



GREEN VALLEY RECREATION HIKING CLUB

Santa Cruz Ranger District
Mr Stan Helin, District Ranger
Ms Sherry Tune, Deputy District Ranger
5700 N Sabino Canyon Road
Tucson, AZ 85750

PO Box 1074
Green Valley, AZ 85622
February 22, 2010

Re: Pusch Ridge Hiking Restrictions

Dear Mr Helin:

I am writing you to add support to the recent article in the Arizona Daily Star, and the letter to you from Southern Arizona Hiking Club, regarding the Pusch Peak off trail hiking restrictions that applies during the winter big horn sheep lambing season.

The off trail hiking ban was appropriate when there were big horn sheep living in the Pusch Peak area. The newspaper article and the SAHC letter each point out that there have been no sheep living in the Pusch Peak area in the last several years, and that there is not likely to be a program initiated in the near future to reintroduce big horn sheep to the area. Thus, the request to lift the ban on off trail hiking during the winter lambing season.

The state of Arizona is blessed with beautiful terrain and an abundance of natural resources. Unfortunately, in these tough economic times, there will be no access to some of our beautiful state parks.

The mountains around Tucson, including the Catalinas and Pusch Peak are enjoyed by our 450 member Green Valley Rec Hiking Club. One of our hikes starts at the Pusch Peak Trailhead on the northwest corner, goes to the Peak, and then bushwhacks down the ridge to the south. This is a very pretty hike, which we did last fall.

This loop hike could also be offered to our snowbird members in the winter hiking season, if the off trail restrictions were lifted. It would be little or no cost to the District or to the State to remove this off trail restriction, and would allow another group of our hikers that comes to Arizona to enjoy our beauty, and to spend money in our economy while they are here.

In conclusion, we support the requested lifting of the off trail hiking ban in Pusch Ridge.

Please feel free to contact me at 520-777-8657, or through our club email at gvhcmal@yahoo.com.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Phil Betzel, President
Green Valley Rec Hiking Club