Decision Notice

& Finding of No Significant Impact

Cartwright Allotment Analysis

USDA Forest Service
Cave Creek Ranger District, Tonto National Forest
Maricopa and Yavapai Counties, Arizona

Decision and Reasons for the Decision

Background

This decision covers the authorization of grazing and selected improvements for the Cartwright Allotment on the Cave Creek Ranger District in Maricopa and Yavapai Counties, Arizona. The allotment includes land designated as Management Area 1F in the Tonto National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

The purpose and need for the proposed action arose for the following reasons:

- The Cave Creek Complex (CCC) Fire in 2005 burned a large portion of the allotment. The analysis will consider the effects of the fire.

- There is a need to incorporate additional flexibility into the management of the allotment in order to allow the Forest Service and grazing permit holder to be able to adapt management to changing resource conditions or management objectives, and to comply with Forest Service Policy (FSH 2209.13 Chapter 90).

- The allotment lacked sufficient environmental analysis to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Tonto National Forest Land Management Plan, as amended.

- Rangeland vegetation condition and soil condition is less than desirable in many areas as a result of past historic grazing. There is a need for management to be more responsive to decrease the duration and intensity of use in areas with less than satisfactory soil or vegetation condition.

The authorization of grazing and the proposed management practices on Cartwright Allotment was described in the Cartwright Allotment Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EA analyzes and discloses the anticipated effects of the proposed action and three alternatives. It also describes specific mitigation and monitoring requirements that will be implemented as part of the selected alternative. The EA is available for review at the Cave Creek Ranger District office and the Tonto National Forest Supervisor's Office.

Decision

Based upon my review of all alternatives, I have decided to approve the grazing management strategy described under **Alternative C** of the EA. In addition, this decision incorporates the four components listed below. The number of livestock initially allowed will be less than 175 adults/yearlings and is based on resource conditions. Numbers will be adjusted based on adaptive management yearly at the Annual Operating Meeting.

The selected alternative will authorize managed livestock grazing on the Cartwright Allotment. The livestock grazing action will be a five-pasture deferred rotation with 350 cattle yearlong, yearling progeny from January 1 to May 31, and 10 yearlong horses. Three pastures will be eliminated from grazing: Professor, Lime Creek and Long Canyon Pastures. 6L Pasture will be used as a grassbank pasture, as needed by the Cartwright Allotment permittee. The action consists of four components – authorization, improvements, management practices and monitoring – and the action will be implemented using an adaptive management strategy. The four components are described below.

1. Authorization

The selected action will authorize managed livestock grazing under the following terms and conditions.

Duration and timing of grazing: Use on the allotment will be authorized year-round using rotational grazing under the Allotment Management Plan. Grazing management will be designed to insure that pastures receive periodic growing season rest or deferment in order to provide for grazed plant recovery. The sequence and timing of pasture moves and specific on/off dates will be set annually based on monitoring of ecological condition, forage utilization, available water, livestock nutritional needs, and past distribution and management strategies.

Intensity of grazing: Forage utilization will be managed at a level corresponding to light to moderate intensity on the uplands (30-40% of current year's growth on herbaceous material and 50% or less on browse material) in order to provide for grazed plant recovery, increases in herbage production and retention of herbaceous litter to protect soils. Consistent patterns of utilization in excess of 40% of key species in key areas would be used as a basis to modify management practices or take administrative actions necessary to reduce utilization in subsequent grazing seasons.

Critical riparian areas will limit use to <50% of terminal leaders on the top 1/3 of the woody plants that are accessible to livestock (<6 feet tall). Use on deergrass is limited to less than 40% of plant species biomass. On emergent species (rushes, sedges, cattails, horsetails), a stubble height of six to eight inches will be maintained during the grazing period (USFS 2007b). Greenline/streambank alternation will be measured as an annual indicator and to help determine long term trend.

Administrative actions necessary to implement the decision: The following administrative actions will be used to implement the NEPA-based decision to authorize grazing.

- **Permit Issuance**: A new 10-year term grazing permit will be issued for Cartwright Allotment. The permit will be for 350 adult cattle (bulls, cows) yearlong, plus progeny of the adult cattle, grazing at that time, as yearling carry-over from January 1 to May 31 of each year; and ten horses to be utilized in the grazing operation.

