Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2016 12:00:00 AM
First name: Louis
Last name: Trujillo
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Following text has been entered verbatim on behalf of Louis Trujillo, by FS personnel:
To whom it may concern,
I oppose any action which involves the expansion or creation of additional Wilderness lands and/or special management areas within the boundaries of any Federally managed public lands. These areas remove mineral rights from the public domain thus creating a legal peril for those who have traditionally used public lands for recreation in the form of rockhounding or prospecting. As I understand it under wilderness or special management regulations, removal of Federally owned minerals by any person without prior specific government approval constitutes theft of government property '. Even if your agency decides for now not to rigorously prosecute the activities associated with these forms of recreation, the peril and possibility of criminal charges still exist.

Contrary to common perception rockhounding and prospecting are not mining activities, rather they both are a family recreational activity. Many of us have fond memories of going onto Federally managed public lands with parents or grandparents on camping or simple day trips to look for rocks and minerals. Isn't this one of the greatest purposes for public lands - to get more people outdoors and enjoying nature? One of the primary concerns of the current administration and one of the leading goals of many Federal agencies is to get young people more involved with outdoor activities. Wilderness turns land which all Americans can now enjoy into land reserved for use by only a small number of people fit enough to walk several miles to be able to access their favorite spot. Families, especially those with smaller or disabled children, those wanting exercise but not yet fit, and our rapidly aging members of the population are all excluded. Why would any government agency want to purposely exclude a large portion of the population from enjoying the forests?
Specimens and rocks collected on these trips typically end up as polished treasures or as a foundation for personal collections. Hiking around looking for rocks and minerals yields the benefits of physical exercise with a purpose, is something most children can enjoy and learn from, and helps create lasting fond memories of the outdoors. Just getting out into the forest looking for rocks and mineral specimens also generates a greater desire to learn about science fields like botany, biology, geology, and geography to name just a few. Isn't it also one of the leading efforts of this administration to encourage S. T. E .M. learning opportunities, and fight childhood obesity? By adding more restrictions to where families can go onto Federally managed public lands through additional wilderness and/or special management areas you are placing unnecessary roadblocks to those efforts.
"
(additional personal comments)
You can't take your truck with your family in the forest + bring your rock hounding pictures.