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First name: Patti

Last name: Packer

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to submit comments in response to the USFS scoping notice for the Heber Wild Horse Territory Management Plan. As a member of the public, I greatly appreciate the Heber wild horses. Having the opportunity to visit and read about these wild horses provides me with great enjoyment of our public lands. I have a strong appreciation for the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest because the Heber wild horses live in this area. Below are issues that the Management Plan must address.

The Appropriate Management Level (AML) must be in conformance with the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (WFRHBA). At minimum, the Heber Herd should be allocated 50% of the forage in their own dedicated Territory.

The Management Plan must prioritize preserving natural wild horse behaviors. As the National Academy of Sciences determined "preserving natural behaviors is an important criterion" for wild horse management. Therefore, the following should be precluded from management actions: sex ratio skewing which causes stallion aggression due to the unnatural ratio of males to females; castration, ovariectomy and other surgical sterilization that alters the animal's ability to produce natural hormones; and any fertility control that alters the production of natural hormones.

Given the unique situation regarding the Heber wild horses and the history of catastrophic fires in the area, the Management Plan must include managing horses outside of the Territory through PZP and relocations not removals. In addition, any fencing within the Territory that prevents free movement must be removed. This is inhumane, wrong and not in conformance with Congress' intent.

Congress unanimously passed the WFRHBA because Americans care about our wild horses and burros. USFS must listen to the public when creating a management plan for these cherished American icons.

Thank you.