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First name: Christine

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Tonto National Forest Supervisor,

I am writing in response to the request for public participation on the Tonto National Forest Draft Land Management Plan. I would like to propose the following changes to the Forest Service's "desired conditions" for the Salt River Horses making them consistent with the intent of the state law protecting these cherished, wanted, admired wild horses in their HISTORIC habitat along the Lower Salt River:

Uses of the forest in areas that comprise the Salt River Horse herd habitat should not negatively impact or conflict with the protection of the horses.

I would also like to see you eliminate the possibility of cattle grazing. There is enough public lands providing cattle grazing allotments. The installation of cattle guards on the Tonto in recent weeks seems to indicate future action in this matter.

Any Forest Service action in the Forest that could cause detrimental impacts to the Salt River horse herd and the habitat areas, even those actions that fall under a Categorical Exclusion under NEPA, shall be PUBLICLY DISCLOSED and analyzed in consultation with the AZDA.

Such actions include, (& not limited to) herbicide use, fence maintenance, and construction.

Everyone at this point knows the fall out of herbicide use. Why would this be needed in a desert habitat?

I oppose herbicide use in the horses' habitat, since it can be deadly if eaten within 2 months of application~for all wildlife.

-The Forest Service shall provide 30 days' notice for any activity or project that may impact the Salt River Horse herd or habitat areas.

I opposed the riverfence that prevents critical access watersource along the lowest 4 miles of the Salt River.

However the fence was built anyway, without public input, through the use of a categorical exclusion. Our comment to the plan means that if the FS wants to do something like that in the future that affects the horses, that they would notify the public EVEN if it was a categorical exclusion.

It's a complete mystery why that fence was not placed along the highway long ago. You saw public citizen's erecting safety fence along Bush Highway for the safety of drivers and horses over the last few years. The fence the USFS placed right through, almost the center of, the Salt River horses habitat was profoundly disturbing. As a visitor to the salt River for 30 years I thought this was a horrible plan for the enjoyment of the public and downright cruel thing to do for free roaming wild horses.

The Salt River horses have not damaged this land in well over 100 years. I would like to see them stop being deprived of their habitats with each new implementation or plan that the forest service or any other authority comes up with. Should a proposal our plan come up that will be a detriment to the Salt River horses, the public should be informed of it enough sufficient amount of time to respond.

Thank you for the chance you submit comments.