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First name: Betty

Last name: Welty

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on Wilderness Proposal, Forest Plan and Wild and Scenic Rivers

Elaine Kohrman, Forest Supervisor
Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands
2113 Osuna Rd, N.E.
Albuquerque, N.M. 87113

August, 31, 2016

RE: Cibola Forest Revision Planning

Dear Elaine,

My name is Betty Welty. My husband and I have been pleased to meet and visit with you at both of the Forest planning meetings that were held in Truth or Consequences. As you may remember from our conversation, our family lives and ranches the West Red Canyon Allotment. I am writing this letter with comments on behalf of our entire family.

As a brief history, the Welty family homesteaded and ranched West Red Canyon since 1900, with both Welty Hill and Welty Hill Quadrangle on the United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey being named after our family as early settlers of the area. The Welty's are the original allotment owners of the West Red Canyon Allotment, per the terms the USFS has established regarding ownership of adjoining acreage, working corrals, and permanent water. As long time ranchers, we understand that care of the land and care of the cattle go hand in hand. We treasure this land, not only as our source of livelihood but also for the cultural and historical value it holds for our community. The western states of our nation were settled and homesteaded, at the encouragement of our Government, by families such as ours. Small family ranches, woodcutters, hunting, guiding and the businesses that support them are an important part of the local economy. The proposed Wilderness areas and management plan will negatively impact the local economies and their tax base. It will create more restrictions on the use of the forest for recreational use. It will further burden taxpayers with the need for additional USFS personnel and oversight.

As such, we are collectively, in favor of Alternative A, No Action-Existing 1985 Plan.

My additional comments are as follows:

*Allotment Owners were not given sufficient notice with detailed information regarding the direct impact this proposal will have on their families and businesses.

*As holders of a legal contract with the USFS, the proposal should have been transmitted via US Postal System as all other documents are done. Internet in rural areas is often very substandard and does not allow for the download and transmission of large documents.

*The time frame for response, 7/26/16- 8/31/16 is not adequate for detailed comments.

*Maps do not appear to match the written documents. Acreages of individual allotments impacted have not been provided.

*The forest plan appears to be very general and open to interpretation with no specifics being given as to how the multiple use concept is addressed.

*USFS is underfunded, understaffed and has no budget for additional oversight and maintenance responsibilities created by the Wilderness proposal. The proposal places an additional financial and regulatory responsibility on

an already overloaded department.

*The Wild and Scenic Rivers eligibility process for West Red Canyon is misleading in that there is only seasonal flow which results from flood waters. The arch sites have been previously identified as "pit houses" for seasonal hunting camps. These pit houses are found on the banks of most of the major canyons in the area.

Respectfully,
Betty Welty

Please see my attached letter and comments.
Thank you.
Betty Welty