

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/5/2010 11:53:00 AM

First name: Bill

Last name: Brock

Organization:

Title:

Comments: No to "Wilderness" designation for Samaniego Ridge and the East Catalina areas

Dear Erin:

I was notified today of the potential for the Samaniego Ridge and the East Catalina areas to be designated as Wilderness.

I feel that this is un-necessary and would limit opportunity for recreation in the area. I am an avid Mountain Bicyclist, and I utilize trails in that area. These trails are unique, spectacular, and provide a very specific mountain biking experience, an experience that is NOT available on other trails in the Tucson region. If the designation for Wilderness is approved, these trails would no longer be open to mountain bike enthusiasts. The Tucson area is home to many Mountain Bicyclists, and this potential wilderness designation would prohibit many of the area's residents from recreating in this beautiful area. I am a member of TucsonMTB, a regional forum for Mountain bicyclists which promotes trail advocacy and recreational opportunities in the Tucson area. We are over 800 members strong! There is a very large mountain bike community in Tucson, and this large of a community deserves to have recreational opportunities that are not limited by boundary lines.

Tucson is currently a Gold Level Bicycling city, a designation given by the American League of Bicyclists. It is well known that Tucson is trying to achieve the highest level designation, the Platinum Level. One of the criteria for that designation is for the area to have open access to all levels of mountain biking, as well as road biking. By cutting off mountain bike access in the East Catalina and the Samaniego Ridge areas, this could detrimentally effect the application for the Platinum Level status.

The community leaders of the Tucson area depend heavily on tourism dollars. Inability to provide recreational opportunities that are open to ALL persons is detrimental to attracting tourism dollars. Considering the climate of Tucson, summer mountain biking opportunities are limited to the higher elevation trails that are located in this area - the Mount Lemmon area. Taking that away would severely limit any mountain biking in the whole Tucson region in the summer months.

Please, DO NOT make this area another Wilderness area. There are enough Wilderness areas in the Tucson region, and we need open areas to recreate in.

Bill Brock
24826 Hon Av
Laguna Hills CA
92653