



Letter: Pryor travel plan must protect wild horses

Posted: Saturday, November 24, 2007 11:00 pm

As a former BLM wild horse and burro specialist (11 years) and botanist (five years) in the Pryor Mountains, I wish to comment on the Custer National Forests DEIS for the Pryors. This document hardly addresses vegetation. I am appalled at this omission. The Pryor Mountains are a botanical gem that is one of the most botanically diverse areas in Montana. There are several rare plant species. This vegetation can be severely damaged by off highway motor vehicles.

In addition, OHMV use poses an eminent danger to the unique and coveted Spanish Barb wild horse herd in the Pryor Mountains. I have seen OHMVs chase cattle on federal land. It is predictable that a few riders will use their OHMVs to chase the wild horses. Most OHMV activity is in the summer and fall when the mares are lactating and are very drawn down by their colts. OHMV harassment could prove fatal to both mare and colt. The horses are only supposed to be on BLM land, but actually they spend a considerable amount of time on Forest Service land. I urge people to support the alternative C, which most protects the Pryor Mountains from the impact of OHMV use.

Donald H. Heinze

Los Lunas, N.M.