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Comments: For years I have been coming to Southern Arizona, mostly to ride horses at the Circle Z ranch. I spend well over \$10,000 per year in the Patagonia region and have done so yearly since 2017, with the exception of one year when the ranch was closed due to Covid. There are two main reasons that I travel some 1800 miles each way to come to the ranch: first, to ride the wide variety of trails available as per the existing special use permit between the USFSS and the ranch and secondly and every bit as important, to enjoy the unspoiled beauty of this unique biological 'island in the sky'. In addition I patronize the local wineries and distilleries in the area and have bought several items of significance at the Patagonia Art Show over the years. I am probably typical in my belief that if the proposed powerline is routed as proposed, there would be little benefit of my traveling over 4000 miles round trip when I could have just as satisfactory an experience closer to home. State Highway 82 is already designated an Arizona Scenic Highway -- not only would such a High Power Transmission Line affect the ranch but would be unsightly from the road. Such a powerline has no place in such a landscape when there are suitable alternatives.

Of particular concern to me is the Permanent Access Route and the High Power Transmission Line that is proposed in the Mine's plan of operation.

This route, if allowed, could foreseeably have a huge impact to the Circle Z Ranch's horseback riding opportunities onto CNFS lands. The routes would transect ten of the ranches established trails that have been in use for many years, trails that are already permitted under their Special Use Permit. The ranch would no longer be able to take me and others onto what would be a small strip of land which would significantly and directly impact their ability to offer me the riding and sightseeing experiences I so enjoy while in the Patagonia region. It would also impact the ranch's access onto adjacent forest service lands. Some of the trails the route would dissect would include Toms Trail, Yucca Canyon trail (one of my favorites), Stagecoach, Quarts and several others. It is unconscionable that such beauty be destroyed when suitable alternatives are available.

In addition this route would also indirectly affect the Ranch's adjacent conservation lands, as more than half of the ranch riding trails would be in the visual and sound fields of this route. This would foreseeably cause significant visual pollution as well as potential electromagnetic exposure to persons NEAR the high tension lines. This presents a potential safety exposure issue that needs to be explored. All this is in addition to the destruction of the ecological 'islands in the sky' that the State of Arizona has been touting for many years to tourists as worthy of their visit. Views from State Route 82 as well as on horseback are so rare in this world today.

The forest service should conduct an analysis of the impacts of the Permanent Access Route and High Power Transmission Line on the tourist business, not only to the Circle Z ranch, but the entire tourist industry of the Patagonia and Sonita regions. In addition, the impact of the elimination of many of the ranch riding trails, the potential for visual pollution and disturbances on the UNSF land and both the Ranch Conservation Lands, as well as adjacent Conservation properties needs to be analyzed.

Simply put, there is a much better alternative to the proposed routes that the USFS can mandate be considered. Using the already established Forest Service Road 49 to Lochiel would not have the significant impact that the proposed route would have. Also, another alternative to the visual pollution caused by the High Voltage Transmission line would be to bury that line over the proposed route; yet another alternative that should be studied would be to power the mine from the east as opposed to from the south.

In summary, the USFS is the public custodian of a priceless resource - the unique beauty of the Patagonia

Mountain region. It should not be compromised when better alternatives are available.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Bruce Whitlock