

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/28/2018 7:53:25 AM

First name: Branden

Last name: Infanger

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I disagree with closing any more of the Salmon-Challis National Forest for WSR's or for Wilderness. I am a resident of Salmon and know first-hand what impact the forest plan has on the local economy and ability to enjoy the great outdoors. Salmon use to be an area that supported multiple saw mills and mines. Compared to surrounding areas, Salmon's economy and commerce use to be a highlight. Over the years throughout the 1970's, 80's, 90's we've seen these forest areas that have helped support support the commerce of our counties being limited and one-by-one the logging and mining companies have shut down. Wild fire burn acreage use to be at a minimum too, by the way, but now have gotten out of hand.

Now we face an age that many are barely scraping by in this community. We need a turn-around and need a push to open up more areas and more public access for OHV also.

I have been raised on hunting deer, pronghorn, bear, mountain lion, and elk. I can attest to the difficulty in getting to areas where these animals live. Much of this area already don't have enough access and roads. I can easily see that in 20 years I won't be physically able to climb these steep mountains and want to enjoy them as long as I can. I know many are in this same situation. I hope we can keep these traditions of our hunting alive. I also grew up on fishing trout and steelhead. I can say also that declaring more areas as wild and scenic rivers will put a damper on steelhead and trout fishing, and steelhead dollars going into Salmon will slip away. I have also mountain biked, motorcycled, and rode ATV's on some of the roads (that are really poorly managed by the way) and it is pleasant to travel these roads, and I am one that is for making new roads to more areas in the Salmon and Challis areas. We need to keep our roads open and still open up more so that more of the public, even the elderly, can enjoy the beauties that surround us. These lands are multi use. A majority of the people snowmobile, mountain bike, jeep, ATV, motorcycle, and use all sorts of OHV roads. We need to foster proper stewardship for our trails and accompany the majority's recreation needs. We are all public and we all need a chance to be in the Forest that belongs to all of us.

In the plan initiative package, it is said that this forest is one the least visited in the National Forest Service System. Why is that? Don't we want more people to come to this great place to behold with their eyes these forested mountains and hills? It brings in dollars into our communities and it posses great premiere whitewater boating opportunities, backcountry recreational experiences, and hunting and fishing. The forest is remote, and accessing large portions of the forest is already very difficult. The initiative package also suggests developing new recreation opportunities and retrofitting existing facilities to accommodate mobility-impaired and aging populations. Also suggests addressing emerging or underrepresented recreation demand, such as the increased intrerest in 64-inch utility train vehicles, mountain biking and snow-machines. (And I would like to add motorcycle trails to the list.) Surely, the fate of the Forest and surrounding communities is not easily separated.

These suggestions from the initiative package paint a picture in the public's eye that the Forest Service will keep the people in priority, but when you look at the plan revisions and the map of the areas suggested to be closed off to wild and scenic rivers and wilderness I can see that they didn't keep the people in mind at all. I can see that the people that did the approach study and the people that are suggesting closures are two different parties with very different approaches and different goals in mind. In short, the Forest Service is overstepping their bounds by trying to lie to the public by trying to pull a quick one on the small towns in rural Idaho to limit their prosperity in this mountainous region. I hope that we can come together to agree that the planned direction by the Forest Service is not the way to go. Rather, we need to go back the other direction. There is a breaking point when the American people have to say "enough is enough."

The last point I want to make is that of a "healthy forest." Most all people agree that healthy forests don't have too much overgrowth or dead fuel and has room for new trees and bushes to grow and the wildlife has room to walk the forest floor. There is much mis-managed forests in the area and pose a real threat- wild fires. I have seen, as all the public has seen, much increase in fires and the number of acres wild fires have burned in the last 15 years. Hot Shot firefighters have great difficulty at the cost of our Taxpayer dollars to access the forest to fight the fires. More roads and open roads will help fight these fires and save millions of Taxpayer dollars. This does

not help us with our National Debt situation either. There is also too much fuel sitting because of beetle kill and no logging, and it is to the point now that it is a house of dynamite waiting and ready to be lit. We need more logging roads opened and created so we can keep our Idaho Forests in check and looking great and being great. As it says on the Public Involvement Opportunities page, National forests are owned by all Americans, and we all have a role to play in how they are managed.