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First name: Clark

Last name: Smith

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Occupation: A miner in the Pierce Mining District

Experience: Recreational dredge and Hard Rock mine, 1981-1986

California, Mother Lode, American Rivers.

Recreational dredge and prospected, Oregon, Sixes River 1998 - 1999

Recreational dredge and prospected, Hard rock Mine, Idaho, Pierce mining district, 2002 - 2007

Prospected and dredged Idaho City, Idaho, Salmon, Id, Bitterroot Mountains 2008

2002 - 2007 Profitably & safely, in full compliance with MSHA, Forest Service and BLM regulations. I was the #2 operator at the Bond Mine and Mill site for 5 years.

2008 - present Working towards getting the Klondike group underground and into production. T37N, R6E, SEC34.

I'd like to start with acknowledging what a huge responsibility and task that's ahead of you and would like to thank all of you in advance for all of your hard work and service to all of us on this project as well as future projects.

The first thing I would like to address in this forest service plan revision is the time frame we were given for our comments, example, the 9 days leading up to the meeting in Grangeville, Id. (1-29-18), the plan wasn't available on the website. This made it virtually impossible to grasp what the meeting was about, let alone make an informed list of suggestions for the meeting. After finally receiving the 100+ pages I had only 11 days to read and respond with my input. The Forest Revision Plan is a complex document which it made it difficult to follow, anyone who has attempted to understand the document has 20 pages of glossary and acronyms that one must first try to understand before reading. I'm not trying to degrade the document, lots of important information but only wish I had had more time to analyze.

With more time, I probably wouldn't have missed so many important points that affect all the users of the forest lands. What I am saying is that the time frame was inadequate, to say the least. I had the plan in my hands for all of 3 days and found myself pressed to identify questions before the Jan 12th deadline. The Forest Service has put several years worth of planning with several years left to complete, you're only giving the public days to comment, can you add more time for responses in the future?

My first and biggest concern was in the beginning before I ever received the Forest Plan revision document, all I could get off of the internet was the FPR Schedule and the last pages were contact information for team members directly involved in the project. Their skill sets were forest planner, forester, wildlife biologist, ecologist, landscape architect, fish biologist, geologist and all most likely experts in their field. The problem I saw, which appeared obvious, there is no one representing the entities using the forest, in particular the mining &

logging industry.

I believe mining and logging both should have a team member involved in the process. Some of the reasons are we only have 1 geologist for the entire Clearwater National Forest and the Nes Perce National Forest. Many times in the past, I have to wait until the geologist could get out to my claim, this is where a mining expert could field some of the workload and questions that the geologist maybe doesn't know or hasn't been trained for.

With a seemingly pro-mining Administration and with our President pushing the Strategic Minerals Act and with some of those minerals being located in Idaho I can easily see the Forest services case load for new plans of operations rising substantially. As well, some of POO's will be going after strategic minerals compared to the usual mining of gold, silver and copper in older established mining districts. I can see the immediate need for a strategic minerals advisor expert to at least help plan the direction and where the minerals might be found so that areas aren't inadvertently closed for whatever reason. This expert would also know the characteristics that differentiates between strategic minerals and the typical gold, silver & copper mines. Some of those characteristics might be the new hazards associated with the strategic minerals. With just a short term spent on these topics, along with the new strategic minerals. I don't know how anyone, without expert advice, could administrate on these matters that are forthcoming without the specific experience in the new field of strategic minerals.

The logging industry needs a voice in this as well. Right now, my mining operation is overlapping with a logging operation and both entities could benefit greatly from closer communication tied in with the Forest Service.

My next comments have to do with the opposition of systematic closure of roads to restrict access in the National forests. I also feel that the funds and resources required for that could be put to much better use. I not only write this for all of the miners but that everyone should have access, this is our right and is protected by law. Anyone stating or ruling is misinformed or deliberately misleading. For anyone who isn't aware of the law or needs a refresher, these are the fundamental facts of the revised Statue 2477.
<https://www.blm.gov/ca/dir/pdfs/2003/ib/CAIB2003-023ATT2.pdf> (see attachment)

I'm not an attorney nor an extremist, I don't claim to know all the answers and I'm not trying to tell people how to do their jobs. I'm just a miner trying to earn a living in our National Forests. If my mine makes it to production it will create jobs. I believe that was the sole intent of the 1872 General Mining Act. Please don't look at this letter as merely one mans opinion but, more like a thousand miners opinions along with everyone else that uses our National Forests.

Let's also take into consideration the future miners and what their needs might be over the course of time. There's a reason our forefathers found it so important to write the 1872 General Mining Act (which is still largely in effect) and the RS 2477.

I appreciate your taking the time to hear me out and if you have any questions or wish to discuss this further then please don't hesitate to contact me at the address listed above.

Sincerely,

Clark Smith