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Organization: Arizona Trail Association

Title: founding volunteer, retired Board member

Comments: Thank you the Forest Service for this opportunity to comment. You have produced an amazing product in this Comprehensive Plan.

I have been involved with the Arizona Trail since 1994. I got involved originally as an equestrienne who loved long distance horseback trail rides. When I saw the Arizona Highways article in 1989 I began seeking ways I could help make this project happen. Decades later the Trail not only offers a spectacular route through the most diverse terrain in the World but it is offering services we had not envisioned at the onset of the project. One example is the Veterans Program helping folks affected by PTSD to find healing through exposure to nature and communing with fellow veterans on the Trail.

There is one thing I would comment on and that is the subject of connector trails. Trails that link the Arizona Trail to the Gateway Communities along the trail. These are very important, involve much community involvement. I would hope the Forest Service would look to the Arizona Trail Association for recommendations of connector trails.

Thank the Forest Service for the opportunity to comment.