**Cibola National Forest Magdalena Ranger District**

*Evaluation Criteria Definition Matrix and Comment Form*

Date: September 24, 2015 Name: Virginia Seiser

Phone: 505-306-5212

Email: vseiser@unm.edu

Address 11024 Montgomery NE #272, ABQ NM 87111

Inventory ID/Location: **D3\_5K2** Six Mile Canyon, Magdalena Mtns, Magdalena RD

*Criterion 1-Apparent Naturalness:*

This is a beautiful forested area, part of a sky island surrounded by range land. Pleasing views from ridges over surrounding natural terrain.

*Question 1a. Composition of plant and animal communities? Invasives?*

Forest land providing important wildlife habitat, including deer and turkeys.

*Question 1b. Ecological conditions associated with area w/o human intervention? Change from historical conditions? Vegetation restoration treatments? Natural appearance?*

Some forest thinning along Ryan Hill trail to restore area to historical conditions, has maintained the natural appearance of the area.

*Question 1c. Improvements? Landing zones? Roads or unauthorized routes? Fencing or pipelines? Mining activity? Range or wildlife improvements? Watershed treatments? Departure from naturalness of area as a whole?*

Within the area, there are traces of small-scale historical mining activity largely hidden by vegetation. Area as a whole has a natural appearance. A substantially noticeable (and historically interesting) mining development near the southwest corner of the area has been excluded from the area boundaries.

*Criterion 2-Opportunities for solitude or primitive & unconfined recreation?*

This is a beautiful forested area suitable for hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing and photography. It is a lightly used area with ample opportunity for solitude. On a visit in May, we met no other groups in the area.

*Question 2a. Pervasive impacts on opportunity for solitude? Topography, sights and sounds of civilization? Proximity to recreation developments and high use areas?*

The Water Canyon Complex on the northwest edge of the area is a popular picnic area and campground. The road beyond that point is lightly traveled. The southern border of the area is formed by the Langmuir Research Area, a protected zone. The area is mountainous, with good opportunity for solitude, protected from sight and sound of civilization.

**Cibola NF Magdalena RD** *Evaluation Criteria Definition Matrix and Comment Form*

Inventory ID/Location: **D3\_5K2** Six Mile Canyon, Magdalena Mountains p.2

Date: September 24, 2015 Name: Virginia Seiser vseiser@unm.edu

*Question 2b. Primitive & unconfined recreation opportunity?*

This is a beautiful forested area suitable for hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing and photography.

*Criterion 3-Stand-alone area <5,000 acres not adjacent?* Not applicable.

*Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities?*

This is a beautiful forested area, part of a sky island surrounded by range land.

*Question 4a. Rare plant or animal communities?*

This forested area surrounded by range land provides important wildlife habitat.

*Question 4b. Outstanding landscape features? Unique geologic features? Scenic features?*

The area is mountainous, with scenic views to the south across the forested Langmuir area and to the west across open range land. There are traces of historic mining activity, mostly obscured by natural vegetation but suggestive of interesting rock deposits.

*Question 4c. Historic & cultural resource sites? Structures, relics or RR beds?*

There are traces of historic mining activity, mostly obscured by natural vegetation.

Question 4e. Water resources or watershed features?

Water Canyon on the northern border of the area appears to have year-round stream flow. On our visit in May 2014, Six Mile Canyon was a dry stream bed.

*Criterion 5-Management*

*Question 5a. Can area be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics? Configuration? Relevant laws? Non-federal lands? Management of adjacent lands? Cultural & traditional uses? Wildland urban interface? Management activities or restrictions? Motorized uses? Special use permits? Cherry-stemmed roads?*

Yes, this area can be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics. Area boundaries have been drawn to exclude roads. The northwestern boundary is National Forest. The southern boundary is formed by the protected Langmuir Research Area, also National Forest land. The eastern boundary is range land under BLM and state management. Grazing needs to be monitored: in May 2014 we saw evidence of stream bed trampling by cattle that had strayed far up Six Mile Canyon.

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Date: September 24, 2015 Name: Virginia Seiser

Phone: 505-306-5212

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Address 11024 Montgomery NE #272, ABQ NM 87111

Inventory ID/Location: **D3\_5K16** Panther Canyon, San Mateo Mtns, Magdalena RD

*Criterion 1-Apparent Naturalness:*

This is a beautiful forested area adjacent to the Withington Wilderness.

