

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/17/2020 4:47:51 PM

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Comments: I would like to thank the forest service for finally getting to the point of making a decision on the uses of Rapid River trails #177, #188, #183, #184, #362, #187 and #328. You may have noticed that I added trail #328 and that is because there seems to be some confusion concerning the placement of the trail #187 and #328 on the forest service maps. As signed on the ground, the Lake Fork Ridge Trail #328, runs from its intersection with trail #177 (T21N,R1W,Sec. 5) to its upper intersection with trail #187 (T21N,R3W,Sec. 7) and the Echols Butte Trail #187 runs from its intersection with trail #362 (T21N,R1W, Sec. 19) to its intersection with the Black Lake Road #112 (T21N,R2W,Sec. 15). Hopefully as we move through this process that will not become an issue and as I make comments from here on out, I will use the trail numbers referenced from the map included with the scoping document to avoid any confusion.

I would like to see all 5 of the previously open 2-wheeled motorized trails reopened to the Rapid River Corridor. There is a long history of 2-wheeled motorized use in Rapid River and included with that usage is many hours of volunteer labor and personal money spent in maintaining the trails which we are discussing. Originally the Lake Fork Creek Trail #188 was the Lime Kiln Road, built around 1904. It was built to access a limestone deposit on Lake Fork for the purpose of treating the acidic tailings that contained cyanide. It was also used to access towns on the Salmon River earlier in the year because the passes coming in from the Council side were snowed in much later. The Lake Fork Creek Trail has a very obvious road prism, much wider than the approximate 16" tread requirement for a 2-wheeled motorized trail.

In the early 90's a motorized volunteer group that went by the name TEAM (trails for equal access management) worked in cooperation with the forest service and performed many hours of work on the Lake Fork Creek Trail. Clearing the fallen trees, brushing out the trail and installing water drainage was only part of what they succeeded in accomplishing. One of their major contributions was the installation of several pressure treated bridges that cross wet areas along the trail. For the good work that they performed they were presented with the Take Pride in America and Take Pride in Idaho awards and a Certificate of Cooperation from the Idaho Trails Conference. TEAM also assisted the forest service with installing the Sinking Creek bridge on the Indian Springs Trail #184. The material was flown in by helicopter, accidentally dropped at the wrong location and was shuttled to the correct location and assembled by the volunteers.

I started riding a motorcycle on these these trails when I was 10 years old. It was a 1980's Yamaha 80 and was more of a street bike than it was a trail bike. If a 10 year old kid can ride these mountain trails on that kind of bike it should tell you what the condition of the trails were, excellent! As my friends and I got older and started riding these trails on our own we also started packing a chainsaw and other tools and began doing a little maintenance here and there. Starting in about 2005 we began the official Adopt-A-Trail Agreement for several of the trails in the area, including the 5 trails we are now addressing. I have records of what trails we worked on, what work was performed, who all helped in the maintenance and how many hours we spent working. In 2005 we applied for the adoption of 15 different trails in the area and were denied because of the possible change that might take place with the travel plan the following year, even though "no change" was going to take place that year. In 2006 we were happy to adopt 12 of the trails in this area and spent a considerable amount of time maintaining 70 miles of trail. In June of this year the tornado that swept up Bear Creek and ended in Rapid River blew down thousands of trees. The biggest hit area on our network of adopted trails was the Indian Springs Trail #184 in the Sinking Creek drainage of Rapid River. When I discussed the massive amount of blow down on this one section of trail with the New Meadows District Ranger, Kimberly Brandel, I was informed we were not to cut any of the wind blown trees out of the Rapid River trails. Even though there was not going to be any proposed logging within the roadless area. My adopt-a-trail agreements were not getting off to a good start... The following year, 8 different volunteers and I prepared to cut out a couple hundred trees that were laying in trail #184 from the

tornado that were all stacked in about a one quarter mile stretch. It was a big job but we completed it in one day with no help from the organization that is tasked with managing these trails.

After the last travel plan change the Rankin Mill Trail #191 was changed to a seasonal closure. At the time the forest recreation supervisor asked the Adams County Commissioners and I if we would write a letter of support for a grant that would provide money for a kiosk, bridge over Lake Fork Creek and a gate that would be closed during the seasonal closure. We were both more than happy to do that on one condition, that the lower Lake Fork Creek bridge down near Rapid River would be rebuilt. The native stringer bridge had broken in the middle and was laying in Lake Fork Creek. The forest service got the grant, and the kiosk, upper bridge and gate were all installed. To this day the lower Lake Fork Creek bridge is still laying in the creek, well within the Rapid River Corridor.

A couple years ago the new bridge that was installed on Lake Fork Creek using the money provided by the grant broke in the middle and was laying in the creek. The 3 native spruce stringers that were used to support the bridge had rotted and broke under the snow load. Spruce is not highly recommended for its structural integrity or its ability to last in an outdoor climate. After finding the broken bridge a group of volunteers rebuilt the bridge using 4 western larch stringers and the existing pressure treated decking material that was salvaged from the old bridge.

After the Wesley Fire a couple of the short bridges that crossed some wet areas on the Lake Fork Creek Trail #188 were burned. That has been several years ago and nothing has been done to replace them. More recently the large steel stringer bridge that crosses Rapid River near the bottom of Lake Fork Creek had the west end wash out, making it completely unusable to any trail user. To make matters worse, when I found it, after it had washed out there was still foil wrapping on the bridge left over from the Wesley Fire. The wrapping had been slowly coming off and was laying in the creek and hanging off the bridge. The bridge had also suffered from a couple direct hits from dead snags that I had warned the forest service about prior to this incident. In more recent years there seems to be a pattern of neglect coming directly from the forest service involving the motorized trails in the Rapid River Drainage. I should say neglect and a more than willing attitude to close the area to motorcycles. In doing so they have allowed all the previously opened motorized trails to fall into disrepair, making them unusable to all user groups. The selfish attitude of a few people has ruined this area to all users in recent years. Not to mention it has cost the forest service time and money dealing with the closures that could have been better spent dealing with more important issues.

We have went from excellently maintained trails that everyone could use, to trails that no one wants to use because of their state of disrepair. By reopening these trails we could all work together to make them the great trails that they once were.