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THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY
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To: Jim Murkin - BLM Casper Office

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From: BLM Action Center

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TWS Endorsement of BCA comments



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THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Four Corners States Regional Office

October 18, 2006

Via Facsimile – 307-261-7587

Jim Murkin
BLM Casper Field Office
2987 Prospector Drive
Casper, WY 82604

Re: Citizens' Wilderness Inventory for the South Fork of the Powder

Dear Mr. Murkin,

The Wilderness Society (TWS) *is* submitting this letter to formally **support and** endorse *The South Fork of the Powder: A Citizens' Wilderness Inventory*, submitted by Biodiversity Conservation Alliance to your office today.

TWS's **mission is** to protect America's wilderness and wildlife **and** to develop **a** national network of wild **lands** through **public** education, scientific analysis, and advocacy. Our **goal is** to ensure that future **generations** will enjoy the clean air and water, wildlife, natural beauty, opportunities for recreation, and spiritual renewal that pristine forests, rivers, deserts, grasslands and mountains provide. We have worked to **protect** wilderness-quality lands **across** the United States since **1935** - from advocating for and achieving **the** passage of the **Wilderness Act** of 1964, to working for designation of millions of acres of wilderness across the nation since that time, and now through **ensuring** the protection of wilderness **quality** lands under the jurisdiction of the BLM, including through the **agency's** planning processes.

The lands identified **in the** Biodiversity Conservation Alliance's inventory have the **size**, naturalness, and outstanding solitude **and** opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation required for Congressional designation under **the** Wilderness Act. The ultimate protection of **this** landscape would make an important contribution to the National Wilderness Preservation System, which does not current include **designated** wildernesses in shortgrass prairie ecosystems, the land cover type contained within the South **Fork of the** Powder unit. In the interim, it is vital that the BLM take immediate steps to protect the wilderness values of these lands. The BLM has assured Congress **and** the citizens of this country that **it can and will** protect the wilderness values of **our public lands**; the BLM should fulfill its commitment for the lands in the South **Fork of the** Powder.

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Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 555(c), we petition the RLM to **re-inventory** and carry out a formal evaluation of the area's wilderness characteristics, and to protect these lands from future oil and gas development, surface disturbance, pipeline and transmission line rights-of-way, and other **activities** that would degrade or impair the wilderness under the revised **Casper** Resource Management Plan,

Thank **you** for your consideration. We look forward to your response **and** to seeing these **lands** protected.

Sincerely,



Nada Culver, Senior **Counsel**
Heath Nero, Outreach Coordinator
BLM Action Center
(303) 650-5818