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Title:

Comments: The Ochocos belong to the American people. The Ochocos do not belong to the USFS. The USFS has been given the honor of taking care of the Ochocos. They should be proud to be the stewards of this beautiful land with its unique diverse wild life, particularly the wild horses. Sadly they are not. They take no pride in their job. They don't want to make a positive difference in this world. All they want is their paycheck and be best friends with the ranchers. Why is that I wonder.

Shame on the USFS for this EA report. There are so many false statements made by the forest service it is simply unbelievable. If comments were made that they didn't like the USFS simply dismissed them. Over and over again. One such example of a false narrative is on page 272 the consideration under the title "Introducing Mares" in this EA, a personal communication with Dr Cothran is mentioned. Since the USFS referenced it (9/13/2017, project folder) I requested from Beth Peers to see that report. She emailed it to me. It was two pages and titled, call with Dr Gus Cothran

September 13 2017

Prepared by Steve Gibson

Here is what the USFS did not tell us in that particular consideration. Dr Cothran says " ... empirical work suggests that if maintenance of fitness is important, effective population sizes much larger than 50 are necessary. Theoretical studies suggest that the figure could be closer to 5000..." Steve Gibson goes on to say, Dr Cothran indicated that every conservation geneticist will state that more is always better and that we need to maintain as many as we can, however, environmental factors will often limit populations long before they reach 5000 effective breeding individuals. I am curious what part of this Steve Gibson does not understand. Let me explain it. It means that all the wildlife self regulate. The strongest survive. If man did not exist the horses and other animals would continue to survive in the Ochocos. Every year would look different yes, depending on weather, disease, injuries and predation. The horses would survive to the best of their ability like every other species.

If the USFS follows through with taking the herd down to 12 to 65 then effectively they will have caused the extinction of the wild horse in the Ochocos. The United States Forest Service is only as good as the people are who work there. For our government to cause the extinction of a species is unconscionable.

The American people have screamed and shouted, filed lawsuits, volunteered countless hours, gathered petitions and written letters for decades trying to save the wild horse. It doesn't matter whether it is here in the Ochocos or in Nevada or anywhere else the USFS stance is always the same, the wild horses are destroying the land. Not the cattle or sheep past or present, not the people riding their atv's, not any mining that has been done past or present, not people camping, riding horseback or hiking, and not the hunters. All of the above throughout time has had an impact and will continue to have an impact on the Ochocos. The horses are not the problem. The deer and elk, bear and cougar, are not the problem. All of the wild life were living in the forest before man came along. MAN IS THE PROBLEM!!!!

Congress finally listened and wrote the FRWHAB act. I have read the original ACT as well as the ammendments and nowhere in there does it say that ranchers and their livestock will take precedence over wild life. NO WHERE!!!! Also the act says that the the National Academy of Sciences should be involved in the decisions about the horses. I see nowhere that the USFS has included them on anything concerning the horses.

Once again the American people have spoken. Why does man always have to interrupt and alter what nature has done. Why does man always believe that he knows what is best for our public lands. So here we have a beautiful forest that is full of wildlife. It is a calming place to be with water and flora and fauna, and forage for all the different species of animals and birds that live there. It was created naturally by mother nature, by god. Now man has come along and said wow this forest is a goldmine. We will mine it, we will run livestock on it. We will ride ATV's all over it. When damage is done we will simply blame the wild horses.

Mother nature creates habitats, wildlife come and the varied species work together to sustain that habitat. The USFS needs to remember that they are stewards of the land. It should be their job to regulate how people may use the forest, not to be best friends with the ranchers. Not to be so full of evil that they would even consider surgical treatments for birth control or birth control at all on a wild animal. There are over 25,000 acres for the wildlife to enjoy. There is plenty of room for the horses. There is plenty of forage for the horses if you keep the livestock out.

Take heed, the American people are watching you, the United States Forest Service. We will never ever stop fighting for the horses because to do so would put them in danger, would expose them to the most barbaric conditions and horrific suffering and finally extinction.

Sincerely,

Jerry West