

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/16/2024 2:07:40 PM

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Comments: Thanks for looking to improve the Visitor's Center at SCRA. My wife and I live nearby and hike there almost daily. In my opinion, the current proposal, more than doubling the size of the Center, increasing the size of the parking lot by 50%, adding a food service facility and adding full-time staff offices from other locations, is far too big and out of scale with this location.

There are four major concerns with the current proposal:

1. Transportation safety and Infrastructure. The transportation infrastructure providing access to SCRA is a mess and the USFS, Pima County and the Catalina Foothills School District are not doing anything at this time to address the current shortcomings, nor plan for adding the capacity and improvements to support a traffic increase in the SCRA Visitor Center. Traffic in and out of the SCRA parking lot is dangerous during busy times, the traffic delivering kids to/from the two schools across the street compounds the danger, the intersection at Sabino Canyon/Sunrise is poorly marked and congested (with cars backed up through the intersection at times waiting to enter SCRA). Also, the surface condition of Sunrise, along with the lack of a multiuser trail for safe passage of schoolchildren/walkers/hikers/bicyclists. makes this area unsafe and inadequate to handle the proposed SCRA expansion.

2. Needs focus on SCRA users: In my opinion, most of the current users are there to hike, and the proposed design spends most of the space/money on interpretive exhibits/eating facilities/gathering places, more in keeping with a National Park facility than a USFS recreation facility. Great bathrooms, more sources of potable water throughout the Recreation Area, ramadas, picnic tables and benches at heavily used locations would be significant improvements.

3. Food Service Not Needed: There are currently seven sit-down restaurants, four with "take-outs", as well as two convenience stores within 1.5 miles of Sabino Canyon. The federal government does not need to add food service on site given the current abundance of private sector offerings. A look at multiple food service facilities at federal and state parks reveal most struggle to cover costs and many are completely closed or seasonally closed.

4. USFS Operations and Budget Capacity. Currently, the USFS is unable to maintain the SCRA's facilities adequately. Rules for the use of the Recreation Area are not enforced. The bathrooms are not clean and often toilets and wash basins are not operating. Capital improvements are very slow in coming, if at all, and most have been done recently by Friends of Sabino Canyon, a non-profit group. How will the USFS manage a facility that is close to three times (3x) bigger given its inability to keep the current operation running well?

Until these questions are addressed fully, I strongly encourage the Forest Service to put this proposal on hold.

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