



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

South Dakota Chapter
Public Lands Committee
Mark Norton, Chair
2012 E. Broadway
Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 295-4190

March 10, 2017

Kelly Warnke
Black Hills National Forest
Hell Canyon Ranger District
1019 N. 5th Street
Custer, SD 57730

Subject Line: Limber Pine Restoration Project
Email to: comments-rocky-mountain-black-hills-hell-canyon@fs.fed.us

Dear Ms. Warnke,

The South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society (SDTWS) submits comments on the proposed Limber Pine Restoration Project within the Norbeck Wildlife Preserve on Black Hills National Forest. The Wildlife Society is an international non-profit scientific and educational association dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. The South Dakota Chapter achieves this mission in part by evaluating the principals involved in proposed public actions that affect wildlife and habitats. Our Chapter goals and objectives are outlined at: <http://wildlife.org/south-dakota-chapter/>

We support this project to restore limber pine within the Norbeck Wildlife Preserve. Our Chapter is interested in all projects that will occur in the Norbeck Wildlife Preserve, which was created to provide breeding habitat specifically for the benefit of game animals and birds. Limber pine is known as nesting and seed foraging habitat for songbirds. Small mammals also gather and cache limber pine seeds and wild ungulates use it as browse. Within the Black Hills, limber pine is a rare species that has been negatively impacted by the native pine beetle and non-native blister rust. We agree that this project will increase habitat diversity within the Norbeck Wildlife Preserve and enhance its ability to fulfill its purpose.

Thank you for requesting our review of this proposed project. Please continue to send us correspondence on this and other wildlife habitat projects within the Black Hills National Forest. Previous names and addresses on record for the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society Public Lands Committee should be replaced with my name and address.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Norton", is written over a series of horizontal lines.

Mark Norton, Chair
Public Lands Committee
manorton@hotmail.com