

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/7/2017 3:12:50 AM

First name: michael

Last name: Lane

Organization: Alpine Scenic Jeep Tours

Title: Owner

Comments: Hello. I operate a 4x4 scenic tour company out of Ouray Colorado. My company supplies scenic mass transit to several areas near Ouray for public who can not drive their own vehicles to some of the more rugged roads.

I have concerns on the way that several areas of our forest service lands are managed in the Imogene Pass and Yankee Boy Basin areas.

I honestly believe that Yankee Boy Basin and FS road 853 are being loved to death. In the 11 years I have guided tours I have seen many detrimental changes to these areas.

To begin with both road 361 and 853 have been greatly improved over the years. This work has been performed by Ouray County and private interests. (Mines). These road improvements have caused two issues. It has allowed a much greater amount of traffic to access these areas and have also allowed much greater speeds on this road. During prime tourist season many 2 wheel drive vehicles venture up into Yankee Boy, FS 853, until the road becomes too rough. They then park on the side of the road and continue on foot. Many days there are cars parked on both sides and sometimes right on this 4x4 road. This leads to a very hazardous situation. Cars have no room to turn around and are forced to back down a narrow corridor. Emergency vehicles cannot fit up this road. Yankee Boy has really become a zoo. The restrooms are over used. The wildflowers are being trampled by cars and people. Vehicles often park in the fields of flowers. Litter is becoming a problem.

Possible cures? Here are a few ideas. Create a fee area near the Camp Bird mine and above. A fee both could provide education and travel protocols for the area. It would provide funds for waste removal, road supervision and rule enforcement. (Speed limits, parking etc). More specifically if the road was restricted to 4x4 vehicles only near the Ruby Trust or Revinue Mine area. There is room for parking in these areas for public who wish to continue on foot. Many foot travelers hike up the road which causes more congestion. If a designated foot trail were created from this parking area, past twin falls and up to the Mt Sneffels trail, congestion would be greatly reduced. Many people continue to use the road even past the Sneffels trail because the trailhead sign is blocked by parked cars.

So far the Imogene Pass area does not have cars and people all over the road however there are problems.

Past the Camp Bird Mine there are no restrooms on this well travelled road. I frequently encounter human waste in areas off the road. (Our tours always make stops at the existing restrooms and carry emergency waste receptacles.). The Imogene Road is also not compatible with other users. Motorcycle users frequently exceed speed limits and decibel limits. These motorcyclists drive fast and loud. There is no law enforcement on these roads.

ATV's or Razors etc also can travel extremely fast. It has become an adrenaline sport for many of these users. I have had many near misses with these ATVs moving fast, skidding around corners and creating huge dust clouds. The ATV's frequently drive off of the roads onto the tundra scaring it. Again there is no law enforcement to prevent this. I believe a fee collection gate to help offset costs and educate the public. These users really need education. In addition to driving off the road and speeding these users ruin the trail conditions. They spin their tires and anything slightly technical and create difficult and dangerous ruts and holes in the road.

The other issue that is tied to ATV's is that the rental company's are not required to pay any use fees like the Tour company's do. Once the rental company's drop off the rental ATV's near the Ouray ice park there are no

other roads these vehicles can travel other than Forest Service roads. I do not understand why these rentals do not pay a use fee. It is not fair. These ATV rentals are a huge and growing use on Forest Service roads and do not pay their share.

I think a fee area and rental user fees are required to control and maintain these areas.