

This is in regard to RIN 0596-AC91. I am a fine arts photographer by profession ([www.petemyers.com](http://www.petemyers.com)), fifty years old and follow in the footsteps of Ansel Adams in depicting the natural beauty of our public lands, the very fiber and heritage of our democracy.

The Forest Service through this proposal is trying to sneak through the conversion of public lands to sites of commerce for the benefit of the Forrest Service. Further, it is a direct slap in the face of the disabled and our seniors that have given so much to this country.

About 5% of the budget of the Department of Agriculture is allocated to the Forest Service. Of that, about 50% is diverted directly to fire fighting efforts. I find it shameful that the Department of Agriculture can provide crop subsidies, often based on historic practices rather than need, yet want to balance the Forest Service budget on the backs of seniors and the disabled—and if not on them, then the rest of us.

The United States National Forests are not a commodity. It is the heritage of our nation. The beauty of our public lands is as important to the welling being of its citizens as is our education system. No one would think that charging admission fees at a public library is an acceptable practice, nor do we charge for primary education. Yet the forest is being viewed different by the very agency in charge of its wellbeing. The idea that public lands should be self-sustaining by funding for use is simply wrong—and further, illegal.

I say a strong NO to this proposal and any other attempt by the Forest Service to utilize our public lands as a means of commerce to fund the agency.

What I do support is the transfer of the Forest Service to the Department of the Interior and for proper congressional funding of the agency. It is high time that the Forest Service is taken out from under the commodity driven Department of Agriculture and put under the authority of the agency central to preserving the heritage of our public lands.