Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/19/2021 12:44:06 AM
First name: Becky
Last name: Wilt
Organization:
Title:
Comments: To whom it may concern,
I'm writing in response to the proposed reduction of the Heber Wild Horse Herd. I want to say that I am a homeowner in Heber/Overgaard. The presence of the wild horses in the Heber/Overgaard area was definitely a big part of our desire to purchase our home there. We often drive out on the forest service roads in hopes of seeing some our beloved Heber horses. It is my opinion that the proposal of cutting the number of horses by 75% is extreme to say the least. I know the horses are federally protected and have a designated area. I also understand that horses cannot see or adhere to a line in the sand that men have deemed their area. The horses also are limited by the rim itself and Hwy 260. Their only options are to share the forest with people camping, people off roading, elk, the communities of Heber and Overgaard, and cattle from ranchers. It seems like the cattle should not be allowed to graze in the area of the federally protected horses. It's my understanding that ranchers purchase grazing rights. If this is the case, why are these federally protected horses and their food sources not being protected? Can the cattle not graze any where else?
This is not a large herd of horses. They are dearly loved by people in the area who have already endured the illegal shootings of more than 20 horses last year, of which none have been resolved to my knowledge. Please reconsider your plan. Decimating this herd will be a detriment to the area, the residents, and the local economy.