

## Appendix D: Proposed Management Areas and Draft Alternatives

### Draft Forest Plan Alternatives and Management Areas and Narrative Descriptions of Each Alternative

Each Alternative Applies Differing Levels of Scale and Intensity of the Four Plan Revision Core Themes:

1. Respecting Cultural, Traditional, Historical, and Contemporary Landscapes and Uses
2. Valuing Unique Places and Features
3. Managing Holistically for Watershed and Ecosystem Health
4. Managing for Sustainable Recreation

**Table 231. Comparison of Alternatives**

<b>Alternative A</b> No Action- Existing 1985 Plan	<b>Alternative B</b> Preliminary Draft Plan (Proposed Action)	<b>Alternative C</b> No New Designated Areas Emphasis	<b>Alternative D</b> Alternative Management Areas and Recommended Wilderness Emphasis	<b>Alternative E</b> Backcountry Emphasis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain all Management Areas from 1985 Plan</li> <li>• No new Management Areas</li> <li>• Retain All Existing Designated Areas, inc. Wilderness</li> <li>• No new Recommended Wilderness Areas</li> <li>• Existing Plan Components for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing Designated Areas, including wilderness</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove all Management Areas from 1985 Plan</li> <li>• New Management Areas</li> <li>• Retain All Designated Areas from 1985 Plan, inc. Wilderness</li> <li>• New Recommended Wilderness Areas</li> <li>• Revised Plan Components for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing Designated Areas from 1985 Plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove all Management Areas from 1985 Plan</li> <li>• No new Management Areas</li> <li>• Retain All Designated Areas from 1985 Plan, inc. Wilderness</li> <li>• No new Recommended Wilderness Areas</li> <li>• Revised Plan Components for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing Designated Areas from 1985 Plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove all Management Areas from 1985 Plan</li> <li>• New Management Areas</li> <li>• Retain All Designated Areas from 1985 Plan, inc. Wilderness</li> <li>• New Recommended Wilderness Areas</li> <li>• Revised Plan Components for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing Designated Areas from 1985 Plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove all Management Areas from 1985 Plan</li> <li>• New Management Areas</li> <li>• Retain All Designated Areas from 1985 Plan, inc. Wilderness</li> <li>• New Recommended Wilderness Areas</li> <li>• Revised Plan Components for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing Designated Areas from 1985 Plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing CDNST</li> <li>○ Existing Eligible (W&amp;SR)</li> <li>○ Existing Management Areas 1-18</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CDNST from 1985 Plan</li> <li>○ Updated Eligible W&amp;SR</li> <li>○ Proposed Management Areas (below)</li> <li>○ Recommended Wilderness Areas (below)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Forest-wide plan components for all remaining areas not included in above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CDNST from 1985 Plan</li> <li>○ Updated Eligible W&amp;SR</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Forest-wide plan components for all remaining areas not included in above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CDNST from 1985 Plan</li> <li>○ Updated Eligible W&amp;SR</li> <li>○ Alternative Management Areas (below)</li> <li>○ Alternative Recommended Wilderness Areas (below)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Forest-wide plan components for all remaining areas not included in above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CDNST from 1985 Plan</li> <li>○ Updated Eligible W&amp;SR</li> <li>○ Alternative Management Areas (below)</li> <li>○ ALL areas having wilderness character are Recommended Wilderness (below)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Forest-wide plan components for all remaining areas not included in above</li> </ul>
<u>Recommended Wilderness</u> No new recommended wilderness	<u>Recommended Wilderness approximate acreage</u> <b>Mt. Taylor:</b> None <b>Magdalena:</b> 48,900 acres <b>Mountainair:</b> 600 acres <b>Sandia:</b> None  <b>Total:</b> 49,500 acres	<u>Recommended Wilderness approximate acreage</u> None	<u>Recommended Wilderness approximate acreage</u> <b>Mt. Taylor:</b> 15,000 acres <b>Magdalena:</b> None <b>Mountainair:</b> 1,200 acres <b>Sandia:</b> 300 acres  <b>Total:</b> 16,500 acres	<u>Recommended Wilderness approximate acreage</u> <b>Mt. Taylor:</b> 15,500 acres <b>Magdalena:</b> 73,700 acres <b>Mountainair:</b> 4,200 acres <b>Sandia:</b> 900 acres  <b>Total:</b> 94,300 acres