*Question 1a. Composition of plant and animal communities? Invasives?*

The San Mateo Mountains are a sky island surrounded by range land. They provide important habitat for wildlife, including deer and turkey.

*Question 1b. Ecological conditions associated with area w/o human intervention? Change from historical conditions? Vegetation restoration treatments? Natural appearance?*

Forested terrain appears natural. Upper Panther Canyon shelters old-growth pines.

*Question 1c. Improvements? Landing zones? Roads or unauthorized routes? Fencing or pipelines? Mining activity? Range or wildlife improvements? Watershed treatments? Departure from naturalness of area as a whole?*

Hiking in to Panther Canyon, we encountered traces of overgrown two-tracks roads, reduced to footpaths by natural vegetation, giving an overall appearance of naturalness. In some places, three-foot tall saplings grew down the center between the tracks, evidence that they had not been used by motorized vehicles for many years.

*Criterion 2-Opportunities for solitude or primitive & unconfined recreation?*

Good potential for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation including hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding and wildlife viewing. Hiking through the area on a Saturday in May, we did not encounter any other groups.

*Question 2a. Pervasive impacts on opportunity for solitude? Topography, sights and sounds of civilization? Proximity to recreation developments and high use areas?*

The area is surrounded by National Forest and borders the Withington Wilderness on the east. There are two developed campgrounds on the road on the western border of the area. Entering the area on foot, the access road immediately drops from sight, screened by the succession of canyons and ridges. Hiking through the area on a Saturday in May, we had complete solitude. The area is not impacted by the sight or sound of civilization.

**Cibola NF Magdalena RD** *Evaluation Criteria Definition Matrix and Comment Form*

ID: **D3\_5K16** Panther Canyon San Mateo Mtns, page 2

Date: September 24, 2015 Name: Virginia Seiser vseiser@unm.edu

*Question 2b. Primitive & unconfined recreation opportunity?*

Good potential for primitive, unconfined recreation including hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding and wildlife viewing.

*Criterion 3-Stand-alone area <5,000 acres not adjacent?* Not applicable

*Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities?*

This is a beautiful forested area, part of a sky island surrounded by range land. Pleasing views from ridge tops over surrounding natural terrain.

*Question 4a. Rare plant or animal communities?*

The San Mateo Mountains are a sky island surrounded by range land. They provide important wildlife habitat.

*Question 4b. Outstanding landscape features? Unique geologic features? Scenic features?*

Pleasing views from ridge tops over surrounding natural terrain.

*Question 4c. Historic & cultural resource sites? Structures, relics or RR beds?*

Not aware of any.

Question 4e. Water resources or watershed features?

We didn’t encounter water on our trip.

*Criterion 5-Management*

This is a beautiful forested area surrounded by National Forest and adjacent to the Withington Wilderness.

*Question 5a. Can area be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics? Configuration? Relevant laws? Non-federal lands? Management of adjacent lands? Cultural & traditional uses? Wildland urban interface? Management activities or restrictions? Motorized uses? Special use permits? Cherry-stemmed roads?*

Area can be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics. It is surrounded by National Forest and adjacent to the Withington Wilderness. There is no urban interface. Some cherry-stemmed roads in the western portion of the area.

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Date: September 24, 2015 Name: Virginia Seiser

Phone: 505-306-5212

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Address 11024 Montgomery NE #272, ABQ NM 87111

Inventory ID/Location: **D3\_Lang** Langmuir, Magdalena Mtns, Magdalena RD

*Criterion 1-Apparent Naturalness:*

This is a beautiful forested area, with a high degree of naturalness, part of a sky island surrounded by range land.

*Question 1a. Composition of plant and animal communities? Invasives?*

This is a forested area, part of a sky island surrounded by range land, and thus provides important habitat for wildlife, including deer and turkeys.

*Question 1b. Ecological conditions associated with area w/o human intervention? Change from historical conditions? Vegetation restoration treatments? Natural appearance?*

The area appears to have a high degree of naturalness.

*Question 1c. Improvements? Landing zones? Roads or unauthorized routes? Fencing or pipelines? Mining activity? Range or wildlife improvements? Watershed treatments? Departure from naturalness of area as a whole?*

Research Lab buildings and an observatory located near the north edge have been excluded from the area. The area itself appears to have a high degree of naturalness.

