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East Fork/South Fork RAMP

Land of many uses? NOT ANYMORE!

I am a Yellow Pine resident and property owner. I have been hanging out/recreating/living in the area most of my 70 years. I can no longer hike or backpack into many of my favorite areas due to age but love to still drive to those favorite spots to hunt, or fish, or just enjoy the scenery. These road closures negatively impact my freedom to use Public Lands! The East Fork/South Fork Salmon River is NOT congressionally designated wilderness, yet, the Forest Service continues to whittle down our travelable roads until there are practically none left. We the PUBLIC are squeezed out of OUR OWN country. If that isn't (age) discrimination, I don't know what is.

The tiny village of Yellow Pine depends upon tourism now to sustain it. With logging no longer thinning our forests to make them more fire and bug resistant and without mining actually happening in the area, there is nothing else to keep the village alive. The roads that have been closed and are slated for closure just pound another nail in the YP coffin. Yellow Pine used to be a booming little berg, even in winter. I remember seeing both sides of the street lined with parked snowmobiles, who's riders were in the various establishments, spending nights and spending money! Now the very roads that bring recreation to our economically beleaguered area are closing faster than we can comment. And COMMENT we do; however, it does no good. The collective FS mind is made up before these 'opportunities for comment are even posted. All the posting does is meet the bureaucratic legalities.

Sugar Creek, Quartz Creek, Zena Creek, Cow Creek, Three Mile, should all be reopened and/or should be protected from future closures. If a tiny slide occurs on any of these, it is an excuse for the forest service to close and obliterate. What about the Forest Service mandate to mitigate, damage on our backcountry roads? The same arguments were offered during January of 2020 during the South Fork Ramp but to no avail. Those roads should also be reopened!

During my many years in the area I have seen lots of slides occur, muddying the waters of the streams. In many cases, it was the presence of a ROAD that caught debris and prevented some of the sediment from reaching the waterway. The Salmon/Steelhead excuse has worn thin. Sediment happens thanks to 'ma nature', and roads have always caught the blame.

I repeat, this comment period is an exercise in futility because the Forest Service mind is made up. Please prove my assumption wrong!

Land of many uses? Nope! Only if you can walk to your favorite sites!