

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/12/2020 2:07:24 PM

First name: Patty

Last name: Rister

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Dear Tonto National Forest Supervisor,

I noticed that the plan did not mention much about the Salt River Wild horses, so I am expressing my concern about the horses for future consideration.

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 to make them consistent with the intent of the state law protecting these cherished wild horses in their historic habitat along the Lower Salt River:

-The Forest Service shall prioritize minimizing user conflicts in these areas. 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.

-Any Forest Service action in the Forest that could cause detrimental impacts to the Salt River horse herd or habitat areas, even those actions that fall under a Categorical Exclusion under NEPA, shall be publicly disclosed and analyzed in consultation with the Arizona Department of Agriculture and their 3rd party contractor. Such actions include, but are not limited to, herbicide use and fence maintenance, and construction.

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

As a recreational user of the TNF recreation sites, the sight of the metal fences, especially at Coon Bluff really took away from the beauty of that site.

As a kayaker of the Lower Salt River, I am not in favor of any fence crossing the river. A fence would only collect debris which could impact the safety of the kayakers, paddle boarders, and tubers.

Thank you.