

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/24/2019 3:58:08 PM

First name: brian

Last name: macha

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I grew up in New Mexico and spent a lot of time in the Gila. I entered the draw for bull elk in the Gila every year I was a resident of the state of NM and was never lucky enough to be selected. Now I am resident of the state of Oklahoma and the way the NM draw is structured, I have almost a zero percent chance of drawing a hunt in one of my favorite places on earth (Gila). Why does Apaches-Sitgraves have anything to do with what I have just revealed? Well because it is in this same area - and additionally, the Apache-Sitgraves has its own natural appeal. I will reference Aldo Leopold, etal. to illustrate this latest claim. But anyway, I was lucky enough to have recently drawn an Arizona unit 1 late season bull elk hunt. Last year in fact I drew this tag and I hunted every inch of unit 1 before finally experiencing success atop Escudilla Mtn (another Leopold reference is in order here). I have hunted bull elk all over the western United States and last year's hunt in Arizona can be put up against any of the places I've been in terms of the setting and the experience. Granted, I choose to hunt out of a backpack and I choose to outfit myself... hunting in this manner allows me to get away from the crowds and I believe that it puts me closer in touch with my environment - and I believe I am a more successful hunter as a result. One thing I noticed about unit 1 even before applying is that road access is what people call: great. This is to say that everyone knows there are already roads all over this unit from top to bottom - quite honestly its difficult to find an isolated area to hike into that you can't get into with a vehicle or atv. I think it is obvious that my personal views are that, if anything, motorized access of any kind be substantially limited and/or decreased in this area - they definitely should not be expended. My views do not necessarily stem from a motivation to enhance my own style of hunting either. Consider the fact that I will probably not draw a hunt in unit 1 again for quite some time - so why would I care what happens in Apache-Sitgraves? Well, I'll tell you why: because numerous studies have established the clear fact that wildlife is impacted by motorized travel and human activity as a function of the type of vehicle and the frequency of contact. It is not hard to find the literature on this subject and many states have already taken action based on findings. Again it is not difficult to find the pertinent accepted literature i am referencing nor is it difficult to find out what concerned states are doing. Just to clarify what I am referring to in broad terms: the larger/louder the vehicle and the more frequent the contact, the bigger the radius of impact (in real land area) and the greater the stress on the animals. In a place like unit 1 that already has some type of road system literally all over the place, it is not too hard to come to the conclusion that the entire landscape and the animals on it are already overly stressed by too-frequent motorized intrusion. Indeed, I believe - or I should say that I know - when I hunted unit 1 this past year, superimposed on a spectacular and historical backdrop, I also witnessed an environment that is unnecessarily stressed by motorized traffic. So why would anyone want to increase this stress even more by creating more motorized access? It doesnt make sound scientific logical sense so I have to assume that there must be some other motivation. Whatever the motivation is, I would implore the final decision-makers to consider the impact that roads are already having on this storied landscape and its animal inhabitants. Just go pull up a map of the area under consideration and look at how many roads are already out there. Then go to an aerial photograph and look at the amount of trails that arent even listed on the map... What would Aldo Leupold think about what all this and what would he say about further increasing motorized travel?