<b>Alternative A</b> No Action- Existing 1985 Plan	<b>Alternative B</b> Preliminary Draft Plan (Proposed Action)	<b>Alternative C</b> No New Designated Areas Emphasis	<b>Alternative D</b> Alternative Management Areas and Recommended Wilderness Emphasis	<b>Alternative E</b> Backcountry Emphasis
<u>Proposed Management Areas</u> No new proposed management areas	<u>Proposed Management Areas</u> <b>Mt. Taylor:</b> Salado Canyon/Guadalupe; Mt. Taylor Watershed, Little Water Canyon  <b>Magdalena:</b> Sawtooth/Monument Rock, Dark Skies  <b>Mountainair:</b> Fourth of July, Gallinas Municipal Watershed, Jumanos Pueblos, Cement Springs, Bighorn Sheep, Gross Kelly (Cattle only)  <b>Sandia:</b> Las Huertas Canyon, East Mountains (Sandia) Outdoor Education/Recreation	<u>Proposed Management Areas</u> None	<u>Proposed Management Areas</u> <b>Mt. Taylor:</b> None  <b>Magdalena:</b> Enchanted Towers, OHV Use-Nogal and S. San Mateos, San Mateos Backcountry Wildlife Conservation Areas  <b>Mountainair:</b> Gross Kelley Allotment as seed bank without communal grazing, Bighorn Sheep additional Areas  <b>Sandia:</b> Communal Grazing	<u>Proposed Management Areas</u> <b>Mt. Taylor:</b> None  <b>Magdalena:</b> Backcountry Wildlife Conservation Areas, Expand the Dark Skies  <b>Mountainair:</b> Gross Kelley Allotment as seed bank without communal grazing  <b>Sandia:</b> Communal Grazing

1 **Description of Alternatives**

2 **Alternative A – (No Action, maintain existing Forest Plan)**  
3 **Management Areas and Designated Areas Description**

4 This Alternative meets the four core themes with less scale and intensity than Alternatives B-E due  
5 to the differing focus of the policy and direction of the 1982 forest planning regulations than the  
6 2012 planning rule. The 2012 planning rule differs from the previous planning rule by taking into  
7 account new understanding of science, land management, and the all-lands context for managing  
8 resources that will meet modern and future needs. Whereas the 1982 planning regulations focused on  
9 outputs, the 2012 planning rule focuses on outcomes with an emphasis on public collaboration.

10 **1985 Plan Management Areas 1-18**

11 **Management Area 1-** The management area is composed of the 37,232 acre Sandia Mountain  
12 Wilderness. The area is adjacent to the Albuquerque metropolitan area. Management emphasis:  
13 provide quality wilderness experience opportunities, dispersed recreation; wildlife diversity and  
14 ecosystem health maintained through prescribed natural fire management practices.

15 **Management Area 2-** The 44,648 acre management area is the Sandia Ranger District excluding the  
16 Sandia Mountain Wilderness and the military withdrawals. Management emphasis is to provide  
17 opportunities for a variety of year round recreational experiences, wildlife diversity and population  
18 viability maintained or improved through habitat management

19 **Management Area 3 -**The 100,007 acre management area is composed of the Manzano Mountain  
20 Wilderness on the Mountainair Ranger District and the Apache Kid and the Withington Wilderness  
21 on the Magdalena Ranger District. Management emphasis is to provide dispersed recreation  
22 opportunities compatible with maintaining wilderness values and protecting resources.

23 **Management Area 4 -**The 33,112 acre management area is administered by the Black Kettle Ranger  
24 District, which is not within the mountain districts analysis area.

25 **Management Area 5 -**The 230,842 acre management area is administered by the Kiowa and Rita  
26 Blanca Ranger Districts, which is not within the mountain districts analysis area.

27 **Management Area 6 –** Reserved.

28 **Management Area 7 -** The 30,606 acre management area consists of the Langmuir Research site on  
29 the Magdalena Ranger District. The area is legislatively designated for atmospheric and astronomical  
30 research. Management emphasis is to preserve conditions necessary to meet research needs of  
31 Langmuir Laboratory.

32 **Management Area 8 -** The 194,099 acre management area is located on the Mt. Taylor Ranger  
33 District. The primary management emphasis is on regulated even-aged timber management.

34 **Management Area 9 -** This is a 4,377 acre management area located on the Mt. Taylor Ranger  
35 District. Primary emphasis is on wildlife.

36 **Management Area 10 -** This 5,932 acre management area is located on the Mt. Taylor Ranger  
37 District. The primary emphasis is on maximum commercial timber production through regulated  
38 timber management.

1 **Management Area 11** - The 102,430 acre management area located on the Magdalena (67,539  
2 acres) and Mountainair Ranger Districts (34,891). Emphasis is to maintain forest and watershed  
3 health, vigor, and productivity, as well as provide and maintain wildlife habitat diversity and old  
4 growth.

