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Arizona Cattlemen Commnets

Comment Number: 1

Cited Section ID: Appendix P Grazing Allotment Information

Comment Title: Arizona Cattlemen Commnets

Issue: 10755

Comment:

To Whom It May Concern:

The Arizona Cattlemen's Association appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the Draft Resources Management Plan for the Lower Sonoran and Sonoran Desert National Monument. In the grazing section of the preferred alternative proposal the association has concerns with the choices presented by the BLM to significantly change the direction of the lands in the Sonoran Monument. In fact the association disagrees with the proposal to permanently end grazing on any of the allotments within the Sonoran Desert Monument. While monitoring conducted by the BLM concludes that only a small amount of acreage is not achieving Standard 3 due to livestock as the causal factor, the BLM has proposed a permanent solution to solving a problem on a diverse and changing landscape. Failure to meet Standard 3 in many parts of the monument has many causal factors and it is also known that areas that do not have livestock grazing and have not had livestock grazing for many years like the Barry Goldwater Range are failing to meet the same standard. If the lands in the Sonoran Desert Monument, under BLM control, have failed to meet the land evaluation standards set forth by the agency then the BLM is just as much at fault for these failures as the permittee. Federal land permittees are required to work with the BLM and other land managing agencies when setting stocking rates and overall management of the permit.

We believe the decision to eliminate any grazing within the Monument is premature and is a mistake to set rules and regulation that will have a greater impact on the future of the cattle industry and the landscape. We believe the current management practices and cooperation with the BLM is in the best interest of properly managing for the future of the Sonoran Monument. Flexibility to manage a diverse and unique landscape is needed and livestock grazing is a critical tool that should not be eliminated.

We strongly suggest that the BLM propose no action related to livestock grazing in the

monument and continue to manage the area as is, addressing any concerns with individual permittee holders to meet any standards the BLM has.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact our office.

Regards,

Patrick Bray

Executive Vice President