- **Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)**: On an annual basis the Forest and permittee will jointly prepare an annual plan, referred to as the AOI, that sets forth:

    - The numbers, class of livestock, and the timing and duration of use for the current season.
    - The planned sequence of grazing in pastures on the allotment, and the monitoring criteria that will be used to make changes.
    - Structural and non-structural improvements to be constructed, reconstructed, or maintained and who is responsible for these activities.
    - Allowable use or other standards to be applied and followed by the permittee to properly manage livestock.
    - Monitoring for the current season that may include, among other things, documentation demonstrating compliance with the terms and conditions in the grazing permit, AMP and AOI.

2. Improvements

Structural range improvements proposed to promote improved livestock distribution in the Cartwright Allotment are listed below.

- Construct approximately one mile of fence on the south side of Cave Creek and tie it into the existing fence on the north side of the creek. It will be built before cattle graze in Quien Sabe Pasture.
- Rebuild and extend the Camp Creek Exclosure northward approximately ½ mile to include the spring area of Maverick Pasture.
- Construct an exclosure fence around ½ mile of 7 Springs riparian area in the Bronco Pasture.

Typically, improvements are funded on a cost-share basis with the Forest Service providing materials and the permittee providing the labor to construct or install the improvement. Due to the Cave Creek Complex Fire, Cave Creek Ranger District requires over a hundred miles of fence to be reconstructed. Forest Service funding for all of the improvements is not currently available and funding constraints will likely require the projects to be completed over a period of years. The permittee has been notified of funding constraints and encouraged to pursue alternative sources of funding if they wish to expedite completion of the developments.

3. Management Practices

Management practices include measures to reduce or avoid resource impacts that are incorporated into the project design. These measures have been used on previous projects and are considered to be effective at reducing environmental impacts. They are consistent with applicable Forest Plan standards and guidelines and the terms and conditions and conservation measures of existing biological opinions. Implementation of these practices in combination with the duration, timing and intensity of grazing proposed is intended to avoid the occurrence of adverse environmental impacts.

Soil, Water and Vegetation – the objective is to mitigate effects of livestock grazing and facility construction through the use of Best Management practices (FSH 2509.22) and adaptive management. Practices include, but are not limited to the following.

- Utilization of key upland herbaceous forage species in key areas will be managed to achieve the goal of light to moderate grazing as a pasture average. The objective is to protect plant vigor, provide herbaceous residue for soil protection and to increase herbage producing ability of forage plants. A utilization guideline of 30-40% use of key species in key areas will be used to achieve this objective.
- Necessary techniques will be used to achieve proper distribution or lessen the impact on sensitive areas. Practices include herding, salting and controlling access to waters. Salt or similar solid supplements will be placed on good feed, at least one quarter to one half mile from waters and salting locations will be moved annually. Placement of liquid supplements will require prior approval of the District Ranger.
- No hay or bulk feed will be placed on Forest lands in order to minimize the introduction of weed seeds.

Wildlife – the objective is to mitigate impacts to wildlife from livestock grazing and from disturbance associated with construction of range facilities

- Monitoring will determine if the allotment has recovered sufficiently from the CCC Fire to be grazed. Periodic field checks including stock counts, utilization monitoring, and range improvement maintenance checks will be used to identify needed management adjustments. Monitoring for each pasture will occur throughout the grazing period.
- Apply utilization limits to critical riparian areas (stream channels/springs/riparian areas), and monitor throughout the grazing period. Nine critical reaches were identified on the Cartwright Allotment. They are listed in the Biological Assessment in the Project Record.
- Eliminate the use of riparian areas and desert washes for gathering, trailing, and shipping livestock, and do not construct future livestock facilities in riparian areas or washes. Begin to remove all livestock handling, gathering, and shipping facilities from riparian areas and desert washes.

- All water developments will include wildlife access and escape ramps.
- All new fencing, reconstruction and maintenance of fences will be to Forest Plan standards to provide for wildlife passage through the fence. At a minimum, this will require a smooth bottom wire 16 inches off the ground and a total height of 42 inches or less.

Heritage Resources – the objective is to protect heritage resources (historic and prehistoric sites) from impacts caused by range construction projects or livestock concentration.

