



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 01 October 2019
To: United States Forest Service
From: Jacob Pries, Policy Intern
Re: Ashley National Forest Land Management Plan

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), we would like to state our support for the proposed revising and updating of the Ashley National Forest Land Management Plan. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. Founded in 1988, the QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

At QDMA, we believe that proper forest management practices are vital to the preservation of deer, wildlife habitat and the deer hunting tradition. With proper management of our forests being so vital to their successful preservation, it is important that we encourage sound, science-based forest management activities. We strongly encourage the United States Forest Service to continue to consider activities that promote habitat enhancement, forest resiliency, and public access. Additionally, we want to encourage the United States Forest Service to consider the impacts of facilitating the continued existence of a healthy deer population.

A healthy deer population within the Ashley National Forest contributes to a deeply rooted hunting tradition and deer hunters are an important driver of the local economy. The deer that hunters pursue depend on the sound and updated forest management activities in this proposal. According to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, Utah hunters help contribute \$1.04 billion dollars annually while supporting 19,677 jobs and Wyoming hunters help contribute \$778 million annually while supporting 13,943 jobs. With economic resilience being one of the goals in this proposal, it is clear that the interests of the hunting community must not be ignored moving forward on this project.

Additionally, we would like to see these forest management activities provide improved access to land within the Ashley National Forest for continued recreational opportunities. Hunters are the original conservationists who have continually provided extensive funding to wildlife and habitat conservation efforts. By increasing the accessibility of these lands, you will increase the opportunity for individuals to experience what makes the time-honored tradition so great, thus ushering in the next generation of conservationists. On behalf of the QDMA, we would like to thank you for your time on this matter and consideration of our comments.

Respectfully,

Jacob Pries
Policy Intern
Quality Deer Management Association