

Mr. Calvin Joyner, Regional Forester
Objection Reviewing Officer, Southwestern Region
USDA Forest Service
333 Broadway Blvd SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

RE: OBJECTIONS TO TRAVEL MANAGEMENT ON TONTO NATIONAL FOREST DRAFT ROD

Dear Mr. Joyner:

Please accept these objections and suggestions to the Draft Record of Decision ("Draft ROD") for the Tonto National Forest. as well as the associated Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. ("FSEIS").

These objections are submitted in accordance with objection process 36 CFR 218. I am submitting these objections on behalf of myself John Burton, Kirtis Butler, Bruce Vahjen, Dror Kirat, Marc Owen and all other motorized users of the Tonto National Forest in Arizona.

I have been an active participant in all of the Focus Group Meetings facilitated by Micah Grondin, Forest Supervisor and our group has been tasked with identifying and quantifying user issues and complaints and formulating possible solutions to those issues.

I have several very serious issues with the Draft Proposal.

The maps provided are of such poor quality they are virtually unusable. Because the Trails are so poorly marked or not marked at all it is virtually impossible to index the mapped trails and proposed closures to the actual trails in the field. This oversight prevents all users from having any clear understanding of what exactly the Forest Service is doing. If this doesn't violate Forest Service Rules it most certainly violates the spirit of the user input procedure!

The Forest Entrance Gate on N. 144th St. causes increased traffic on a dirt road that is objected to by residents along 144th St. The pipe fenced staging area inside the gate on Trail #2123 is virtually unused due the Trail #2123 is not an access road suitable for vehicles and trailers.

Relocating this gate south on 144th St. to Lone Mountain and creating a user friendly staging area would virtually eliminate undesirable user traffic between Lone Mountain north to the existing Gate. Establishing a new staging area at Lone Mountain Rd. would also mean all traffic would travel to the staging area on pavement substantially reducing noise and dust.

There are existing trails from that intersection which could easily disperse traffic from the staging area to the north and east and connect users to the rest of the Tonto Trails.

THIS BRINGS UP MY MAJOR CONCERN AND OBJECTION TO THE DRAFT PLAN.

The entire area of the forest bounded by 144th St. on the West, Trail #2123 on the North, Trail #1109 on the East and the Lone Mountain Forest Boundary on the South has been designated a NON- Motorized Area in the Plan. This is a huge chunk of lightly used, flat, safe existing trails which do not encroach on anyone and have been in use since the invention of the wheel. Why on earth are you proposing to lock us out of this area. These safe trails are just about the only trails suitable for beginner level riders and or Senior Citizen riders like myself or families that desire a safe non-threatening recreational user experience. There is plenty of room for all users including horses and hikers and mountain bikers to share these trails.

A Multi-Use shared trail concept provides the best use of our public lands.

Prohibiting motorized users from enjoying this area is discriminating against one group. This area like the entire Tonto National Forest belongs to all of us. Management by trail closure is Not Management at all.

Sincerely, John Burton

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