- Archaeological surveys will be conducted for areas proposed for surface disturbance which have no previous survey coverage, or have out-dated surveys which do not conform to current standards.
- Relocation or redesign of proposed range improvements and ground-disturbing management practices to avoid direct and indirect impacts to historic properties.
- Relocation of existing range improvements and salting locations sufficient to ensure the protection of historic properties being impacted by concentrated grazing use.
- Fencing or exclosure of livestock from individual sensitive historic properties of areas containing multiple sensitive historic properties being impacted by grazing.
- Other mitigation measures involving data recovery may be developed and implemented in consultation with the SHPO as the need arises. The appropriate tribes will be consulted if the mitigation is invasive or if it affects a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other property of concern for them.

4. Monitoring

The objective of monitoring is to determine whether management is being properly implemented and whether the actions are effective at achieving or moving toward desired conditions.

Effectiveness monitoring includes measurements to track condition and trend of upland and riparian vegetation, soil, and watersheds. Monitoring will be done following procedures described in the interagency technical reference (Sampling Vegetation Attributes, Interagency Technical Reference 1996), and the Region 3 Rangeland Analysis and Training Guide (1997 USDA Forest Service, Southwestern Region). These data are interpreted to determine whether management is achieving desired resource conditions, whether changes in resource condition are related to management, and to determine whether modifications in management are necessary. Effectiveness monitoring will occur at least once over the ten-year term of the grazing authorization, or more frequently if deemed necessary.

Implementation monitoring will occur yearly or more frequently, and will include such things as inspection reports, forage utilization measurements in key areas, available water, livestock counts and facilities inspections. Utilization measurements are made following procedures found in the Interagency Technical Reference, with consideration

of the Principles of Obtaining and Interpreting Utilization Data on Southwest Rangelands (PR61), and according to the Protocol for Monitoring Riparian Areas/Tonto National Forest (5th Adaptation, 2002)

Utilization will be monitored on key forage species, which are native perennial grasses that are palatable to livestock. At a minimum, monitoring will include use in key areas, but may include monitoring outside of key areas. The Cave Creek Range Staff Officer and the permittee will be responsible for monitoring livestock grazing utilization. Over time, changes in resource conditions or management may result in changes in livestock use patterns. As livestock use patterns change, new key areas may be established and existing key areas may be modified or abandoned in cooperation with the permittee.

The permittee will be encouraged to participate in monitoring activities. Records of livestock numbers, movement dates and shipping records will be kept by the permittee and will be provided to the District Range Staff annually.

Adaptive Management

Adaptive management is a tool that uses the documented results of management actions to continually modify management in order to achieve specific objectives. Alternative C is designed to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt management to changing circumstances. If monitoring indicates that desired conditions are not being achieved, adaptive management will be used to modify the management. Such changes may include administrative decisions such as the specific number of livestock authorized annually, specific dates for grazing, class of animal or modifications in pasture rotations. However, such changes will not exceed the limits for timing, intensity, duration and frequency defined in the term grazing permit. Adaptive management will be implemented through annual operating instructions, which will adjust livestock numbers and the timing of grazing so that use is consistent with current productivity and availability of water, and is meeting management objectives.

Adaptive management also includes monitoring to determine whether identified structural improvements are necessary or need to be modified. In the case that changing circumstances require physical improvements or management actions not disclosed or analyzed herein, further interdisciplinary review would occur. The review will consider the changed circumstances and site-specific environmental effects of the improvements in the context of the overall project. Based on the results of the interdisciplinary review, the Ranger will determine whether correction, supplementation or revision of the EA is necessary in accordance with Forest Service handbook direction at FSH 1909.15 (18) and FSH 2209.13 (96.1), or whether further analysis under NEPA is required.