5 **Management Area 12** -The 35,428 acre management area is located on the Mountainair (9,798  
6 acres) and Magdalena (25,630) acres) Ranger Districts. Emphasis is to maintain forest and watershed  
7 health, vigor, and productivity, as well as provide and maintain wildlife habitat diversity and old  
8 growth.

9 **Management Area 13** -The 215,552 acre management area occurs on the Mountainair (7,845 acres),  
10 Mt. Taylor (60,465 acres), and Magdalena (147,242 acres) Ranger Districts. The primary emphasis  
11 in on wildlife management activities.

12 **Management Area 14** - This 236,185 acre management area is located on the Mt. Taylor Ranger  
13 District. Emphasis is to manage Pinyon-juniper for personal use and commercial firewood.  
14 References 28 acres of potential RNA (Little Water Canyon).

15 **Management Area 15** - This 118,723 acre management area is located on the Mountainair Ranger  
16 District. Emphasis is on range and wildfire management activities

17 **Management Area 16** - The 457,146 acre management area is located on the Magdalena Ranger  
18 District's four mountain ranges. The primary emphasis is on range and wildlife management  
19 activities

20 **Management Area 17** - The 20,486 acre management area adjacent to the Albuquerque  
21 metropolitan area in the Sandia District is closed to public entry for security and safety purposes and  
22 is managed by Kirtland Air Force Base (15,891 acres) and the Department of Energy (4,595 acres).

23 **Management Area 18** – The 17,419 acre management area is located on the Mt. Taylor District,  
24 predominately on the Zuni Mountains. Management emphasis is to plant and then maximize  
25 commercial timber production. References 100 acres of potential RNA (Bluewater Creek).

## 26 Existing Designated Areas

27 **Congressionally Designated Areas**- Designated wilderness provides places where natural processes  
28 dominate and the impacts of humans are minimized. Congress preserved these places to pass on to  
29 future generations. Wilderness provides large areas for the study of nature and unique scientific and  
30 educational opportunities

- 31 • Sandia Mountain Wilderness (Management Area 1 in 1985 Plan)
- 32 • Manzano Mountain Wilderness (Management Area 3 in 1985 Plan)
- 33 • Apache Kid Wilderness (Management Area 3 in 1985 Plan)
- 34 • Withington Wilderness (Management Area 3 in 1985 Plan)

35 **Bernalillo Watershed Research Natural Area** (referenced in forest-wide prescriptions applicable  
36 to Management Areas 2 in 1985 Plan) - Research natural areas (RNAs) are administratively  
37 designated by the Regional Forester, and managed to maintain the natural features for which they  
38 were established. Because of the emphasis on natural conditions, they are excellent areas for  
39 studying ecosystems.

1 **Inventoried Roadless Areas-** Inventoried roadless areas provide clean drinking water, function as  
2 biological strongholds for populations of threatened and endangered species, provide large, relatively  
3 undisturbed landscapes with high scenic quality, and provide opportunities for dispersed outdoor  
4 recreation.

5 **National Historic Landmarks- Sandia Cave**

6 **Critical Habitat for Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat-** Mexican Spotted Owl Habitat  
7 as Required by the 2012 Revised Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery Plan

8 **Continental Divide National and Scenic Trail** (Management Areas 8, 13 and 16 in 1985 Plan) -  
9 National scenic trails, are established by Congress to provide for maximum outdoor recreation  
10 potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic,  
11 natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails may pass. National historic trails  
12 follow as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national  
13 historical significance

14 **State and Nationally Designated Scenic Byways** - Scenic byways are roads recognized to contain  
15 intrinsic qualities-- archaeological, cultural , historic, natural, recreational, and scenic. Seven national  
16 scenic byways are within the Cibola National Forest area of influence, three of which were  
17 designated by the state of New Mexico

18 **Department of Defense, Kirtland Air Force Base** (15,891 acres) and **Department of Energy**  
19 (4,595 acres) **Withdrawn Areas** (Management Area 17 in 1985 Plan)

20 **Langmuir Research Site and Magdalena Ridge Observatory** (Management Area 7 in 1985 Plan)

21 **T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area-** special management area, created as a result of a land  
22 claim dispute in which the Pueblo of Sandia recovered lands immediately east of its existing  
23 reservation boundaries.

