Darcy Mitchem

I am very familiar with the upper Green River area, and am involved as a citizen in this area, but I just read about this comment period today (Sept 24) and it ends on Sept 27. Why did the local community (Toutle) not know of this earlier? I support creative ways to keep a mine from the upper Green River, but I have concerns about unintended consequences that may have nothing whatsoever to do with a mine. The chances that anyone can economically build an open-pit mine here in liberal leaning and soggy Western Washington are very slight. So, I am concerned that this new designation may prohibit or reduce recreational use, especially horse use, including the Green River Horse Camp. Will that facility now be under closer scrutiny? How will this effect trails that are near the river and its tributaries? What about reduction in any roads that access the area? I can easily see this designation as a way to prevent any future trail system expansion in the entire basin. I can see this designation as a way to remove horses, bicycles, ebikes, hunting/fishing, disbursed campsites and even limit hikers/backpackers or places to camp. I am concerned that the designation may put pressure on downstream forestry practices--will logging permits now get tighter scrutiny? Will road and culvert replacements (that are designed to improve water quality by the way) be harder to finish or permit? With a heightened designation, some may use this to push to make the Green River system more "natural" overall, which could lead to the closure of the incredibly important Toutle River salmon hatchery. This hatchery provides the only salmon in the entire Toutle system that can be harvested and kept by sport anglers. Another recreational casualty I could foresee is the elimination if trout (lethal removal) in the Mount Margaret area, where their outlets that feed the Green River. These trout were planted years ago, survived the eruption, and are mostly non-native eastern Brook trout. Yes, that fishery isn't a trophy situation and it needs to be managed by the WDFW better, but I can see this rule as an opportunity (excuse) to kill all the trout there and not replace them with native species. If this designation only effects discharge from a MINE or other industrial facility, I'm fine with it, but the trickle down of regulations with unintended casualties that include historic recreational use is unacceptable.