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Comments: The proposed action for the Wild Horses that call this area home is very flawed. It seems that it is set up that way so it can fail. It needs to be revised.

We have visited the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest and this area is pristine and beautiful; Wild Horses add even more to it. We saw a foal not even a day old and what a joy to see them peacefully enjoying the day grazing with the band. It is early January and we are in a La Nina year which means little rain. Yet these Wild Horses are thriving, fat and sassy. Not to long after that the rain and snow come along and Spring is in the air. Driving down the dirt roads sometimes seeing a glimpse of a Wild Horse is scarce but you occasionally get lucky.

The Forest Fire is mentioned in the Proposed Action packet. You talk how the forest needs to recover, yet you let cattle graze… Since the Wild Horse and Burro act you need to do everything in your power to protect the forest and Wild Horses are the last thing in any action. The first and foremost is cattle. Have a 10 year no use for ranching in the Apache Sitgreaves National forest. Wasn't there a town just south of Heber that had to move because cattle ranching destroyed the land they lived on? Wilford was the name. Google it, its all there.

The proposed boundaries for the territory are small and have have fencing and blockades in the way. Obviously there are no Wild Horses in King Philip and Sharp Hallow allotments. Why is that? Well fencing and closed gates seem to be the culprit. The Territory in Gentry Should go all the way down to the Fort Apache Indian reservation. Why? Because thats where the fencing is. How are you going to keep Wild Horses from wondering off the territory if there are no physical boundaries? Wild horses roam and from your count they are beyond that proposed territory boundaries. It seems to me that is setting them up for failure. Its like drawing a circle on the ground and having cats stay in it. So if they cross over the boundary they would be rounded up; Am I right? Bunger and Phoenix Park Allotments should all be under the Heber Wild Horse Territory all the way to Pinedale ridge Rd.

Lots of names are mentioned in the proposed action packet, yet there is no proof of what they are saying. My Family has visited the Forest in the 70's and they say there were 400 Wild Horses. Your counting of Wild Horses is completely asinine. Pictures of individual horses should be taken and then counted so there is no double counting. It is mentioned that horses came from the Apache Nation? Well what if the Wild Horses of the Heber Herd were going back and forth from the Nation to the Heber Territory. Is there proof of it anywhere besides what someone said. There is no solid evidence its just someones word and the word of ranchers which dont have any meaning.

Another area of concern is Black Canyon Lake. Lots of people activity. If the Wild Horses are confined to a small area then encounters with the public is high and accidents could happen. Whether a horse does something to someone or vice versa it would not be good. But if the Wild Horses are more spread out accidents are less likely to happen.

In Conclusion the Proposed action should be taken back to the drawing board. Also has the Killer of the Heber Wild Horses been caught? That needs to happen. Another item on the list for this area of the forest should be the banning of hunting.