Reasons for the Decision

The selected alternative best meets the purpose and need and achieves desired conditions (EA p 7, pp. 17-21) in the following ways:

1) The alternative is consistent with the management emphasis, direction and standards and guidelines for Management Area 1F identified in the Tonto Forest Plan.
2) The alternative will provide for rotational (pastures) grazing with periodic growing season rest or deferment. The light to moderate utilization will promote improvement in upland vegetation and soil condition. (Issue 1)
3) The permitted numbers reflects a reduction for removal of the herd on the three pastures eliminated from grazing: Professor, Lime Creek and Long Canyon Pastures. (Issues 1,2,3,4)
4) The alternative provides for the construction of infrastructure to improve livestock distribution, which will increase vegetative cover, protect soils and improve the Cave Creek riparian area. Proposed improvements will control livestock distribution and will provide management flexibility. (Issue 3)
5) This alternative offers benefits to TES species due to slightly reduced stocking rate and the addition of the grass bank. Establishment of a grass bank in the 6L Pasture and infrequent use will minimize direct and indirect effects to uplands and riparian areas associated with the lower portion of Cave Creek. (Issue 3,4)
6) The alternative best achieves Forest Service policy (FSM 2202) and the mission of the Tonto National Forest Plan (Forest Plan p. 19) *to manage for multiple use in a manner that is compatible with other resource production and use...*
7) The alternative provides a basis for sharing responsibility for successful implementation of this decision with the permittees.
8) The alternative will provide an adaptive management framework that will allow the Forest and grazing permittee to adapt management to changing resource conditions.

Public Involvement

The proposal was listed in the Forest's Schedule of Proposed Actions beginning in April 2007. Public scoping for the proposed action was first initiated on April 9, 2007. Using the comments from the public and other agencies, the interdisciplinary team developed a list of issues to address.

In September 2007, a draft of the EA was provided to parties who had expressed interest in the project. The public was also notified of the opportunity to comment through a legal notice published in the Arizona Business Gazette on 9/6/2007 and in The Arizona Republic on 9/17/2007. Three comment letters were received in response to this opportunity. I considered these comments in reaching my decision.

Other Alternatives Considered

In addition to the selected alternative, I considered three other alternatives, summarized below. A comparison of the effects of these alternatives is found in Chapter 3 of the EA. A fifth alternative – continue current management – was not carried forward because it was determined that the alternative would not meet the purpose and need.

Alternative A: (No Grazing). Under this alternative, grazing would not be authorized and use of the allotment by domestic livestock would be discontinued. The permittee would be given one year from the date of the decision to remove livestock from the allotment. Existing structural improvements would remain in place but would not be maintained. Improvements contributing to resource protection or enhancement, such as water developments important for wildlife, would be maintained where feasible using other program funds. Periodic inspection of structural improvements would be used to determine whether maintenance or removal is needed. Removal or maintenance of improvements would be authorized by a separate decision. Where possible, maintenance of allotment boundary fences would be reassigned to adjacent permittees with the understanding that livestock are to be kept off of the allotment.

While this alternative would meet the natural resource objectives defined for the allotment, it would not be consistent with Forest Service Policy (FSM 2202.1) and the Forest Plan Mission (Forest Plan p.19) to manage for multiple use.

Alternative B: (Proposed Action). This alternative authorized 400 head of adult cattle plus progeny of the adult cattle, grazing at that time, as yearling carry-over from January 1 to May 31 of each year; and 10 horses to be utilized in the grazing operation. The alternative was for a 6-pasture deferred rotation system and removed three pastures from grazing: Professor, Lime Creek and Long Canyon Pastures. While this alternative reduced livestock numbers from the 640 adult cattle in the 2001 permit, it did not address the reduction of livestock with the removal of the three pastures from grazing. 6L Pasture would be grazed every year with this alternative.

Alternative D: (Seasonal Use/6 L Pasture Grassbank). This alternative authorized 4812 head months (HMs-see Addendum A for definition) which is the same allowable HMs as in Alternative C. It kept 6 L Pasture as a grassbank pasture, similar to Alternative C but it authorized grazing from October 1 through February 28. A positive aspect of cooler season grazing is the much greater likelihood and ease of meeting riparian use guidelines. However Alternative C with the elimination of three pastures, the designation of 6L Pasture as a grassbank pasture, the fencing of Cave Creek in Quien Sabe Pasture, and the other suggested range improvements should effectively address the riparian concerns.

Finding of No Significant Impact

After considering the context and intensity of the environmental effects described in the EA, I have determined that these actions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment as defined in the Council on Environmental Quality implementing regulations at 40 CFR 1508.27. Thus, an environmental impact statement (EIS) will not be prepared. I base my finding on the following:

Context: The action is a site-specific action that by itself does not have international, national, region wide or statewide importance. Effects are limited to the locale of the project area.

