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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for taking the time to talk with me last week about the dispersed camping management project in the Cottonwood drainage. As you recall, my brother and I are co-owners of a mining claim with a cabin just north of FS344. (Google maps labels the road to our property as FS334B; this may be mislabeled, as our address is 24600 FS344C). In the decade plus that we have been owners and coming to the area, we have noticed a significant change in the impact of camping and usage. As we discussed, our specific area of concern is a meadow north of FS344, just east of where 344B splits off to the north (we have a special access permit with the FS for use of 344B to access our driveway). This area is between the private land owned by Gayle Zonnefeld to the east and the large open area to the west where portable restrooms have recently been placed. In addition to our land, there are 3 cabins on land leases immediately adjacent to this area. I have attached an image of the map of the area with cabins and property marked. Years ago, this area was a grassy meadow. Now, it is full of ruts, tracks, fire rings, and often trash left behind. On weekends it is full of cars and campers; this past weekend, Gayle and his son counted 60 vehicles in this small area. Certainly, this camping is neither limited nor dispersed. The impact of high use on the area is significant. We do not see wildlife as we did before. As above, the impact on the land in terms of vehicle tracks, fire rings, trash, etc is clearly visible. On the weekends, there are multiple large fires and often loud music. We have had campers walk into the woods north of the meadow and shoot into the woods, not knowing that our cabin is just up the hill. Driving down our driveway, we see toilet paper and other evidence of human waste dotting the woods. We have had campers walk the driveway past our gate and stand outside our cabin. Campers are placing tents and RVs immediately in front of (and in plain view of) the land lease cabins along the road. We have concerns that this may lead to confrontations at some point. We would welcome any effort to better define limited dispersed camping in the area. Due to the number of leased cabins and private holdings adjacent to this meadow along FS344, we request that camping be prohibited in the area north of FS344 between the Zonnefeld land and the curve past the turnoff north for 344C (or "B" as labeled on the attached google map). This would preserve the beauty of this meadow and the creek to the south and limit the impacts described above. As you and I discussed, we are also in favor of designating campsites along the remainder of FS344 in order to better enforce the intent of limited dispersed camping. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. I am happy to speak with you further or answer any other questions. Thomas Short