



January 24, 2017

Mr. Neil Bosworth
Apache Leap SMA
PO Box 34468
Phoenix, AZ 85067-4468

**Re: Superior Recreation User Group (RUG)
Comments on Apache Leap Special Management Area**

Dear Mr. Bosworth,

In response to the Tonto National Forest's request for input from the public regarding the Apache Leap Special Management Area (ALSMA) Plan, the Superior Recreation User Group (RUG), a subcommittee of the Superior Community Working Group, would like to submit several requests for your consideration in developing the plan. These comments relate primarily to section (g)(5)(B)(ii) of Section 3003 of H.R. 3979 requiring the Secretary to consider measures to provide access for recreation.

The Recreation User Group's comments are mainly concerned with future recreation opportunities. The group is in the process of developing a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder, multi-use trails and recreation plan that includes the ALSMA area for Forest Service analysis in future Environmental Assessments. Key assumptions of this plan (to date) include the following features and access requirements, which the group requests be included in the ALSMA:

- The development of a hiking trail at the base of Apache Leap. This area has historically been used for informal hiking for many years by area residents and visitors.
- Multi-use trails (including mountain biking use) in topographically feasible areas within the ALSMA
- Continued access to the Cross Canyon Road, FR 2440

The RUG requests that the ALSMA preserves the ability to use the area for the recreational purposes listed above, pending separate NEPA analysis. We believe that continued historic uses and the expanded recreational venue will provide educational opportunities for future visitors to learn about Apache Leap and its rich cultural background and the connections with Native American history.

Additionally, the group would like to emphasize their recommendation that ongoing consultation with all affected communities and stakeholders, both on a government-to-government and informal basis, be implemented by Tonto National Forest.



Please contact our facilitator, John Godec, at 602-266-2226 or jdg@godecrandall.com, if you have questions or would like further explanation of these comments. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Superior Recreation User Group

Arizona Trail Association – Fred Gaudet, Matthew Nelson

Chamber of Commerce – Pete Casillas

Community Working Group – Pamela Rabago, Lynn Martin

East Valley Backcountry Horsemen – Elizabeth Butler

International Mountain Bicycling Association – Patrick Kell

Legends of Superior Trail – Bill & Nancy Vogler

Queen Creek Coalition – Erik Filsinger

Superstition Area Land Trust – Charles Goff

Tonto Recreation Alliance – Kevin Patterson, John Bricker, Rich Smith

Town of Superior – Mila Besich-Lira, Mayor & Todd Pryor, Manager