

November 28, 2022

Dear Salmon River and Panther Creek Road Users:

Lemhi County and the Salmon-Challis National Forest work in partnership to maintain the Salmon River Road. The Forest Service is the lead during the summer months and the County during the winter months. When significant issues occur, we work collaboratively to address them as timely as possible, with the resources we each have available.

The soil types and steep topography along the Salmon River Road contribute to avalanches rock falls, and debris flows onto the roadway during periods of heavy moisture. The potential for this to occur is compounded by the recent Moose fire that burned vegetation that aided in stabilizing the slopes. In addition to this concern immediately adjacent to the roadway, some of the drainages located on the south side of the river and road, where the fire started, experienced high intensity fire which makes them vulnerable for debris flow into the Salmon River. This could redirect the river toward the roadway and compromise it by undercutting.

The County and Forest Staff have been discussing the potential for road damage and developing plans to respond depending on what occurs. This includes keeping road equipment in the vicinity, considering the need for rip rap, and the necessity to contract a larger job out if it exceeds our capacity. We agree to jointly maintain this road over the next year and we will be in frequent communication.

Although we are aware of the increased potential for avalanche and debris flow issues and are preparing for such events, we are unsure when and where such occurrences will happen. Avalanches typically occur in early spring as daily warming destabilizes the snowpack on steep slopes. The roadway damage from debris flow is primarily driven by moisture from a storm event. With this in mind, we have asked the National Weather Service to provide us as much advance notice as possible, if a storm is approaching this area. This will aid us in monitoring the roadway and mobilizing equipment in advance.

We are doing what we can to prepare, and we ask that you too prepare for limited access in the event of heavy moisture or runoff precipitating debris flows or avalanches in the area. It is possible that access could be shutoff or severely limited at times over the next year. Please plan accordingly and be prepared to be self-sufficient (medications, fuel, food) for up to a couple weeks. This condition will be most uncertain through this winter and next summer. The increased likelihood of avalanches, rockfalls, and debris flows impacting the road will continue for several years.

If you'd like to speak to the Forest Service about our preparations, please contact Forest Engineer Mike Carroll at 208-993-9543. If you'd like to speak to the County, please contact Lemhi County Road and Bridge at 208-756-2861.

To report an issue or blockage on the road please contact:

- In an emergency call 911.
- Between November 1st and March 31st call Lemhi County Road and Bridge at 208-756-2861.
- Between April 1st and October 31st call Salmon Challis National Forest at 208-993-9543 or 208-756-5121.

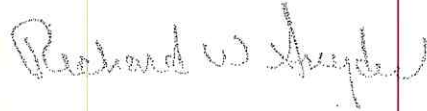
Thank you for your cooperation in anticipation of likely disruptions in access along the Salmon River Road. We will do our best to prepare for and minimize impacts.

Sincerely,

CHARLES MARK

Digitally signed by CHARLES
MARK
Date: 2022.12.01 10:44:53 -07'00'

Charles A. Mark
Forest Supervisor
Salmon-Challis National Forest



Rick Snyder
Commissioner
Lemhi County, Idaho