

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/25/2015 3:52:26 PM

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Comments: As a lifelong resident of Albuquerque, I have enjoyed mountain biking in the open space areas in Elena Gallegos in the foothills of the Sandia Mountains in Albuquerque. This includes all the open space areas from the Tram to Interstate 40.

Please DO NOT change any of the open space areas in Albuquerque to a Wilderness designation that prohibits mountain biking. Doing so would effectively punish mountain bikers and force them to drive additional miles to reach areas that allow mountain biking. For me this equates to an extra fifteen miles of drive time and would increase the amount of pollution from my vehicle. Apply this to the thousands of bikers every year who would have to drive extra miles to reach other areas besides Elena Gallegos and the additional pollution becomes more concerning.

The current City of Albuquerque Open Space areas provide an excellent buffer to the Sandia Ranger Wilderness area just west of the Pino Canyon Trail head. Taking this away will punish mountain bikers and limit mountainous choices to ride that are close to Albuquerque.

The existing boundaries have worked for many years. No change to the Sandia Wilderness boundaries into the City of Albuquerque Open space is required. Many new homes in the Sandia Heights area were built over the last 20 years in areas that are east of the proposed new wilderness area. It does not make sense to allow for homes to be built in the adjacent areas and then change the remaining open space areas, adjacent to the new homes, to a wilderness designation that does not permit mountain biking.

Respectfully,

Ken Schaefer