

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/16/2014 2:53:44 AM

First name: Michele

Last name: Zerah

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Help designate Future Wilderness areas for New Mexico Forests

Oct 15, 2014

Cibola National Forest Supervisor Elaine Kohrman

Dear Kohrman,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Cibola National Forest wilderness inventory process.

Our public forestlands should be protected for the enjoyment and benefit everybody, not for short-term profit or the benefit of any one special interest group.

As the Cibola National Forest continues the process to revise its plan for managing the forest, there is an important opportunity to preserve the wildest portions of the Cibola. These areas should be protected to maintain their natural characteristics, eliminating the possibility for human development and exploitation.

Areas like the Guadalupe roadless area in the Mount Taylor Ranger District is a perfect example of a place that is worthy of wilderness protection. This remote region includes, old growth ponderosa pine, and riparian habitats, as elk, mule deer, and predator species such as mountain lion and black bear. Bird species are particularly diverse in the area. Guadalupe Canyon has sweeping mesas and steep cliffs that offer unique opportunities for solitude and natural habitat undisturbed by substantive human development.

In the Magdalena Ranger District, the San Mateos, Bear and Magdalena mountains all offer rugged and unique lands and habitat that should be preserved and protected. Predators such as black bear and cougar call this area home that also provides critical habitat for the Mexican spotted owl and other species like elk and pronghorn.

These and other areas are at risk of reckless activity and development that would harm their natural qualities and degrade the areas that make the Cibola National Forest so special.

Please make the right call and preserve these special wild places in Cibola National Park, for the wild lands and animals to live and thrive, and for nature lovers of all kinds to enjoy!

Sincerely,

Michele Zerah
13212 Bighorn Rd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111-8221