Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/19/2026 4:15:23 AM
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: As a 62 year resident of Safford and a Graham County Elected Official I'm in support of Alternative #1, issuing a new 20 year occupancy permit for the Columbine Camp. My reasons follow:

1. This camp was established on Mt. Graham prior the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

2. The USFWS rescinded the definition of "harm" under the ESA in July of 2026. In the EA for this permit there was no documentation of historical injury or takes by due to the presence of the Columbine Camp.

3. The Environmental Assessment indicated that the impacts to Endangered Species during the 3 year demolition and removal of the camp (Alternative #2) would be greater in the short term than issuing the permit.

4. The presence of the USFS Columbine Visitor Center attracts numerous seasonal visitors who may create disruptions and disturbances to endangered species. Allowing the USFS facility or the MGIO to operate while requiring the removal of the Columbine Camp seems patently unfair.

5. The operation of the Columbine Camp is in harmony with the USFS' goal to "help people share and enjoy the forest while conserving the environment for generations to come." (USFS webpage).

6. The ground disturbance and construction of the Columbine Camp occurred 60 years ago. There's no less disruptive way to allow families, tourists and children to enjoy day activities and overnight camping than in the existing Camp. An equal number of dispersed campers would have a much greater impact on the forest habitat.