95

COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

"Representing the interests of Colorado's cattle industry since 1867"

April 19, 2000

USDA Forest Service Content Analysis Enterprise Team
Attn: UFP, Building 2, Suite 295
5500 Amelia Earhart Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Dear Enterprise Team:

On behalf of the over 2,700 members of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA), we thank you for the opportunity to comment on the "Unified Federal Policy for Ensuring a Watershed Approach to Federal Land and Resource Management", as published in the *Federal Register* on Tuesday, February 22, 2000 pages 8835-8840.

A concern that we at the CCA have is the general vagueness of the policy. In all of the goals and objectives that are proposed none of them state the specific ways the water improvements will occur. It is appropriate to work with agencies at the local level, however, it doesn't say how this will happen. Cattlemen support and contribute to clean water, and we believe that there are many ways to obtain this goal. It is likely that our ways of getting to this goal are not the same ways that you see reaching this goal. You may or may not have a good plan but without publishing it, we can't comment on this plan.

This plan has the potential of the federal government overstepping it's legal authority. In Colorado, we have our own water laws and water courts. This plan will intertwine the collaboration and monitoring of water between the federal and state governments, thus making things very complicated.

Grassland soils provide excellent biological filter to recover nutrients passing through the soil. In turn, the density of the grass increases due to the increase of nutrients, and the quality of the soil increases as well. Studies done by the USDA-ARS have shown that both surface and ground water from a grassland watershed were as good as or better than water from an adjacent pristine forested watershed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Vernon Sharp

Vernon Sharp
President

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APR 21 2000

8833 Ralston Road, Arvada, CO 80002 • Phone (303) 431-6422 • Fax (303) 431-6446 • Visit us on the Web at: http://cca.beef.org

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