

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/16/2020 2:39:53 AM

First name: Elaine

Last name: Moisan

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear USFS,

There are many educated, experienced and/or verbose members of the Portal community that will send long comments about this, so I will try to spare you.

I've lived here for 10 years (I am a home owner in Portal) and I've been coming here since the late 70's. I've worked at the Southwestern Research Station, Cave Creek Ranch, and I'm also a birding guide.

EVERYBODY loves South Fork!!!! Easy access - beautiful scenery - amazing wildlife ... what's not to love? Why not have picnic tables, like we all used to enjoy? I also camped at South Fork in the 70's! Why not put a campground back in there?

I remember birding in the canyon in the 70's - it was overwhelming to try and see all of the birds singing and flying around on South Fork. I'm a bird guide now, and it's hard work these days. It is well documented that overall bird numbers are far less: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/silent-skies-billions-of-north-american-birds-have-vanished/>

Furthermore, visitation will inevitably keep rising, via social media/internet, blogs, books - so I think protection for this canyon is now appropriate, rather than trying to re-create what used to be there.

I do agree that we do need a real toilet with some parking and trash containers. I do not think another "trail" is necessary, but I like the idea of a few benches along the road and at the berm, especially if there will be a seasonal road closure.

No picnic tables, please! I disagree with this aspect of your plan. Jays and other corvids love picnic areas, and kill the nestlings of songbirds - I'm sure you know about this. Considering the lower number of migratory Dear USFS,

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No picnic tables, please! I disagree with this aspect of your plan. Jays and other corvids love picnic areas, and kill the nestlings of songbirds - I'm sure you know about this. Considering the lower number of migratory songbirds, I think we might want to give them a leg up, and not have a picnic area in a sensitive place.

Also - the people that will wish to picnic there are often not in league with those who want quietly observe nature. They just want to have fun in the woods! Kids & dogs splashing in the creek, the car stereo on, etc. That's OK, but - at this point - please can't we leave South Fork for wildlife (and those who wish to observe it) and give picnickers another nice location?

The South Fork is such an important place for our valuable diversity of plants, insects, birds, mammals, etc. Yes - protect it from human waste and garbage, but otherwise leave it alone. We have the rest of this whole huge mountain range to play in.

Thank you very much for considering my opinion,  
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