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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.

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 would also like to add that continuous wilderness spaces like the numerous Cibola areas are key to healthy species populations. Without these areas the amount of connectivity and space for these animals will be substantially restricted. We all know now that healthy wildlife is consistent with healthy communities, including rural and urban New Mexican resident communities. These spaces are critical to our human health and persistence.

Thank you for considering my comments.

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