

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/24/2015 4:06:52 AM

First name: Nick

Last name: Mathews

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on Forest Plan - Magdalena and San Mateo Mtns.

I've recently been informed that the forest plan for the Cibola NF is up for revision, and that the Magdalena Mountains and the San Mateo mountains face the chance of being declared wilderness areas. This would put an end to access for mountain bikers who frequently enjoy these mountains. As a local mountain biker and steward of these mountain ranges, I would like to express my opinion on this matter.

These two mountain ranges, especially the Magdalenas, are the best local venues for mountain biking in Socorro County. As a mountain biker living in Socorro, NM, the "Maggies" are a precious resource, containing huge intrinsic value. Their trails are my avenue to good health, both physically and mentally. My mountain bike provides a fun and efficient way to traverse these beautiful forest trails, and I would love to continue mountain biking on these trails for as long as I can.

When I ride the trails in the Maggies, I feel proud, as these are trails that the Socorro mountain bike community have worked to preserve. We are volunteers who work enthusiastically to protect and maintain our public lands, because our public lands bring us immeasurable joy. Our work, which is coordinated with the Cibola NF, should be testament to our passion about our mountains. Local mountain bikers have been responsible stewards of these mountains - and I believe that our access to their trails should remain in place.

The mountain biking trails in the Magdalena and San Mateo Mountains also provide tourism for local communities. Mountain biking is currently attracting tourism in Socorro and holds the potential to be a major economic stimulant if utilized correctly. Gallup, NM, Moab, UT, and Sedona, AZ are all great examples of communities that have used mountain biking as an effective economic stimulant. Socorro will lose current tourism and economic potential if mountain bike access in the Cibola NF is compromised.

Wilderness designation for the Magdalena and San Mateo Mountains would be a great loss to local individuals and communities, and we earnestly request your consideration during the upcoming revision of the Cibola forest plan.

Regards,

Nick Mathews