Intensity: The following discussion is organized around the ten significance criteria described in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations at 40 CFR 1508.27.

1) My finding of no significant environmental effects is not biased by the beneficial effects of the action. Both beneficial and adverse impacts were considered in the analysis. Grazing as proposed will result in removal of the herbaceous vegetation, but will be limited to light to moderate levels in order to allow for the retention of litter and plant stubble to provide soil cover and wildlife habitat. Possible improvements associated with the grazing authorizations involve the placement of riparian exclosure fences. Construction of these improvements will result in minor, short term disturbance, but will benefit resources over the long term as a result of improved livestock distribution.

2) No significant effects on public health and safety were identified (EA p9). The scope of the grazing authorization is limited to the implementation of managed livestock grazing and the possible installation and maintenance of structural range improvements using hand techniques or light equipment. These actions are not expected to present significant hazards to workers or the public.

3) There are no known unique characteristics associated with the allotment. Therefore, the project will not adversely affect parks, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or other resources considered to have unique characteristics.

4) The effects on the quality of the human environments are not likely to be highly controversial. The environmental analysis process has documented expected environmental effects from my decision. (EA pp.34-82). These effects have been disclosed in Chapter 3 of the EA and the selected action has been designed and mitigated to address the various issues raised. The analysis represents the judgment and expertise of resource management professionals who have applied their knowledge to similar projects and resources in the past. The management practices proposed are commonly-used resource management practices described in agency directives, meet Forest Plan standards, and are used by other land management agencies. While some members of the public are opposed to public lands livestock grazing, this action is not highly controversial within the context of the National Environmental Policy Act.

5) The effects analysis (EA pp. 34-82) indicates the effects are not uncertain, and do not involve unique or unknown risk. The Forest Service has considerable experience with the types of activities to be implemented. The effects described in the EA are based on the judgment of experienced resource management professionals using the best available information.

6) The decision to reissue a grazing permit on Cartwright Allotment does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects. Future actions

will be evaluated through the NEPA process and will stand on their own as to environmental effects and project feasibility (EA pp 30-32).

7) The cumulative impacts of the action on soils, vegetation, terrestrial and aquatic wildlife resources were considered in the EA in Chapter 3 and in a variety of specialist reports (See project record). The direct and indirect effects of the proposal are expected to be minor in the short term and beneficial or neutral over the long term. None of the effects are considered significant for reasons described herein. No past or future actions have been identified that will combine with the effects of the proposed action to cause cumulatively significant effects.

8) Cartwright Allotment contains hundreds if not thousands of prehistoric archeological sites representing the occupation and agricultural modification and use of this area by the Hohokam over a period of 8,000 to 10,000 years. It also contains hundreds of historic sites reflecting its use and occupation by Yavapai and Apache hunters, gatherers, farmers and more recent Anglo and Hispanic ranchers, miners and prospectors. Based on a history of observation and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), managed grazing is not considered in and of itself to constitute an effect on heritage resources when the grazing strategy is designed to match herd size with capacity and distribute livestock as evenly as possible across the allotment in order to avoid localized concentrations of animals and the resultant impacts to soils and vegetation associated with intense trampling. The action will have no significant adverse effect on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The action will also not cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources (EA pp. 53-57). Mitigation included as part of the selected alternative is designed to preclude effects to these resources. Consultation with SHPO under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act has been completed for grazing and proposed improvements and the SHPO has concurred with the no adverse effect determination.

9) A Biological Assessment for endangered, threatened and Forest Service Sensitive species has been completed for all the alternatives listed in the EA. The two species evaluated were the Gila topminnow and the Southwestern willow flycatcher. With Alternative C, the BA determined a "No Effect" on the Gila topminnow or its habitat. A "May affect, not likely to adversely affect" was determined for the Southwestern willow flycatcher and its habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) concurred with these findings in a letter dated November 2, 2007. Management practices that are intended to prevent adverse effects to listed species have been incorporated into the selected alternative (EA pp. 24-29).

