

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/17/2020 9:10:12 PM

First name: Linwood

Last name: Laughy

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

The Rapid River flows through two national forests that management both the river's corridor and watershed as addressed in multiple federal statutes. The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest acknowledges the special status accorded to this river by the U.S. Congress and has chosen to restrict motorized travel in the wild river corridor as well as in the entire watershed that lies within that forest. This river also plays a significant role in efforts to keep Snake River salmon runs from further collapse.

I understand the Payette National Forest is considering opening single-track motorized travel within both the corridor and watershed of this river as part of its non-snow travel management plan. I believe such a course of action would be unwise for at least four reasons: the Rapid River needs to remain in its near-pristine condition for the benefit of anadromous fish, a growing concern for Idaho and other Pacific Northwest states; the river's legally-defined special status supports erring on the side of caution with respect to the interpretation of relevant statutes; and the approval of single-track motorized travel in the Rapid River corridor invites litigation which often leads to costs to the forest that could be put to much better use.

A fourth reason is perhaps the most important of all. A growing population, constant expansion of development in the urban/wild interface, and increasing demand for outdoor recreation continue to put pressure on special wild places with outstandingly remarkable values. Rapid River is such a place, a piece of wilderness that, once destroyed, will be forever lost. Hence the fourth reason -because retaining this corridor and watershed in its existing condition is just the right thing to do.