

## **Payson Roundup Letter to the Editor – April 22, 2016**

**<http://m.paysonroundup.com/news/2016/apr/22/wake-arizonans-your-federal-public-lands-are-threa/>**

Editor:

Are you aware that our state Legislature is currently evaluating the transfer of our precious federal public lands (i.e., national forests, BLM lands, etc.) to the state?

Have the governor and the Legislature critically looked at the current condition of the 9 million acres of Arizona's "State Trust Lands," which seriously lack management?

How can they expect to take on the extremely complex management (e.g., fire management, forest restoration, etc.) and costs in the millions to manage roughly 30 million acres of federal public lands in Arizona?

Considering the sole mandate of State Trust Lands is to generate funds for the schools and education and that these lands are not considered "public land" open to public access without access fees, the only means of offsetting these huge management costs would most likely be to either sell them for private development or significantly lease large tracts of land for accelerated mining, logging, energy development, and limit public access.

As an Arizona native, I strongly value the public access and use of these lands for a multitude of recreational opportunities (e.g., hunting, fishing, camping, etc.) that we as the public have benefited from for over 100 years under federal public land ownership and the concept of "multiple use".

I adamantly oppose proposals to transfer our precious federal public lands to the state. If you feel the same, write the governor and the Arizona Legislature to oppose these proposed actions and research this issue further (see – [www.sportsmenaccess.org](http://www.sportsmenaccess.org)).

Bob Vahle

Note: Bob Vahle is the AWF Region 1 Director and the AWF NWF Representative