## 24 **Alternative B-(Preliminary Draft Plan Proposed Action- PA)** 25 **Management Areas and Designated Areas Description**

26 This Alternative meets the four core themes with a high level of scale and intensity. This is due to  
27 Forest-wide plan components which describe desired conditions and management strategies that  
28 adhere to all of the core themes in an integrated and collaborative way. These plan components  
29 provide a strategic framework for managing the plan area and reflect the Forest's distinctive roles  
30 and contributions. This Alternative consists of proposed management areas that were developed to  
31 meet the core themes on a site specific basis throughout the Forest. Alternative B includes 49,500  
32 acres of recommended wilderness which may further increase the scale and intensity of adhering to  
33 the core themes of Valuing Unique Places and Features and Managing for Sustainable Recreation.

34 Existing Designated Areas as described in Alternative A

35 Updated Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers

36 Management Areas

37 **Mt. Taylor Ranger District:**

- 38 1) Salado Canyon/Guadalupe Management Area-  
39 a. East of Canyon Rim should be boundary.

- 1                                   i. Unique  
2                                    1. scenery, keep out trespass livestock, large volcanic rocks, seeps,  
3                                        aspens, geology-sandstone bluffs, unroaded.  
4                                   b. Eastern side of rim: Manage for the outstanding scenic, wildlife, and cultural areas.  
5                                   c. Preserve the natural features and qualities that are consistent with Inventoried  
6                                    Roadless Area  
7                                   d. Characteristics where IRA exists; manage for wildlife habitat; characteristics of the  
8                                    Traditional Cultural Property and traditional and cultural values.  
9                                   2) Mt Taylor Management Area-  
10                                   a. Watershed Restoration  
11                                   b. Cultural and Traditional Cultural Uses including drinking water for Laguna and  
12                                    Traditional Cultural Properties  
13                                   c. Geologic uniqueness.  
14                                   d. Timber Canyon area (Sec 33 and parts of 4): manage as special mgmt area for  
15                                    preservation of crater core/other unique features  
16                                   e. Manage fire risk/treatments. Sections 27, 34 and 3: WP and WR; “firebreak”  
17                                    objective (steep slope in Secs 27 and 28).  
18                                   f. High priority watershed for water to downstream communities.  
19                                   g. Restoration focus for forest health, addressing invasives, resiliency, protection of  
20                                    critical habitat,  
21                                   h. Recognition of high value cultural resources and significance.  
22                                   i. Timber Canyon is part of the Mt. Taylor Watershed management area proposal.  
23                                   j. Where management area overlaps with CDNST, the CDNST plan components  
24                                   3) Little Water Canyon Management Area Low elevation plant community Mgmt. Area –  
25                                    a. Little Water Canyon and possibly other similar plant communities with unknown  
26                                    locations.  
27                                    b. These have unique plant community, water scenery, large trees, maximum water  
28                                    capture.  
29                                    c. May need different plan component to retain large trees, including large oaks,  
30                                    maximize water capture.  
31                                    d. See little red circle on D2 input map, but there may be other locations.  
32                                    e. One comment suggested not including NE side of Oso Ridge, but comment was later  
33                                    retracted by commenter, per Michael Carpinelli.  
34                                    f. Plan component needed to allow for debranching of spruce. Spruce fern community  
35                                    is unique to Little Water Canyon and may be in other locations as well.  
36                                    g. Michael Carpinelli has drafted a Forest-wide plan component that would address  
37                                    these unique undiscovered botanical areas.

38 **Magdalena Ranger District:**

- 39                                   1) Sawtooth/Monument Rock MA  
40                                    a. More emphasis on scenery mitigation, and high scenic integrity  
41                                    b. Continue multiple uses—nexus between falcons and climbers

- 1 c. Team to discuss recreational value of area—rock climbing
- 2 d. Team discuss impacts to utilities
- 3 2) Dark Skies MA (20 acres outside of town)-
- 4 a. 20 acre site be designated as an astronomical observing area in the Cibola National
- 5 Forest just to the west of Magdalena, NM

