

March 2015

Dear Ms. Kohrman,

Please do not recommend any of the proposed sites in the Zuni Mountains for a wilderness area.

Those areas are sustainable as they are now, even in the drought stressed times; as the local residents are quite responsibly self-monitoring and good at monitoring those who may not be aware of good sustainable practices for maintaining the environment.

When people are allowed to access the area, they usually feel a sense of pride and a sense of responsibility for its wellbeing. They tend to protect it and are more apt to see that others do not vandalize it. If the area is closed off to those who cannot access the area by means other than by vehicle, they feel left out and detached; and actually are prohibited from entering the area by the means that they are physically able to. If they do not feel an attachment to the land, they are not as likely to continue to be involved in its welfare and sustainability.

*Sincerely,  
Bernadette Hiles*