*Criterion 2-Opportunities for solitude or primitive & unconfined recreation?*

Good opportunity for solitude. Dispersed recreation is allowed so there are opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, photography and storm observation.

*Question 2a. Pervasive impacts on opportunity for solitude? Topography, sights and sounds of civilization? Proximity to recreation developments and high use areas?*

Good opportunity for solitude. There is no recreation development. Area appears to be low use, far from the sight and sound of civilization.

*Question 2b. Primitive & unconfined recreation opportunity?*

Dispersed recreation is allowed so there are opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, photography and storm observation .

**Cibola NF Magdalena RD** *Evaluation Criteria Definition Matrix and Comment Form*

ID: **D3\_Lang** Langmuir, Magdalena Mtns page 2

Date: September 24, 2015 Name: Virginia Seiser vseiser@unm.edu

*Criterion 3-Stand-alone area <5,000 acres not adjacent?* Not applicable.

*Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities?*

This is a beautiful forested area, part of a sky island surrounded by range land. It offers spectacular views across the Plains of St. Augustine. The Lab was sited here because the location is ideal for observing weather phenomena.

*Question 4a. Rare plant or animal communities?*

This is a forested area, part of a sky island surrounded by range land, and thus provides important habitat for wildlife.

*Question 4b. Outstanding landscape features? Unique geologic features? Scenic features?*

This is a beautiful forested area, part of a sky island surrounded by range land. It offers spectacular views across the Plains of St. Augustine. The Lab was sited here because the location is ideal for observing weather phenomena.

*Question 4c. Historic & cultural resource sites? Structures, relics or RR beds?*

No specific information.

Question 4e. Water resources or watershed features?

No specific information.

*Criterion 5-Management*

*Question 5a. Can area be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics? Configuration? Relevant laws? Non-federal lands? Management of adjacent lands? Cultural & traditional uses? Wildland urban interface? Management activities or restrictions? Motorized uses? Special use permits? Cherry-stemmed roads?*

The area can and should be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics. There is no urban interface. The area was set aside by Act of Congress. The activities of the Research Lab are managed through a special use permit. Motorized use is carefully restricted to designated roads. This is federal land that has been set aside for special purposes; the managers should be accountable for managing it for the public good. Maintaining wilderness character of the land is a public good, whether or not the public is granted access.

The area is bordered by National Forest to the north and west, BLM and state range land to the east and southwest, and some private ranch land to the south.

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Address 11024 Montgomery NE #272, ABQ NM 87111

Inventory ID/Location: **D3\_ADJ9** and **D3\_ADJ10** Sierra Ladrones, Bear Mountains, Magdalena RD

*Criterion 1-Apparent Naturalness:*

The BLM Sierra Ladrones Wilderness Study Area is a rugged, remote and scenic area surmounted by rocky Ladrone Peak, which dominates the surrounding landscape. These two adjacent areas should be managed as an extension of the Sierra Ladrones WSA. The whole region has a high degree of naturalness.

*Criterion 2-Opportunities for solitude or primitive & unconfined recreation?*

These are remote areas with good opportunity for solitude, far from the sight and sound of civilization. There is no developed recreation in the area. I’ve hiked the Ladrones and found it challenging terrain. The opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation include hiking, backpacking, camping and horseback riding.

*Criterion 3-Stand-alone area <5,000 acres not adjacent?* Not applicable*.*

*Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities?*

The BLM Sierra Ladrones Wilderness Study Area is a rugged, remote and scenic area surmounted by rocky Ladrone Peak, which dominates the surrounding landscape. These two adjacent areas should be managed as an extension of the Sierra Ladrones WSA. The whole region has a high degree of naturalness.

*Criterion 5-Management*

*Question 5a. Can area be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics? Configuration? Relevant laws? Non-federal lands? Management of adjacent lands? Cultural & traditional uses? Wildland urban interface? Management activities or restrictions? Motorized uses? Special use permits? Cherry-stemmed roads?*

These two areas can be managed to preserve wilderness characteristics. They are bordered by the BLM Sierra Ladrones Wilderness Study Area the north and east and should be managed as an extension of the WSA. National Forest land borders to the south and east. There is no urban interface. The road dividing the two areas is in effect cherry-stemmed.

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