



WILDERNESS OR FEEDLOT?

Southwestern wilderness areas in our national forests are grazed to the bone, the result of the cumulative impacts of a century or more of livestock grazing. Grazing in wilderness areas has impaired biodiversity, degraded water quality, and harmed recreational values.

The first four bills that ultimately became the 1964 Wilderness Act called for the termination of wilderness grazing, but ultimately a short-sighted compromise allowed grazing to continue. In 1980 Congress passed "congressional grazing guidelines," grandfathering in grazing allotments and their associated "improvements," making domestic livestock a more permanent part of wilderness.

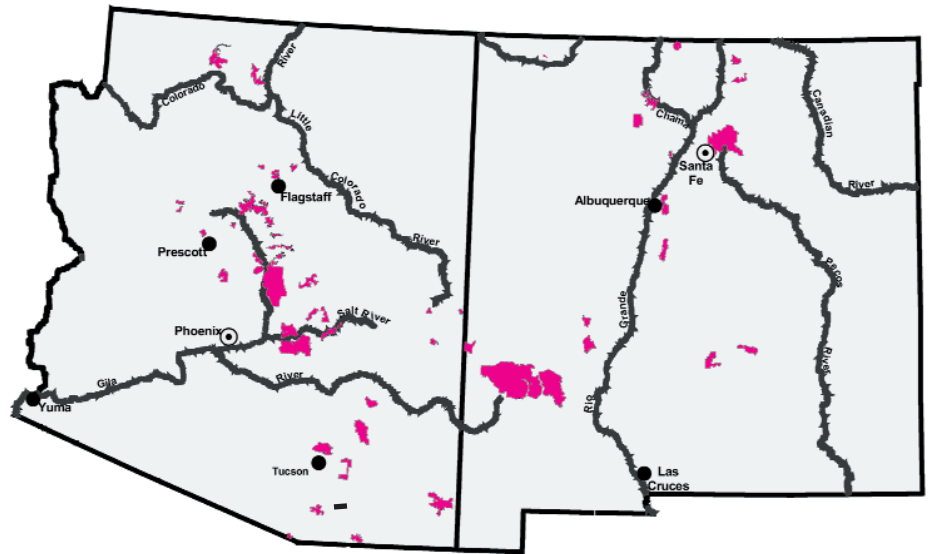
"Impacts of long term grazing have deteriorated the ecosystems such that biodiversity and productivity in both riparian and uplands are twenty percent of potential."

—FOREST SERVICE, SOUTHWESTERN REGION, WILDERNESS REPORT, 1995

As our understanding of the ecological impacts of livestock grazing in the arid West has evolved, a compromise that once seemed expedient is, today, an anachronism. In addition, even though the environmental community compromised on wilderness ranching, we have gained nothing in return. Today, the ranching community is leading the fight to dismantle the Endangered Species Act and opposes all additions to the National Wilderness System.

Adding insult to injury, ranchers, aided and abetted by the Forest Service, continue to push for taxpayer-funded stock ponds, pipelines, and fences. In every wilderness area, the Forest Service spends more on livestock management than they do on wilderness management.

WILDERNESS AREAS IN NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA



EXAMPLES OF ABUSIVE GRAZING IN WILDERNESS AREAS ARE WIDESPREAD IN THE SOUTHWEST

- ▼ Overgrazing in the Chama Canyon, Gila, Mazatzal, and Sycamore Canyon wilderness areas threatens the Southwest willow flycatcher, bald eagle, and Mexican spotted owl.
- ▼ Endangered trout in the Gila and Mt. Baldy wilderness areas continue to decline due to overgrazing of streamside areas and watersheds.
- ▼ Rare plants in the Pecos, Kachina Peaks, and Mazatzal wilderness areas are eaten by cows and suffer from soil erosion and trampling.
- ▼ Sensitive amphibian and reptile populations continue to plummet in the Sky Islands wilderness areas of southeastern Arizona due, in part, to grazing-induced destruction of springs and streams.

THE FACTS ABOUT COWS AND WILDERNESS

- ▼ There are fifty-two wilderness areas in New Mexico and Arizona
- ▼ Wilderness areas comprise eighteen percent of all Forest Service land, a total of 1.7 million acres.
- ▼ 275 grazing permittees use 165 grazing allotments
- ▼ There are a total of 112,200 animal unit months in southwestern wilderness areas.

TAKE ACTION

It's time to stop the lies about grazing being compatible with wilderness. Write your congressmen urging them to end livestock grazing in wilderness areas.

Senator/Representative
U.S. Capitol
Washington DC. 20515