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FUEL TAX: Money needed for rec, rescue

I certainly don't blame our legislators for wanting to come home. I mean, who wants to stay in Boise when you could be in North Idaho? But come on folks, the "agreement" between the legislature and the governor was nothing more than a shell game.

I know that some of you are saying, "Man, those motorized folks are really getting a raw deal." Well, let me remind you of something. This money comes from IDPR, ultimately from the motorized community. But how many of you are in the following categories: huckleberry pickers, horseback riders, hikers, mountain bikers, sightseers and of course there are the motorized folks? Well, the loss of these funds is ultimately going to close down your areas also, not just the motorized areas.

I feel that it would be in the best interest to all of us in North Idaho who use our mountains to climb on the bandwagon and let the legislators know that it is not just us motorized users getting a bad deal out of this, but eventually -- maybe not right away, but you know -- it will eventually happen to you, too. As many of the recreational areas are slowly being taken away, we are all going to pay the price.

This "agreement" robbed the recreational community of \$4.8 million of state gas tax money. This is the tax on fuel that is not burned on highways. It is the fuel used by off-highway vehicles, boats, snowmobiles, ATVs, etc. This money is used to maintain trails and protect the environment, build and repair boating facilities and develop the park infrastructure. It also pays the counties for search and rescue.

It looks to me like in their haste to get home and not "give in" they gave the recreation community the shaft. Please, it's not too late, inform the legislators to give us back our gas tax!

RICHARD LAMBERT

President, Back Country ATV

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