

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/6/2014 5:26:13 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Protect the Cibola for future generations

Thank you for soliciting comments on the Cibola's ongoing inventory for lands with wilderness characteristics. It is of the utmost importance both to carefully document wilderness characteristics and to make management decisions to protect those characteristics for future generations.

Wilderness provides countless benefits, both for the forest ecosystem and for human visitors. Large untouched spaces are incredibly important-they provide opportunities for fully functioning ecosystems, create carbon sinks, and allow people to experience nature on a primal and often spiritual level. It seems to me that we do lack wilderness in NM, and the wilderness areas we have are pretty small. It would be great to have some larger wilderness areas in the Cibola. I love backpacking and experiencing areas in their pristine state.

Many areas in the Cibola clearly meet the required criteria to be considered wilderness, including areas in the San Mateo, Magdalena, Bear, and Datil Mountains. Please inventory these areas, as well as any other large roadless areas as comprehensively as possible. Protect these areas through the forest planning process and recommend these areas to Congress as suitable for permanent wilderness designation.

I also am an avid mountain biker and appreciate trails outside of the wilderness as well. It's nice to have a mix of dirt roads as well as trails to be able to mountain bike on. There are a couple national trails that pass through NM: the Grand Enchantment Trail and the Great Divide Trail; both pass through the Cibola and provide excellent opportunities for mountain biking. I think mountain biking trails should also be an important consideration in the land management plan, and balanced with other sports and wilderness.

Thank you for considering my comments.

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