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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I'm a member of the Gold Prospectors Association of America. We have outings at the Quartzville sites 19 and the Galena site 23. Blocking access/reducing parking will not stop the people causing the damage. This only punishes the vast majority of the people using these sites legitimately. It also increases hazards for access to people with disabilities.

Blocking access to the taxpayers who own the forests and pay for the maintenance of said forests has not historically been an effective means of deterrence.

I say this because for decades I have voluntarily cleaned garbage from the forests around Oregon. Always leave it better than you found it, and leave no trace.

The reward for this has been gates on roads, tanks blocks, boulders, and other obstructions limiting access to PUBLIC lands. A constant reduction of access to public lands and limiting access for those with disabilities. Seems like a shotgun solution to a problem that requires precision (punish the guilty).

I'm positive that a more inclusive solution can be found to reduce the criminals activities in the forests.

Perhaps charging the individuals under an existing law?

Would the criminal activities be considered interference with mining operations? (besides the obvious illegal disposal of waste)

ORS 517.133 Interfering with a mining operation.

(1) As used in this section, "lawful mining operation" means any small scale mining operation that is in full compliance with state and federal laws.

(2) A person commits the crime of interfering with a mining operation if the person intentionally:

(a) Interferes with a lawful mining operation; or

(b) Stops, or causes to be stopped, a lawful mining operation.

(3) Interfering with a mining operation is a Class C misdemeanor. [1999 c.354 §6]

https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors517.html

Best Regards,

Jeff

Please contact me to discuss if time allows.