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Comments: Like many outdoor enthusiasts in the area, I am opposed to the plan to designate areas of the Magdalena and San Mateo mountains as wilderness.

Mountain biking has an established presence on many of the trails in the assessed area. The Socorro Fat Tire Fiesta featured several rides in the Magdalenas and they are included in the published "The Socorro Country Fat Tire Trail Book" (1992). Notable potentially affected trails are #11 (South Baldy trail), #10 (Copper Canyon), #13 (Water Canyon Mesa), #8 (Baldy ridge). These trails are all accessed by a well maintained road that is open all year. Other trails are established mountain bike routes as well. Jordan Canyon and Hop Canyon are notable. These trails are hardly remote. From Socorro, the west side of the Magdalenas accessible through Water Canyon is a short drive. Water Canyon campground serves as a base and is a popular destination and often crowded on weekends, and has ample parking for bikers, campers and hikers. There are mines and old establishments scattered throughout the region. There is fencing, pipelines and wiring that provide the large and active scientific usage on Magdalena ridge. This is a beautiful area but wilderness designation is not appropriate given its current use.

This region is well known in the New Mexico mountain biking community and tends to attract strong conscientious riders who respect the current shared use with hikers and those on horseback.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sam Hankins