



Letter: Timeless principles apply in Pryor Mountains

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Think globally and act locally. When it comes to protecting the environment, this call to action makes much sense. But what can one person do? First, as a teacher of environmental science, I suggest a quick course of study that starts with memorizing the four laws of ecology: Everything is connected to everything else; there is no such thing as a free lunch; Nature knows best; and everything must go somewhere. (See Barry Commoner, "The Closing Circle.")

A recent Gazette article discussed the scientific research showing that removing old logging roads led to improved big-game habitat, which made not only the elk and such happy, but wildlife viewers and hunters as well. What personal choice can one make about a road? Well, right now the fine folks with the U.S. Forest Service are finalizing decisions about many roads in the Pryor Mountains that are connected in profound ways with - Everything! At the Web site www.pryormountains.org, you can find out who to contact to encourage them to make wise decisions on your behalf.

As it stands, their so-called preferred alternative allows too much of the Pryors to be dominated by motorized activity. If they embraced the four laws, paid close attention to their own research and objectives, and didn't lose sight of the forest for the trees, I believe they would advocate Alternative C. With some small adjustments, this alternative is the one that both protects a wonderful local resource and allows for multifarious recreation opportunities.

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