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Comments: I do not support the removal of any wild horses from the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest until it is proven with science-based data that they are doing any harm to anybody or anything. A herd of less than 400 horses is HARDLY an overpopulation in a wilderness as vast as that forest is! This draft plan is immoral and irresponsible, especially being proposed by the very agency that is tasked with protecting this wild herd as per the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro Act (WFRHBA) passed by Congress. That baloney in the beginning of the Draft Plan saying that all the wild horses died out prior to the Rodeo-Chedeski fire is an unproven FALSEHOOD and a moot point, since during the 2005-2007 Federal Court Injunction action, the attorneys for the horse advocates provided 6 affidavits from various residents of the Heber-Overgaard area that swore to seeing free-roaming horses in the forest before, during and after that 2002 forest fire and the USFS could not substantiate their claim that all the horses had died. Besides, according to the 1971 WFRHBA, "all unbranded and unclaimed horses" are protected under that law.

Before you claim the wild horses are doing any harm, please study what impact the cattle that are grazed on these forest lands are doing to the land and draw appropriate science-based conclusions on which species is actually causing any range degradation. As part of the Environmental Analysis process to be undertaken as part of this process to implement a "management plan" for the wild horses, I expect to find out the precise number of cow/calf pairs that are permitted to graze on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest and precisely how many wild horses live there? Which of these two species of animals are known to be the more destructive to the land and which ones actually help to spread seeds through their manure to re-seed the lands? Consider this data in your study: https://www.hanaeleh.org/horses-versus-cattle-truth-behind-grazing-rights/ as well as this article by the Serengeti Foundation showing the positive benefits of horses contributing to the restoration of damaged rangeland: https://serengetifoundation.com/horsepower/

I watched the news last night and saw on Arizona's Family Channel 3TV a report where a USFS spokesman, Anthony Madrid, made the claim that the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest is showing signs that the lands are overgrazed. If that is truly the case, then where is the plan to reduce the number of cattle permitted to graze on these lands? Please study that as part of the Environmental Analysis process. How many cows should be reduced from the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest's grazing permits in order to mitigate rangeland destruction, alleged by USFS Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor Anthony Madrid? Because the wild horses are protected by the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and should be protected wherever they roam on these public lands. The cattle should NOT. The public supports the wild horses, not the cattle, and you USFS folks are bringing this issue into the light like never before with such insidious claims. Please also study the current societal preference for which species of animal is preferred to stay on the public lands - wild horses or cattle?

BLM data shows cattle far outnumber wild horses - at a ratio of 28 cows to 1 wild horse as of 2018 data on the western public lands. Proof of that is available at this link: http://dailypitchfork.org/?p-1417 and should be the basis to study and report on how many cows graze the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest vs. how many wild horses and which species does the public prefer the population be reduced?

Forage/water/habitat resources should be distributed fairly among all the animals that inhabit the lands with wild horses being given the larger proportion over the cattle, as privately-owned cattle do not require public lands to survive and the wild horses do. Let the cattlemen find private land to graze their cows if there isn't enough forage for them available on the public lands.

DO NOT remove ANY wild horses. My daughter has taken me to see them on the forest lands and I enjoyed that more than words can describe. They are beautiful creatures that God put in these forests because they make a

positive contribution to the ecosystem, not to mention to the public's enjoyment of our public forest lands. If you don't manage these lands according to the public's wishes, you will have to pay for those bad decisions.

STAND BY THE PUBLIC OPINION and preserve the wild horses!