

Gerald Temoke
Chairman
Elko Band Council

Testimony on “EXPLOSION OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS THREATENING JOBS AND
ECONOMIC SURVIVAL IN THE WEST”

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We have been walking, then riding and now driving around these mountains for hundreds, more likely thousands of years, many county residence have been here for generations. Most of us spend our lifetimes here. This is our home.

Some of us are getting older now and getting out into the mountains can only be accomplished by motorized vehicles and for that we need to have roads that we can access or in some cases go off road (game retrieval, wood cutting, gathering pine nuts, getting close to certain medicinal plants & roots), and not be threatened with huge fines or jail time for something we have spent our lives doing, never leaving any permanent damage to this county by our actions.

Existing roads that are not on the Forest Service map are considered not to exist. If these roads are not allowed to be used after a short period of time they will for all intents and purposes disappear.

We believe this will be only detrimental to outdoor enthusiasts but for fire suppression and search and rescue efforts that may arise.

On April 1, 2009 the Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone passes a resolution that stated the Te-Moak Tribe is, “...opposed to any road closures...without proven and approved scientific knowledge and without approval of the Te-Moak and the combined County Board of Commissioners...And directs Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture to honor the Tribe’s request.”

Then on November 14, 2011 the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada representing all 27 member tribes of Nevada passed a resolution that stated it was, “opposing the proposed closure of roads and cross country travel on the National Forests....and that the Forest Service must take no action until...” the Inter-Tribal Council was consulted.

The Forest Service never consulted or attempted to consult with us until after it was announced that there would be a Congressional Hearing.

The only way the Forest Service is going to show any respect an cooperation with the tribes of Nevada and the counties is if you withhold funding from the Forest Service.

The Forest Service must totally scrap their plans to closed roads and cross country travel or at a minimum require that the Forest Service completely start over and utilized scientific knowledge and get approval from the counties and the tribes before closing anything.

Travel Management is not just a Nevada or Elko County problem. It seems all the Western States are having the same issues with the Forest Service and their Travel Management Plans.

People from Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Oregon, Idaho, New Mexico, California had all wanted to testify but due to the limited amount of time allotted only Nevada, Utah and Arizona are here to speak.

I don't know what formula the Forest Service uses to determine what roads should be open and which roads are closed or, according to them, do not exist, but most roads are there for a reason.

People need to get from place to place and driving is usually the fastest, safest way to do that. If that can be done without doing any permanent harm then why do we need to be dictated to by bureaucrats that have not spent their lives here and are making decisions based on, (I'm guessing), a "one size fits all" government formula.