July 28, 2022

Proposed Chalk Buttes Timber Sale on State Land
Section 36, Township 1S Range 56E

To Whom It May Concern:

The Eastern Land Office of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation is in the initial planning and scoping phase of the Chalk Buttes timber sale in Carter County in Southeastern Montana. Section 36 Township 1S Range 56E is located 15 miles southwest of Ekalaka, MT. The proposed timber sale is part of a program that manages forested State Trust Land for revenue to support public schools. The purpose of this letter is to identify issues and concerns as they relate to the proposed project. A brief description of the proposed action is listed below.

- Harvest approximately 600,000 thousand to 700,000 thousand board feet of Ponderosa Pine over approximately 275 acres. The proposed harvest would contribute to the DNRC's sustained yield as mandated by state statute 77-5-222.
- Preliminary surveys indicate that the silvicultural treatment would be a selective harvest with an effort to reduce stocking levels to a more historic, pre-fire suppression stand density, while maintaining the current multi-age stand structure.
- Approximately 1-2 miles of new road construction is anticipated. Approximately 1-3 miles of temporary spur roads would be necessary to accomplish the management objectives. These roads would be obliterated at the completion of the project through ripping the road surface and seeding back to native grass species.
- 3-5 miles of existing road on Private land would be incorporated as well.
- This proposed action would reduce fire hazards, fuel loading, increase forest health, and improve forage for wildlife and cattle.

The DNRC is in the scoping phase of the project environmental assessment so all volumes, acreages and road distances are preliminary estimates. In preparation for this project, specialists such as wildlife biologists, hydrologists, soil scientists and archaeologists will be consulted.

Please review the proposed action and provide comments on any issues or concerns by August 13, 2022. If more information is needed or an on-the-ground review desired, please don't hesitate to contact me. Please submit written comments or direct any questions to:

DNRC
Attn Andy Miller
P.O. Box 1794
Miles City, MT 59301
(406) 232-2034

Thank you for your time and effort.

Respectfully yours,

Andy Miller
Forester, ELO

"AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER"