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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern:

I have been a returning guest at Circle Z Guest Ranch, located just south of Patagonia, Arizona for years, and I hope to continue to come to AZ to enjoy the natural beauty it offers. Of great 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 area is an extraordinary example of the phenomenal environment Arizona has to offer the wider world, and the negative impact this proposal would have on the land should be prevented at all costs.

This route, if allowed, could foreseeably have a huge impact on the Circle Z Ranches horseback riding opportunities onto CNFS lands. The routes would transect 10 of the ranches established trails that have been in use for years, trails that are permitted under their Special Use Permit. The ranch would no longer be able take their guests out onto this small strip of land, which would significantly and directly affect their ability to continue to offer outstanding horseback riding onto adjacent forest service lands. There are few places in the world that allow for the riding Circle Z offers, and it would be a travesty to lose these opportunities for those who come from all over the world to experience AZ at its best.

This route would also indirectly affect the Ranches 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, a disturbance in our enjoyment of the pristine and expansive vistas that are so rare in the world today.

We ask that the Forest Service conduct an analysis of the impacts of the Permanent Access Route and High Power transmission line on the tourist business the ranch brings to this area, the elimination of their riding trails, and on the potential for visual pollution and disturbances on the UNFS land and the Ranch Conservation Lands.

There are few places in AZ or even the US West that have Patagonia's power to entice riders, hikers, and environmentalists to come and explore its undeveloped and pure areas. I hope that the Forest Service takes all of this into consideration before making a decision.

We believe there are viable alternatives to the proposed routes that the USFS can mandate be considered. Using the already established FS road 49 to Lochiel would not have the significant impacts that the proposed route would have. Also, an alternative to the visual pollution caused by the High Voltage transmission line is the burying of that line, or the requirement to bring the power in from the east as opposed to from the south.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Laurie P. Fichter