



# News Release

USDA Forest Service  
Bighorn National Forest



## Public Comment Meetings Scheduled for Bighorn Forest Plan Revision

Bighorn National Forest Supervisor Bill Bass has announced a series of Forest Plan Revision public comment meetings to be held during the last week of September. The 90-day comment period for the Draft Forest Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) ends on September 30. The schedule for the public comment meetings is:

Town	Date	Time	Location
Greybull	9/27	6 – 8 pm	Elks Lodge, 622 Greybull Avenue
Sheridan	9/28	6 - 8 pm	Sheridan College, Science Center, Room 104
Worland	9/29	6 – 8 pm	Washakie County Fairgrounds Meeting Hall
Buffalo	9/30	6 - 8 pm	BLM Office Conference Room, 1425 Fort Street

Forest Supervisor Bass said that, “People will have 3 minutes to share their opinions about the future management of the Bighorn National Forest with me, my staff, and fellow Bighorn National Forest users.” There will be no recording of comments, so presenters are asked to submit a copy of their comments in writing when they sign in or upon completing their oral comments.

Just over 100 people attended the Revision public meetings held in late July and early August, and local citizens commented on a number of items. “How travel is managed, as far as access and open roads, was the issue brought up most often,” according to Bass. He noted, “However, the full spectrum of issues you might expect, from how to protect forests from fire, insects, and disease, to the pros and cons of additional Wilderness areas, were discussed.” Forest Supervisor Bass continued, “I really want to thank all the people who have participated in the public meetings we have held to date. In all of the meetings, people have been extremely respectful and courteous when discussing these important, tough issues.”

Out of more than 6,000 e-mail comments and 60 written comments received to date, about 6,000 have been ‘votes’ for Alternative C. “Local and regional wilderness and roadless advocates have done an excellent job at mobilizing their constituents,” said Bass. People go to a petition website, click a few keys, enter a few sentences for their rationale in support of Alternative C, and the comment is forwarded on. Bass noted, “Petition-type ‘votes’ like this count as one comment, although we will tally how many we receive. The comment is ‘adopt Alternative C’, with the individual ‘customization’ support for that Alternative.”

Bass noted that during the public meetings people were asked to be as specific as possible with their comments, and that the Preferred Alternative, D, would be modified with the best aspects of the other

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alternatives. “I have heard that some people have not commented because they believed the decision is already made”, Forest Supervisor Bass said. Bass continued, “There is no doubt that there will be changes made between the Draft Forest Plan and the final Plan, but I need to hear from you, the ‘landowners’, on what changes should be made.” Some of the items people might comment on include, but are not limited to:

- Should there be a scenic byway management area along the U.S. highways?
- Should there be additional Wilderness, Wild/Scenic Rivers, or Research Natural Areas?
- How many acres of suited timber (lands where timber sales for wood fiber production objectives can occur) should be designated? The alternatives range from about 62,093 acres in alternative C to about 305,535 acres in alternative E. Where these areas are located is also an important comment.
- Should Piney Creek and Rock Creek be roaded? If so, why? For motorized recreation or timber harvest or healthy forest objectives? Should those areas be left as they are today? Should they be recommended as Wilderness?

Additional information about Forest Plan Revision is available on the web at: [www.fs.fed.us/r2/bighorn/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/bighorn/), click on “Forest Plan Revision”. Written comments can be sent to: Bighorn National Forest Plan Revision; 2013 Eastside Second Street, Sheridan, WY 82801; or e-mailed to: [r2\\_bighorn\\_planning@fs.fed.us](mailto:r2_bighorn_planning@fs.fed.us). Bass said, “Forest officials are available to visit with your group. We have found this to be an excellent way for people to find out about the specific topics of interest to them.”

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