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Comments: I am hereby submitting the attached information for the administrative record.

The attached document is correspondence between the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of the Interior, and a public lands grazing lease holder relating to trapping wild horses. It also includes the rancher's itemized lists of the costs of materials and labor used for "fence maintenance and construction" and also for "chaining pastures". These costs are paid for by the American tax payers.

Just like the wild horses, the natural forest vegetation is also being removed for cattle ranching. We are losing our wild horses, our apex predators, and our beautiful forest flora which provides the natural habitat for all the native forest creatures just to make cattle grazing more profitable for public lands ranchers. And to make matters worse, we are paying for it.

Chaining is a method of vegetation removal. The removal of natural vegetation from the forest is primarily to improve grazing for the non native, privately owned cattle.

OLD CHAINING PAGE: CHAINING IN THE AMERICAN WEST

Excerpt:

"Chaining," the most environmentally destructive option, uses a large anchor chain dragged between two enormous bulldozers to tear trees out of the ground, roots and all. The bulldozers used for these chainings travel back and forth as the chains, which can weigh more than 20,000 pounds, flatten hundreds of trees with every pass. As this occurs, the chains rake across the surface, destroying soils, sagebrush, grasses, and forbs and leaving discarded trees in their wake, which can litter the landscape for decades.

Destroying Wilderness

Vegetation removal projects using heavy machinery are not compatible with wilderness. When chains, harrows, or industrial mulching equipment are used to kill off essentially every tree and bush in a wilderness-quality area, the screening, solitude, and naturalness of that area can go from outstanding to nonexistent. Although the BLM claims that these vegetation removal projects will not ruin wilderness characteristics, the evidence of past projects is used by the BLM to justify determinations that areas do not qualify as wilderness.

In addition to degrading wilderness values, these projects disrupt fragile ecosystems, destroy cultural sites, and interrupt the visual aesthetic of an area. It is no secret that invasive species such as cheatgrass thrive in disturbed soils, and vegetation removal projects using heavy machinery create significant disturbance to soils and fragile biological soil crusts, providing the perfect opportunity for invasive species to take root. This issue is compounded when the project area is not seeded with native vegetation (BLM often re-seeds an area with non-native "forage species"), is only rested from livestock grazing for a season or two (if it actually happens at all), or experiences severe drought-which is unfortunately the new normal for the desert southwest."

<https://suwa.org/old-chaining-page-chaining-in-the-american-west/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CCChaining%2C%E2%80%9D%20the%20most%20environmentally,the%20ground%2C%20roots%20and%20all.>

Attachment a: Letter page 1

Attachment b: Letter page 2

Attachment c: Letter page 3

Attachment d: Letter page 4

Attachment e: Letter page 5