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Arizona Regional Airspace EIS
501 Butler Farm Rd., Suite H
Hampton, VA 23666

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Attn: Draft EIS Team

To: Whom it Concerns,

As someone with strong family ties to the Air Force, along with roots and development plans in the Sky Islands region; please consider my comments regarding the proposed changes of Regional Special Use Airspace Optimization to Support Air Force Missions in the Tombstone MOA.

My father was the AF 3 SLS/Atlas Chief Engineer, 5th Space Launch Squadron. He supported over 80 Atlas launch missions, not to mention several Titan launches, as the AF Anomaly Team Chief and Engineering Lead. My older sister served honorably in the Air Force, as did her husband - whose mother served in the the Pentagon, until her passing, as special assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force. My younger sister and her husband are both Lead Engineers in current Lockheed Martin programs, including for the F-35. I have very personal respect for responsibilities of national defense, and for persons who serve in its purpose.

I have, also, the utmost respect that a global biodiversity paragon has been entrusted by history within the borders of the southwestern US: the Sky Island Region of the Madrean hotspot - one of only 36 such internationally designated places on the planet. Among its many exceptional attributes, is the presumed highest combined diversity and density of the earth's birds of prey nesting in the Chiricahua Mountain range.

I spent the most inspiring years of my childhood in the vibrant desert of Sky Island foothills. After traveling the States and the world, I've come home with my husband to this region in my middle age; to develop a guesthouse on our parcel in the Sky Islands - while working for their protection as an unmatched natural resource.

The fragile habitat, migration routes, breeding grounds, endemic species, and atmospheric clarity of this outstanding hotspot are profoundly vulnerable to disruptions of air space, noise/vibration, and even subtle pollution.

If the Air Force aims to expand operations in MOAs which would suffer the least significant impacts, the Tombstone MOA is likely the worst possible geographical choice in the entire contiguous United States, based on the region's singular and internationally-recognized biodiversity; in addition to its combination of cultural heritage, wildlife tourism, and scientific research value.

I ask the Air Force to please carefully consider this unique case of the lands they serve to protect, by not increasing any impacts to an unparalleled national asset - and to those of us resting our lives and livelihoods upon its stewardship. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Melinda Matson Spina

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