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First name: Rick

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on the Cibola Nt. Forest. Man. Plan

To whom it may concern,

We live adjacent to the Mt. Taylor District of the Cibola National Forest, and our concern is that Alternative B is not sufficient to protect the cultural and natural resources of Mt. Taylor due to a lack designated wilderness. Alternative B provides no designated wilderness, which puts numerous cultural resources at risk by allowing for continued ATV/UTV activity throughout the entire district, which often leads to the destruction of cultural sites and irreversible damage to natural resources. We would like you to consider adding the designated wilderness area D2-5K8 (from Alternative E) to Alternative B. Although this is not a large area, it will set a precedent for designating future wilderness areas within this district. It may also promote the gradual reduction in ATV/UTV use in the area, an activity we see as the most damaging to cultural and natural resources. Additionally, any changes to Alternative B that would foster hiking and biking activities, which are less of an impact to the landscape, we would greatly support.

Finally, additional wilderness and protected areas would ensure the rehabilitation of endangered ecosystems and improvements to watershed areas that are directly significant to our lives. With the impacts of climate change already being felt, considerations of the increased likelihood for drought resulting in stresses on plants and animals should be of paramount consideration. Mt. Taylor is a significant area for many people, particularly Native Americans, and should be treated as an invaluable resource to be managed for future generations over the short-term entertainment of current users. We believe that while Alternative B goes somewhat towards these goals, small improvements in expanded protections for cultural and natural resources will result in a healthier ecosystem for future generations.

Thank you sincerely for considering our comments,
Richard Greene and Mary Ownby
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Grants NM 87020

Please see attached letter.