Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/29/2019 11:00:00 AM
First name: Barbara
Last name: Marks
Organization:
Title:
Comments: See attached letter, please.

Thank you!

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We agree that there are a few problems that exist, particularly with some off road vehicles. A small number have to ruin it for the others who for the most part follow the rules. However, some people will still find ways around. We have witnessed that in areas where roads were [ldquo]closed[rdquo], but they found a way around the barriers and ended up causing more damage than if the road had remained open. A perfect example is FR 574, which is recommended for reopening in Alternative 2. It was [ldquo]closed[rdquo] years ago with boulders, but vehicles went around, up the drainage instead of the existing road further up the hillside, causing damage. Public access to our forest is important, and it doesn[rsquo]t mean any less to the handicapped, elderly, and the very young. Decreasing their opportunities to access parts of the forest will mean not seeing the unbelievable joy on their faces when they witness something that they have truly never seen. Game retrieval is also important, including for these groups. Arizona Game & Fish Department has a Challenged Hunter Access Permit (CHAMP) for permanently disabled people to be able to hunt, including being able to shoot from a vehicle. We know you have worked extensively with AzGFD on this Travel Management Plan because they have concerns, about ATV misuse and hunter accessibility as well, not to mention maintaining healthy habitats and wildlife. We all desire those things. As shown by the example above, caution must be shown and not close too many existing roads, particularly old logging roads that have had surfacing put on them and proper drainage, because some off roaders WILL drive around the barriers and make a new road through a meadow or up a riparian area.

Established dispersed camping sites are shown along FR 567 but not FR 281. Alternative 2 designates 300-foot corridors along 1,027 miles of road (35 percent of roads open for public use) for the sole purpose of motorized dispersed camping per 36 CFR 212.51(b). The corridors are measured from the centerline of the road. Vehicles may pull off the road to access dispersed camping sites. Are these [ldquo]dispersed camping sites[rdquo] only ones that are shown as black dots on the map or do they include the ones that have been in existence for many years but not shown as black dots? There have been conflicting comments made as to whether dispersed camping will be allowed along the Blue Road, FR 281, or not. Many of these sites have been in existence for many years, some decades. Removal of these all ready existing sites will put more pressure on private land as campers and hunters start camping on these areas, with or without permission.

We[rsquo]d also like to be sure that in our Term Grazing Permits or other permits, there should be specific language that provides for access during certain closures or to access range improvements and gathering or shipping corrals or traps. If this is not in permits, this should be provided for and analyzed in the RDEIS for our allotments and others.

Access to private inholdings must be clarified and guaranteed. It is difficult at best and impossible in the past for property owners to obtain a loan and attempts to sell property were stopped because of no clear title to their access road. Permits are insufficient to accomplish this. Many of these roads have been in place for over a hundred years, but no matter how long, they must be the safest, guaranteed routes. Anything less would further devalue our properties.

Why were 12 counties considered in the socio-economic study, including the totally unrelated Maricopa County? Granted, it does have a little National Forest in it, but the demographics are completely different. Might as well included all 15 Arizona counties. Including Maricopa dilutes any impacts to practically nothing. Closing a road

on our allotment could have a significant economic impact on us, but much less than one percent if anything for Maricopa County! How can permittees and communities in Maricopa County be compared to permittees and communities in counties like Greenlee, Apache, and Navajo? Additionally, it appears that Maricopa is not within 50 miles of the A-S; closer than I thought, but still over 50. You may consider doing another socio-economic study, this time using relevant counties.

We appreciate that the Terry Loop Road on top of Escudilla will remain open. It is a very important road on our Stone Creek Allotment. Another consideration for roads to remain open is the Mexican wolf, not only for us to monitor the wolves, check our cattle, and access ones killed or injured by wolves and other predators, but also for the Wolf office to be able to quickly monitor and access the wolves, trapping when necessary for collaring and management. We[rsquo]d like to request that when a road goes through a gate in a fence that a cattleguard be installed. Many times the gates are left open in spite of us putting signs on the gates to please close them, allowing our cattle to escape to another pasture or someone else[rsquo]s allotment. It[rsquo]s bad enough with all the dead trees falling since the Wallow Fire. We[rsquo]d greatly appreciate it.

Our family has discussed this Plan a lot and we[rsquo]ve taken notice of things we[rsquo]ve seen on our allotments will working the cattle, mainly this fall as we gathered and readied the calves for shipping. Because we have been so busy with our usual fall work for the last two weeks, this letter represents our families[rsquo] combined comments. If you have any questions for us about our comments or about roads on the Alpine Ranger District, please do not hesitate to call us. We[rsquo]d be more than happy to help.

Again, we appreciate this opportunity and look forward to working with you.