Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/5/2019 2:56:56 PM
First name: Ginger
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: As a 5th generation Eagar-Springerville native, I have seen the negative impacts on the Apache-Sitgreaves national forest caused by mismanagement by the USFS, increased tourist traffic, and environmental lawsuits based on flawed scientific data over the past 30 years. This area was culturally and economically settled around the natural resources available to us. Until the 1990s, thriving logging, lumber, and cattle industries fed the local economy and kept our forest healthy by keeping the forest thinned enough to allow new growth and protect the forest from insect infestation and by keeping the forest floor clean of unmanageable growth. The local residents gained a knowledgeable understanding as to how to keep our particular forest healthy and protecting it for future generations, but their knowledge and warnings were ignored and we have since paid the price. We've had to watch in horror as our rights to use our mountain have been continually stripped from us and watched our mountain burn, never to recover in our lifetimes to what it was as a result of this mismanagement. Now you propose to close even more of the mountain off to us. After the lawsuits of the 1990s and the logging industry was destroyed, you shut most of our roads off to us then. It didn't protect the mountain. It made it worse. You think that closing more roads is going to keep people off the mountain, but your thinking is flawed. We are tired of being shut out of the mountain many of us have lived, worked, and played on all our lives. We won't be held off of it. If you want to keep people from driving off the road, you should open the old logging roads back up so people have more roads to explore, not less. Shutting down more roads is just going to cause more unnecessary damage as people will not be kept off of their mountain. We've already lost a half million acres of camping and recreation areas that we love to the Wallow Fire. Shutting us out of the rest of the forest is not right, nor fair. If you want to protect the forest, create more roads, not less.