



Letter: Want to destroy land? Don't do it in the Pryors

Posted: Saturday, December 8, 2007 11:00 pm

In recent days, I have been contacted by friends about the Pryor Mountain issue in the letters to the editor. I was the fire technician in the Pryors in the '60s, working for the Custer National Forest. I spent four summers living at Sage Creek Station. I drove all through the Pryor Mountain Range talking to families like the Tillets, Schwind, Snell, Stevens and some I have forgotten.

The Pryors at the time were mismanaged in timber development, mining claims and wild-horse management. The Big Ice Cave was closed most of the time because of visitor damage.

The overlook had people driving off the road, leaving ruts that were still there 20 years later. People on dirt bikes raced on and off road at their pleasure, leaving evidence that took years to recover.

I remember Burt Schwind wishing people would stay out of the Pryors altogether and leave him alone with his cows. I was always in agreement with him in this matter. Our wish then and my wish now is that the motorized vehicle be restricted and leave the wild horses and other wildlife alone to their peace and quiet in the Pryor Mountains. There is plenty of other land somewhere else people can ruin with their motorbikes and off-road vehicles. The Pryors are a very fragile ecosystem, and damage from human impact takes a long time to repair.

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