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Title:

Comments: JOHN LONG CANYON

I strongly support the development of a forest road enabling public access to John Long Canyon. This is long overdue.

I'm a deer hunter. John Long Canyon was once considered a prime hunting area for Coues whitetail deer, or so some old-timers in Bisbee have told me.

Several years ago I tried during two consecutive hunting seasons to access the canyon on foot, once from Pridham Canyon and another time from FR 4250 . I found both approaches to be impractical for me and for most other people.

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I'm not afraid to walk. Several times over the years I've backpacked as far as two miles into roadless areas of the Coronado to hunt deer. This involves packing in water and camping gear and butchering and packing out the meat. Some young and hearty individuals might be capable of entering John Long from another canyon that has vehicular access, but there's no guarantee they'd be rewarded with the same experience I've had in the roadless areas. I've heard from reliable sources that a select few hunters have been allowed to cross the private land and set up camping trailers along the forest road. This is national forest land and should be available to all on an equal basis.

The huntable portion of the canyon is up to 7 miles long. If one mile each side of the road through the canyon is included, the area lost to the public amounts to about $7 \times 2 = 14$ square miles. This is unacceptable.

Owning a small piece of private land where the forest road crosses should not enable a landowner to control the access and use of 14 square miles of national forest beyond the boundary of the private land. If the term public lands has any meaning then the public should have access as one of the basic rights of ownership. Public lands are held in trust for its owners, the public. Private control of access over public land by a private individual amounts to defacto privatization.

The forest service should take whatever measures are necessary to return this portion of our public lands to the public on a permanent basis.

Larry Audsley

Tucson