmental and other conditions unique to the area involved to ensure that the goals and policies of the federal government are effectively integrated with the concerns of the local community...”

16 U.S.C. Section 2008

“In the implementation of the Act, the Secretary [of Agriculture] shall utilize information and data available from other federal, state and local governments.”