

June 5, 2024

Linda Jackson, Forest Supervisor

Payette National Forest

500 North Mission Street

McCall, ID 83638

Dear Supervisor Jackson:

These comments concern the EFSF RAMP and are submitted on behalf of the Idaho Recreation Council (IRC). IRC is an organization composed of Idahoans from all parts of the state with a wide spectrum of recreation interests and a desire to preserve recreation opportunities for this and future generations. Our members include 4X4ers, ATVers, Horse Back Riders, Motorcyclists, Mountain Bikers, Rockhounds, RVers, Motorized and Non-motorized Boaters, Rafters, Equestrians, and Snowmobilers (Idaho State Snowmobile Association). We have an interest in any projects that affect recreation and access in Idaho. I represented IRC/motorized recreation on the Big Creek Yellow Pine Collaborative as well as on the Payette Forest Collaborative.

The decisions the Forest Service makes in this document will determine the future of the community of Yellow Pine. Can it be economically viable or will it be just another ghost town? Many of Idaho’s small rural communities that once depended on logging and mining have now become dependent on recreation and that requires access! There are two roads, Sugar Creek, and the Red Metal Mine Road, which are necessary to support recreational activities in Yellow Pine and they are not adequately covered in the Draft EFSF RAMP. In 1997, Payette NF Access Management Plan, these roads were classified as ‘Open’ but over 6 years ago the Forest closed them. There are other roads that are important to the recreating public.

* Sugar Creek Road

We urge you to reconsider opening this road as ML2 but instead open it as trail open to 70” and under. As we know, roads are expensive to maintain and it is likely this road will never be opened due to funding issues. There are funds available through IDPR for trail maintenance which makes a trail designation a wise and prudent decision. This trail would provide an in and out ride to view the Cinnabar site which is desired by the recreation community.

* Red Metals Mine Road:

On behalf of the recreating public who use this road for access to Crater Lake for riding, hiking, and fishing, please open this existing route to a trail limited to OHVs 70” and under. The in-holder of the property has expressed a willingness to allow public access across the property for recreation purposes.

This document completely ignores the existence of this road, even though it is included on many Payette National Forest Visitor and Travel Maps. There is no reason not to open it as a trail except for the willingness.

* Parks Peak Cut-off Trail 074, and Rainbow Ridge 070 and Parks Creek Trail 069:

In the 1994-1995 Payette Travel Map, these trails were motorized but in the 2008 Krassel TMP decision they were nowhere to be found. We can find no explanation to explain why the change in the designation. These were popular single-track trails and they again should be designated motorized single-track trails. CITRA is committed to helping with the annual maintenance of these trails.

The document also does nothing to address the need for increased access to our public lands. Access has continually been reduced over the years and as a result, we have seen over-use or no use in areas. The Forest has a responsibility to the recreating public to provide reasonable access to the public lands. Sadly, it appears, another opportunity to do that will be lost!

Alternative D is the best choice; however, it should and can be improved by including additional roads and trails including those mentioned above.

We adopt by reference the comments of Chris and Lois Swarzhoff.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A close up of a letter

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