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Comments: Hey Kevin!

Hope your day is going well. I used to work for ACES, and am so so grateful something is being done about North Star. I love your proposals. Not sure why anyone would bring glass up there. Extra annoyed when people try to float down the river in floaters that will ultimately bust, not only leaving debris but a human (or two) to float or have to hike the rest of the way - impacting the area. The wildlife in that area has tragically gone down even in my short (5 year) time here. Thankful something is finally being done. Here are my three comments on the new ideas:

1) Correct me if I'm wrong, but currently, the rule is dogs can be at put it/take out, or on the paddle board. There should not be unleashed or swimming dogs.

- from my experience listening to friends and coworkers who work up there, this rule would be effective if it can be enforced

- I am very against the new no dog rule. Not because I don't realize there are some parts of nature that dogs should not be in, but because it wasn't the previous dog rules that were the issue. I think you and I both know it was the low number of rangers and their inability to properly enforce any previous rules. This seems like you just reinvented the prototype of a car before you even test drove it because the vehicle wasn't fast enough. Many of these new rules are wonderful. But if Rangers don't have the presence or power to properly enforce them, this all seems unnecessary.

2) I have several friends who attend the residential caucus for the homeowners in the North Star area. Some of these friends are very passionate about nature! They have had various conversations with me that these new protocols, though in my heart of hearts I truly want to believe were spurred from good intentions - are exactly the opposite. Friends on the caucus say the town and forest service are, and let me quote "caving to a bunch of rich billionaires living near North Star who don't want locals (or tourists) parking by their homes and having fun within view". This isn't just locals gossiping, this is overheard resolutions from the caucus.

Again, I really hope that wealthy homeowners annoyed with the local riff raff is not the reason for this. I want to believe it's due to the fragility of north America's highest elevation Blue Heron rookery and a multitude of other reasons - but I have some very trustworthy friend who attended those caucus meetings who claim this is not the case. You don't have to answer to this. I just wanted you to know it is an opinion amongst some locals. And honestly, cutting out the current parking while proposing no valid alternatives, instead of simply switching to a permit system, seems to validate these claims.

3) the tourist crowd at North Star is by and far the most problematic issue. When you have dozens of people from driving all over the state (and this was before COVID), its a recipe for disaster. And by disaster, I mean people

with no respect, or often just no knowledge, about how to treat the local flora and fauna. Now this is not to say locals aren't also responsible for issues up there. However there is for sure a better alternative. Education should precede blocking access. I don't understand why all of these regulations would be necessary if we simply switched to a permit system that would go something like this:

- locals would have to read or watch an online course and take a quiz in order for get a "locals North Star permit". This would give them unlimited access, for a fee. Maybe even they would have to attend an in person class!

- tourists could only go with a guided group. This would actually increase our local economy, as all tourists would have to go pay an outfitter for a guided tour. The outfitters would have the chance to educate tourists on the area, and be responsible for their behavior. I used to snowmobile guide at t lazy. The thought of simply handing a tourist the keys to a snowmobile and sending them up the road is, quite frankly, terrifying. Even if they had prior snowmobile experience, if they ran into a moose or dangerous terrain very few would make the right move. I think similar logic could be applied to North Star.

Love what you folks do. We all couldn't live the lives we lead without it.

Best,

Larissa

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