

From: Kim Vacariu [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 10, 2023 9:58 AM
To: Dewberry, Kerwin - FS, AZ <kerwin.dewberry@usda.gov>
Cc: Martin, Michiko - FS, NM <michiko.martin@usda.gov>
Subject: [External Email]Chiricahua Public Access Project

[External Email]

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Kerwin Dewberry – Forest Supervisor
Coronado National Forest
300 W Congress St
Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear Mr. Dewberry,

I am writing in response to the Chiricahua Public Access Project.

I live and frequently recreate in the Chiricahua Mountains area near John Long Canyon and Horseshoe Canyon, and have the following concerns about the project.

1. Quiet Recreation is a stated goal of the Coronado National Forest and is prominent in the Forest Plan. Opening up currently quiet areas of the forest to vehicular recreation seems counterproductive to achieving that goal. How does this project help the Coronado National Forest meet this important goal?
2. Current road access for forest users is sufficient in the Chiricahua Mountains. This project does nothing that increases access for the majority of users in either John Long or Horseshoe Canyons. Forest users can already drive to the beautiful rim of John Long Canyon. They just can't drive down into the densely wooded and fire-prone canyon bottom. This current lack of vehicular access makes this one of the most delightful day-hiking and birdwatching areas on the Coronado National Forest.
3. If the Coronado National Forest were serious about access, they would instead be upgrading poor roads in high-use areas to Management Level Three, which would allow for passenger cars. This would create far more access than a rough Management Level Two road in a remote area, which only the small percentage of forest users with 4-wheeled vehicles can access. This project does not increase public access. This project caters to a small subset of forest visitors who have vehicles which allow them to already access many more areas than the average forest visitor. I understand funding from Arizona Game and Fish is driving these projects. Projects should not be initiated simply due to funding being provided by another agency. In particular, projects which ostensibly provide public access, should be initiated when they benefit the public as a whole. Such projects should not compromise the enjoyment of the larger public and their values, to provide access for a limited subset of the public, in response to special interest money.
- 4.

Thanks very much for allowing me the opportunity to comment on this questionable project.

Sincerely,

Kim Vacariu

