

Decision Memo Long Ridge Pasture Fence

USDA Forest Service, Southwest Region, Tonto National Forest
Tonto Basin Ranger District, Gila County, Arizona
(T9N, R10E, Sections 27, 28, 33
T8N R10E Section 3)

Decision

The Tonto Basin Ranger District is proposing to construct a four strand, barbwire fence on the Hardt Creek Allotment. The fence will be approximately two miles in length and will split the Black Mountain Pasture into two separate pastures. The fence will be located south of F.S. Road 417 and will help increase cattle distribution and limit cattle from accessing F.S. 417, which is a heavily traveled road extending from Rye to Gisela.

Access to the project areas will be on existing Forest Service road 417 for materials and labor. The fence will be a four stranded barbwire fence with a smooth bottom wire constructed to Forest Service standards. A lane no greater than 4 feet on either side of the fence may be cleared where needed of vegetation to construct the fence. Construction of the fence must be coordinated with District range staff and constructed in accordance to Forest Service Range Improvement Standards (see Attachments). Disturbance is to be minimal and only in areas covered by the site-specific archeological clearance (# 2011-11-152).

I have concluded that this action may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment. It is within one of the categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 36 CFR 220.6. The project is within Category 32.2 (9) that includes implementation or modification of minor management practices to improve allotment condition or animal distribution. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the action as defined in the next paragraph.

Public health and safety will not be affected by this action. There are no known significant irreversible resource commitments or irretrievable losses to wildlife habitat, soil productivity, forage production, or water quality. No known cultural resources will be affected. A site-specific archeological clearance (#2011-11-152) has been completed in conjunction with forest archeologists and was approved by the Forest Supervisor. A site-specific Biological Evaluation has been completed and approved (Analysis #2012-304). The proposal will not take place on steep slopes or on highly erosive soils. There are no wetlands or floodplains within the project area.

Public Involvement

Design of the project was coordinated with the permittee for the Hardt Creek Allotment and Forest Service specialists including Range, Biology, Recreation, Hydrology, Soils and Heritage.

Findings Required by Other Laws

The project is in Management Area 6J identified in the Tonto National Forest Land Management Plan (USDA 1985, as amended). The management emphasis for this area is to manage for a variety of renewable natural resources with primary emphasis on wildlife habitat improvement, livestock forage productions, and dispersed recreation. The design of this project is consistent with the standards and guidelines of the Land Management

Plan. Effects to Management Indicator Species (MIS) were evaluated (Analysis #2012-304). A biological evaluation was prepared (BE #2012-304) and found no effect to any Threatened or Endangered Species in compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

There are no inventoried roadless areas within the project area. Best Management Practices will be followed during project implementation in compliance with the Clean Water Act.

Implementation

This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215. The appeal must be filed by US mail or hand-delivered to the Appeal Deciding Officer, Reta LaFord, Forest Supervisor, at the following address: 2324 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85006. The appeal may also be faxed to the Forest Supervisor's attention at (602) 225-5295. Appeals, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of this notice in the Payson Roundup, the newspaper of record. Attachments received after the 45-day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in the Payson Roundup, 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.

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact Kelly Jardine, District Ranger, Tonto Basin Ranger District at (928) 467-3200.

Administrative Review or Appeal

This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215. The appeal must be filed by US mail or hand-delivered to the Appeal Deciding Officer, Neil Bosworth, Forest Supervisor, at the following address: 2324 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85006. The appeal may also be faxed to the Forest Supervisor's attention at (602) 225-5295. Appeals, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of this notice in the Payson Roundup, the newspaper of record. Attachments received after the 45-day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in the Payson Roundup, 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 comments during the comment period specified at 215.6 may appeal this decision. The notice of appeal must meet the appeal content requirements at 36 CFR 215.14. Relative to issuance of the term grazing permit, a permittee may choose to appeal under the regulations listed at 36 CFR 251, Subpart C. The permittee must select which administrative review regulation (36 CFR 215 or 251) he or she will opt to use. Both cannot be used for the same appealed decision. An appeal by the permittee under the 36 CFR 251 regulations must be filed simultaneously with the Tonto National Forest Supervisor Neil Bosworth at the address above, and with District Ranger Kelly Jardine at 28079 N. Arizona Highway 188, Roosevelt, Arizona 85545. The appeals must be filed within 45 days of the date of publication of legal notice in the Payson Roundup.

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact Kelly Jardine, District Ranger, Tonto Basin Ranger District at (928) 467-3200.

Contact Person

Further information about this decision can be obtained from, Eric Hoskins at the Tonto Basin Ranger District, 28079 N State Hwy. 188, Roosevelt, AZ, 85545.

Signature and Date



KELLY L. JARDINE
District Ranger



Date