



BLM Phoenix District Office  
Attn: LS-SDNM RMP  
21605 N. 7TH Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85027

I very much support the idea in the draft Resource Management Plan that there would be no competitive events for ATVs (OHV) in the Ajo Block. This is a quiet town, self-sufficient, with opportunities for developing our jobs around local needs, travelers to Mexico, tourism to the federal lands and ecotourism if we conserve the nature of the lands around the town. We may not have done enough to help ourselves in this regard but we do not wish to have the BLM change our town. Intermittent throngs of racers will only hurt our image and upset the precarious nature of development now being carried on by the International Sonoran Desert Alliance and others in Ajo.

The 40 acre free-riding area proposed near Ajo town is a bad idea for some of the reasons mentioned above. The area may have been developed long ago but is an illegal use of government land and should not be legitimized. As proposed it would be the only free-riding OHV area on public lands in your jurisdiction. It will be advertised by your plan and by doing that, a seldom-used local riding area for our neighbors and youth may become a regulated and overused attraction for riders from away. It is close enough from Buckeye and Phoenix for groups to come with many quads, park some trucks and trailers, ride (we hope only inside the area), eat and drink at the site, and return home. Who picks up the trash? Who builds and monitors the perimeter fence, etc.? None of this has any benefit to us in Ajo. Please do not use this plan to drastically change our tiny town. Over time this riding area has grown and it needs to be limited and controlled, not advertised. Please do not allow events in this area for the same reasons.

I have no objection to areas in the BLM and Ajo Block being set aside for target shooting. Ajo has a shooting range that I have been to; it works well and is safe. I am opposed to unlimited target shooting near town (the shooting range is a better place anyway) and for safety sake, a buffer should exist. Better still, would be reasonable areas where the terrain and resources have been surveyed and target shooting areas or districts be shown on maps or signed. I support the no-target shooting proposal on the Sonoran Desert National Monument to protect its resources but off the Monument there needs to be a more reasoned approach which has both target shooting and non-target shooting areas. There are resources here that need protection.

Desert Pronghorn belong in the SDNM and an appropriate sized heard release should be requested. There are SDNM areas where the desert does not need to be terraformed, waters developed, and irrigation plots developed for Pronghorn. This as a responsible way to have dispersed herds of pronghorn in their natural range. The maximum of 5 wildlife corridors in alternative C give the best option for such animals to move in the Monument due to the scattered rainfall and the need for these and other native animals to get to water and feed.

The lands of the SDNM have fared poorly during the years of grazing and the proposal to curtail grazing on the Monument as leases expire in alternative D is the best choice. The lands need time to recover and studies show 30 to 50 years may not be enough. This is land for Pronghorn, desert tortoise, and mule deer not cattle.

The Ajo block has a large and growing population of ferrel burros untended by their owners. These less regulated BLM areas also need protection to allow the viability of the same native species. This area is in many ways similar to the SDNM. Burros do not belong here and they could be moved by their owners, or auctioned or given away to clear the Block and allow deer, sheep, and other native species to survive. The herd of burros has grown to the point they are wandering into town from the surrounding BLM lands. Some controls need to be included in the plan.



