
From: Carmela Lizzo [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, October 2, 2022 3:14 PM
To: FS-objections-southwestern-regional-office
Cc: Grondin, Micah -FS; Norman, Eric -FS
Subject: Desert Vista Area Improvement

Joe Stock and I have been on the Desert Vista Area Improvement Task Force since it's inception. We represent equestrian riders and are members of the Rio Verde Horsemen's Association (I am the current president). We have addressed the access points that overlap with motorized vehicles during past meetings and in writing. Specifically we are concerned about the access point at 136th St and Stagecoach. 136th is one of the busiest roads in the Foothills and the owner of Rio Verde Water has multiple trucks that park at his home just south of Stagecoach and utilize 136th St. The access point currently designated at 136th and Stagecoach includes both motorized vehicles and equestrians and is extremely dangerous for horse riders due to the water trucks, the motorcycles and UTVs that utilize 136th St. Additionally, motorized vehicles drive that road at high speeds despite the lack of visibility due to the hill just south of Stagecoach. We have stated, on numerous occasions, in both the Task Force meetings and during the public review, that an additional equestrian/hiking step over is needed on the north portion at Stagecoach and 140th. This would allow additional openings on the Forest on the north end, disperse the traffic on 136th and remove the liability involved with the interaction between horses and motorized vehicles. This would also allow equestrians and hikers safe access to an area that is currently inaccessible, or accessible only under hazardous conditions. The current step over at 144th and Hawknest does not provide access to the northern part of the Forest due to the topography and the steep terrain.

Additionally, the existing staging area on 144th between Westland and Carefree needs to be removed, specifically the pipe rail and enclosure as it is still being used as a staging area. This should be returned to its originally desert landscape.

Motorized traffic is currently being directed to a horse step over at Hawknest and 144th, yet there is no way for that traffic to exit at that point. The fence has been cut on numerous occasions or motorcycles jump the step over which is extremely dangerous to equestrians accessing that point. The trails that lead to 144th and Hawknest should be redirected east of 144th, away from the step over and then dispersed north and south to connect to the existing trails. These points have all been mentioned several times, via email, during phone calls and the Task Force meetings and have not been addressed. We are concerned for the safety of our equestrian neighbors and respectfully ask that you implement these suggestions into the Desert Vista Area Improvement Plan.

Carmela Lizzo
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Joe Stock
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Sent from my iPad