

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/12/2020 5:30:45 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to voice my strong support for the protection of the Salt River wild horses.

As an American citizen, I acknowledge that our nation's wild horses are a national treasure that must be protected for ourselves and for future generations. The Salt River wild horses are of social, economic and historic importance to their local area, to the region and to the nation and this fact must be recognized by those agencies charged with their care and preservation.

Any changes to the Forest Service's "desired conditions" for the Salt River Horses must be consistent with the intent of the state law protecting these highly valued wild horses in their historic habitat.

The Forest Service must prioritize minimizing user conflicts in these areas. Uses of the forest in areas that comprise the Salt River Horse herd habitat must not negatively impact or conflict with the protection of these iconic mustangs. Any action by the Forest Service in the Tonto National Forest that could result in detrimental impacts to the Salt River wild horse herd or habitat areas, even those falling under a Categorical Exclusion under NEPA, must be disclosed publicly and analyzed in consultation with the Arizona Department of Agriculture. Such actions include, but are not limited to, herbicide use and fence maintenance, and construction. The Forest Service must provide 30 days notice for any activity or project that could impact the Salt River Horse wild horse herd or habitat areas.

Considering their recreational and economic significance, I strongly urge the enhancement of this Salt River wild horse habitat, including the removal of obstructive fencing.

The fencing scheduled for construction would cause irreparable harm to these protected and cherished wild horses and is in violation of state law protecting them "where they have historically lived" in the lower Salt River.

I strongly OPPOSE the planned boundary fence along four miles of the lower Salt river due to the detrimental effect it would have on the wild horses as well as to recreational users of the Lower Salt River. Moreover, it would push myriad mustangs into a high use human area, not to mention it has not been developed in an open and transparent public process.

I vehemently OPPOSE habitat reductions on the south side of Bush Highway and I call on the Forest Service to support construction of a wildlife overpass in this area.

Wild horses are a protected species who are rapidly vanishing from the western landscape and every effort must be undertaken to ensure their survival for future generations to come, as these national treasures belong to ALL OF US.

I support the humane management program implemented by the state of Arizona and its partners. I call on you to work with the Salt River Wild Horse Management Group to explore humane alternatives to construction of this invasive and dangerous fence.

The Forest Service must work with the Arizona Department of Agriculture and the Salt River Wild Horse Management group to protect and humanely manage these highly valued wild horses who are not only an Arizona treasure but are esteemed by mustangs admirers all over the world.