

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/26/2020 8:30:47 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: South Fork Day Use Area 56779

I have been visiting The South Fork of Cave Creek for the past fifteen years and have owned a home in Portal for the past 5 years.

In March, a group of us proposed that any new construction in the South Fork be located outside the Zoological Botanical Area (ZBA), specifically right at the turnoff into South Fork where there is already a large parking area. We supported locating a vault toilet or other type of toilet there. And we suggested that Education activities be located at the Visitor Information Center, which has excellent educational displays. In addition, we suggested that school groups use the Sunny Flats Nature trail and that we would volunteer to build a connector trail from the VIC to Sunny Flats nature trail, a short distance away. Eskild Petersen presented this vision at the March open house.

At that meeting, Alternative C and D were being considered. The present plan introduces us to Alternative B, which was not identified as an option in March, while failing to consider the proposal we made in March. Alternative C and D are correctly dismissed but the draft EA fails to mention that there was also another Alternative, thereby indicating that our suggestion was never considered even for a moment.

I cannot and do not support any new construction in the ZBA and I do not support New construction in a flood zone, which Alternative B is located in. I also do not support new construction in the vicinity of a Spotted owl breeding and hunting area. The proximity of Alternative B site to the Spotted owl area necessitates a full Environmental Impact Assessment. Even if the road is closed there, it becomes an active human site that is too close to a known Spotted owl site.

Any new construction would be appropriately placed in the Developed Recreation Land Use Zone and NOT in the ZBA or Birds or Prey ZBA.

I do support a toilet at the entrance to South Fork, before the ZBA.

The South Fork of Cave Creek is a very unique area that needs to be preserved and protected not developed. There is far too much loss of habitat and fragmentation of habitat in our Forests and in 2020 we need to prioritize all the species on this planet who are not human and save this remarkable area from new construction and development.

I support Alternative A.