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Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks

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WILDLIFE DIVISION

Office Memorandum

TO : Dick Johnson
FROM : Jim Posewitz *JP*
SUBJECT: Beartooth W.M.A. Grazing

DATE: July 2, 1984

By way of follow-up to the staff discussion on grazing the Beartooth W.M.A., I urge that a number of issues be brought up for discussion and resolution.

1. The Commission should adopt a clear set of policy guidelines before we have a proliferation of grazing permits and, subsequently, dependent livestock operators.
2. Commission policy provisions should be supported by Montana Environmental Policy Act procedures and compliance.
3. The public, particularly sportsmen, should be given an opportunity to comment on both the program and individual grazing agreements.
4. All pending domestic livestock grazing plans of a specific nature should be put on hold until the above steps are taken.

Specifically, in the case of the Beartooth W.M.A., there are also some restrictions prohibiting commercial activity that were imposed when the property was acquired. In that respect, it is unique among our holdings. They may be constraints that can eventually be negotiated given the integrity of the particular landowner we are dealing with. While it would be embarrassing to get bureaucratic with a landowner we highly respect and who does a lot for wildlife, it would be worse to start something that is fatally flawed because we didn't do our homework. As issues, those special restrictions, M.E.P.A., compliance, public participation and policy guidelines are all steps that must come before a grazing plan is developed and a livestock operator led to believe we are in the domestic livestock grazing business.

JAP/bfs

cc: Dale Witt
Joe Egan
Dan Vincent