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Organization:

Title:

Comments: 6/18/16 Saturday

Dear Forest Plan Revision Team:

My name is John Bigas wife's name Pam. I received the complete paper document Feb. 22, '16. I eagerly poured over every page and read all the documents. We are hikers, bikers, skiers, campers, nature lovers and have been driving over to this beautiful part of Washington since the 1970's. We have seen the ancient sharpening stone overlooking the Kettle river. Explored the ghost town of Toroda, the smallest State Park. We have camped at Swan lake, hiked the old growth forests of 13 mile cr. We spent two whole vacations backpacking the Kettle Crest Trail from Boulder-deer creek divide to sherman pass and back (no car shuttle) and the next year Sherman pass south to white mt. road and back. Walked the historic CCC log flume site. Explored the narrow lake up Hoodoo canyon. Shopped in Colville, got gas camping supplies. Hiked to the top of Abercrombie Mnt. from campground at silver creek and also from Flume cr. Trailhead. Camped at Leo lake in spring when it was 20o overnight. Camped at Sullivan Lake and hiked the lakeshore. Drove the car to the lookout at Salmo Mnt. Hiked through waist high lupine, valerian, paintbrush to the top of Shedroof mt. Looked far far down at Priest lake from Grassy Top mt. Were the only ones at the Gardner caves? (Crawford St. Park) and we were given a special tour by the State Park ranger.

I remember reading in the pre 1988 planning document our Mayor Charles Royer (Seattle) commented that although the Colville National Forest far away from the congested, polluted, noisy, impersonal environment of our town (10 hr drive) it would be a state treasure and a place to discover the friendlier, slower paced undeveloped Washington much as it was in the 1950's.

I was very sad after I read your document and was not going to "waste" my time trying to convince your team to deviate from the timber extraction path the forest was going down for so long. Forest Service personnel living in a community where statements such as "motorized usage of the Kettle Crest Trail would improve emergency rescues".

Kettle Crest trail a national treasure and premier Colville forest trail given no special treatment. Washington Trails driving over from Seattle to try to restore some recreation resources neglected for decades. A ridgetop wilderness lacking the complete ego-system because the valuable (money) forest in the valley was excluded. Roads reconstructed for logging operations allowed to deteriorate after the cut. Clear-cutting harvests when selective thinning to enhance old growth character would leave habitat for the forest animals, retention of forest cover and soil, slower melting of snow runoff in spring, a more natural appearance of the landscape. This was the chance to adopt an attitude that we are "borrowing" from our grandchildren this resource.

The ratio of wilderness (the highest degree of protection) is way out of whack. A million acre parcel of land with barely 30,000 acres of primitive america, the one thing in short supply. You must realize I live in an area where parks purchased with forward Thrust funds to offset explosive growth are being sold due to a lack of moneys allocated to maintain these parks, open space on scenic chuckanut drive near Bellingham being clear cut because negotiated open space agreements are not being funded. State Parks closing or being let to run down to shabby state due to lack of funding. State forest lands with recreation trails in place clearcut and lost forever, lands close to millions of people, snow free all year long destroyed for school support. Every high point overlooking the city cloaked in towers emitting non-ionized radiation, huge jet liners flying overhead all night long. Foul petroleum smelling air and black soot on patios and cars.

To loose the beautiful, beautiful Colville Forest with all its secret, primitive places, to a grubby, destructive,

dangerous occupation such as logging causes pain in my heart. I can't tell you how many abandoned logging town I have driven through on my explorations of the northwest, The old lumber yard of Preston, Wa. Is now covered with a artificial turf, soccer field, lit for play on those drizzly fall day when it gets dark at 5 PM. Hundreds of cars looking for a place "as the guide book writer Harvey Manning once wrote "where a person might put his or her feet in." Indeed this is a such a problem a sign at Wallace Falls state park read if all the parking spaces are taken (and most were) no other parking is available and you will be ticketed by the Sherriff. This is the state of the state in our neck of the woods. Our part of the state is not considered the wild west to be used "for the needs of our communities". A timber based community is dependent on a slow growing finite commodity and increasing the cut will have the opposite affect of producing "social enhancement" and a "resilience". Now with people able to do high teck work via the internet, aging of the baby boomers (relocated retirement), expansion of Spokane, a new bold vision for the Colville is needed. In my forty years being involved in land management planning I always see alternatives ranging from conservative (environmental) to industrial usually the forest service provides and picks an alternative with a few "crumbs" for the tree huggers and procedes with the plan to get out "the over mature decadent underproductive forest" and replant with a single species (timber co. love douglas fir) vigorous new crop planted way too close together and due to lack of funding the thinning which provides no money never gets done.

I'm 64 years old with a degree in business and 45 years in the woods (Sept '16) prove me wrong Rodney Smoldon. Are you a native Washingtonian do you "love" our home or are you about to relocate to Gila National Forest for a better job, are you going to have a fully staffed trail crew? Thanks for the opportunity to vent my frustrations!

Best wishes and prayers for you and your team. I'll probably be gone when the next revision occurs.

John C & Pamela R Bigas

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