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Organization:

Title:

Comments: For over 100 years Yellow Pine has served as a resource to the Stibnite and Thunder Mountain mining districts. I acknowledge and support their right to mine the available minerals.

The access to this area from Yellow Pine has always been via the 12 mile route on the Stibnite Road, even while mining haul roads used other access such as the thunder mountain road. By closing the Stibnite road at the "North Gate" travel time to Stibnite, Monumental summit, Roosevelt and the Frank Church Wilderness has just increased exponentially. This will have severe negative impacts to tourism, local businesses, and the residents of Yellow Pine.

Access to the Frank Church wilderness from Yellow Pine is limited to a few access points on the west side: Big Creek, Monumental summit and Pistol Creek. Removing access by the Stibnite road makes the Monumental creek portion of the Frank Church wilderness unavailable for those wanting a 2-3 day trip rather than a two week expedition.

The Plan suggests that the "powerline" access road is a realistic alternative route to the area; in reality this will be a very rough jeep or ATV trail, certainly not usable for a truck & horse trailer, camper or van.

We have had public access to the Stibnite & Thunder Mountain districts for the 45 years that I have been in the area. The plan to cut this access off at "North Gate" for the next 20 years is simply unacceptable and there must be an alternate route that does not cut the town of Yellow Pine out. A route through the Cinnabar mine area has been mentioned, also in past mining operations haul trucks and personal traffic on the same road were not mutually exclusive.

Roadless Area issue:

The Burnt log/thunder mtn road that is proposed by the plan is through a roadless area. With all the publicly accessible roads that have been closed in this area it appears that there is a double standard in place and I find that troubling. There is a locked gate at the Red Metals mine road, but it's Ok to put in an improved 26' cross-section access road to Stibnite through a roadless area?