   Based on concurrence with US Fish and Wildlife Service, this Decision selects Alternative C and includes the conservation measures of constructing a mile of fence along Cave Creek to exclude potential flycatcher nesting habitat from

grazing. Additionally, in order to reduce and minimize potential impacts to the closest population of flycatchers from cowbird parasitism, there will be no grazing within two miles of the nesting birds at Horseshoe Lake (which occurs outside of the Cartwright Allotment boundaries).

10) This selected alternative is in full compliance with all federal, state and local law requirements imposed for environmental protection. Chapters 1-3 of the EA documents the analysis for this project which does not threaten or violate any federal, state or local law imposed for the protection of the environment. This project is fully consistent with the Tonto Land and Resource Management Plan (LMP) and the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), Clean Water Act, and the Federal land Policy Management Act of 1976 and was developed with consideration of the best available science.

Based on the above considerations, I have concluded that this project is in compliance with statutes imposed for the protection of the environment and that this is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not needed.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

National Forest Management Act. The Tonto LMP (Forest Plan) was adopted on October 1985 and has been amended several times. The Cartwright Allotment falls within Management Area 1F. The Forest Plan identifies Management Area 1F as suitable for grazing. The term permit grazing authorization for the allotment is fully consistent with the mission and goals listed on pages 19-22 of the Tonto Forest Plan, as well as the standards and guidelines. Light to moderate utilization, in combination with prescribed mitigation features will meet the Forest Plan goals for range, wildlife, soil, water and riparian resources.

My conclusions regarding the effects of Alternative C are based on a review of the record that demonstrates a thorough review of the relevant scientific information, a consideration of responsible opposing views, and the acknowledgement of incomplete or unavailable information, scientific uncertainty and risk. Proposed grazing management was developed using data obtained and interpreted according to accepted monitoring practices for identifying rangeland condition and trend. Opposing views regarding rangeland condition and capacity were considered (See project record), and the proposal incorporates adaptive management actions necessary to adjust stocking to remain within capacity (EA p. 32). Opposing viewpoints regarding permitted use were received and considered in my decision (PR 18,20,21,22,23,26,27,31,32,33,34,36,41,45; EA Ch. 4). Effects determination for listed species were reviewed and concurred with by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biologists. Soil and riparian monitoring and effects analysis were conducted in accordance with accepted Forest Service monitoring techniques (PR1) and are based on site-specific data collected within the project area. Based on the documentation in the record, I conclude the best available science was considered in developing and analyzing the proposal.

Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act. The selected alternative will not impair land productivity (EA pp.46-48) and is therefore consistent with this law.

Endangered Species Act. Informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was completed at the project level for the allotment considered in the analysis (PR81). The consultation concluded that the effects of the proposed action are "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" on the Southwestern willow flycatcher and its habitat, and "no effect" on the Gila topminnow or its habitat.

National Historic Preservation Act. A Heritage Resource Investigation was completed with a finding of no adverse effect on cultural resources (PR 14, 50). Concurrence from SHPO was received on January 3, 2008.

Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice). This decision does not impose disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations.

Implementation Date

If no appeals are filed within the 45-day time period, implementation of the decision may occur on, but not before, 5 business days from the close of the appeal filing period. When appeals are filed, implementation may occur on, but not before, the 15th business day following the date of the last appeal disposition.

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215. The appeal must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, or express delivery) with the Appeal Deciding Office at:

Forest Supervisor
Tonto National Forest
2324 E. McDowell Road
Phoenix, AZ 85006

The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered appeals are: 8:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic appeals must be submitted in a formal, such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to appeals-southwestern-tonto@fs.fed.us. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification. Appeals, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of this notice in The Arizona Republic, the newspaper of record. Attachments received after the 45 day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in The Arizona Republic, newspaper of record, is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal.

Those wishing to appeal this decision should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Individuals or organizations who submitted substantive comments during the comment period specified at 36 CFR 215.6 may appeal this decision. The notice of appeal must meet the appeal content requirements at 36 CFR 215.14.

Contacts

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact Colleen Madrid, Cave Creek District Ranger, at (480) 595-3300 or Carol Engle, Project Leader at (480) 595-3320. Their mailing address is 40202 N. Cave Creek Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85262.

Colleen Pelles Madrid

COLLEEN PELLES MADRID
District Ranger

8/4/08
DATE