6 **Mountainair Ranger District:**

- 7 1) 4<sup>th</sup> of July Canyon MA-
- 8 a. Protect unique scenic, botanical, recreational values.
- 9 b. Scenic Quality.
- 10 c. Southern extent of Big Tooth Maple.
- 11 d. Road Maintenance to facilitate fall color viewing.
- 12 e. Create road maintenance objective or management approach to facilitate passenger
- 13 car protection and sustain maples for long term desired condition.
- 14 f. Develop plan components to accomplish desired condition that includes active
- 15 restoration and integration w/Rec and other uses.
- 16 g. Area includes Tajique Creek which is an eligible W&SR.
- 17 h. Desired Condition provides education info @ site kiosk, interpretative trail, etc.
- 18 i. Management approach – provide fuelwood to deter illegal firewood cutting with
- 19 emphasis on oak.
- 20 j. This very unusual native colony of maple trees in the desert southwest deserves
- 21 special protection for its unique contribution to the bio-diversity of the Manzano
- 22 Mountains and for its high scenic values and recreation opportunities.
- 23 k. It is a very popular area for hikes and family picnics during the fall color season.
- 24 l. The trails are heavily impacted and need regular monitoring to curtail short-cutting
- 25 and associated erosion problems that may damage the trees.
- 26 2) Jumanos Pueblos MA-
- 27 a. Connected to Salinas Pueblo Missions & Salt Lakes.
- 28 b. Develop specific desired conditions to intensify current protection and complete
- 29 inventory for entire area.
- 30 c. Education, outreach, interpretation needed due to significant cultural landscape.
- 31 3) Gross Kelly Communal Grazing Allotment MA-
- 32 a. Traditionally, was a communal grazing area.
- 33 b. Specify cattle and no domestic sheep to avoid conflict with FS policy on managing
- 34 for bighorn sheep grazing.
- 35 c. Boundary would not overlap with bighorn sheep management area.
- 36 4) Cement Springs Civil War Historic MA-
- 37 a. Protection of [the area?],
- 38 b. Desired Conditions to co-manage with NPS.
- 39 c. Considered one of the best relics of Civil War era Existing springs.

- 1           5) Bighorn Sheep MA-  
2           a. Use to be native, original herd documented by Aldo Leopold.  
3           b. NMG&F have released and managed for 50 years.  
4           c. Future hunting opportunities.  
5           d. Wildlife viewing.  
6           e. Co-fund & manage FS, NMG&FD, etc.,  
7           f. Develop water sources for Bighorn Sheep – Balanced at one mile Apart.  
8           g. Create and maintain desired habitat.  
9           h. Need specific desired condition and plan components with NMG&FD & local  
10           communities  
11           i. Provide wood generated from treatments to meet desired condition to local  
12           communities.  
13           j. Phased Approach needed – describe in objectives and/or management approach  
14           k. Define compatible uses.  
15           l. Define through desired conditions how to contain the Bighorn [Sheep] to the  
16           Management Area.  
17           m. How to manage Bighorn [Sheep] if Gross Kelly Allotment becomes active.  
18           n. Consider Mule Deer habitat emphasis as well as Bighorn [Sheep].  
19           o. Bring back desirable shrubs as forage.  
20           p. Look at Claunch Pinto SWCD Land management plan components  
21           q. Recognized increased recreation use due to wildlife viewing.  
22           r. Balance other wildlife, forest health, watershed needs through plan associations  
23           required for all resource needs  
24           s. Protect and enhance traditional plants and herbs for community use while managing  
25           for Bighorn.
- 26           6) Gallinas Municipal Watershed and Unique Geologic Features MA-  
27           a. Municipal water source for Corona – priority watershed concept  
28           b. Future well needs.  
29           c. Manage community water with rare earth mineral exploration opportunities.  
30           d. Desired condition – provide for educational opportunities due to unique volcanic  
31           geology – NM Tech, geologic district.  
32           e. Community forest products provided through management.

33 **Sandia Ranger District:**

- 34           1) Las Huertas Canyon MA-  
35           a. Protection of Traditional Cultural Properties, Traditional Cultural Uses, watershed,  
36           Acequias and drinking water.  
37           b. Protect wildland urban interface through forest restoration (Desired condition).  
38           c. Integrate various management plan and uses, local knowledge, FS, Land Grants,  
39           communities, Groups, etc.,

- 1 d. Conservation Districts (Mgmt approach) (Mgmt approach or Guideline) Area must
- 2 be managed much more collaboratively than other areas (Desired condition)
- 3 e. Other mgmt. approaches: Permits to allow traditional and cultural collection and
- 4 gathering Integrate local communities to achieve goals and objectives of watershed
- 5 restoration Provide and promote economic opportunities for local communities.
- 6 f. Collaborate and integrate with local, tribal, Land Grant, Conservation Districts,
- 7 communities=Landscape approach and local knowledge.
- 8 g. Where proposed management area boundary overlaps with Sandia Wilderness
- 9 activities proposed for the Management Area would need to be in compliance with
- 10 the Wilderness Act and agency direction.
- 11 2) East Mountains Outdoor Education/Recreation MA-
- 12 a. Focus on nature based activities.
- 13 b. Manage special uses to emphasize the land.
- 14 c. Provide environmental education opportunities and interpretation: especially with
- 15 youth and underserved populations.
- 16 d. Forge stronger human connections to the Forest. Encourage outdoor recreation and
- 17 exploration
- 18 e. Not developing a facility – just leaving an area to manage for outdoor education/
- 19 recreation without adding work.

20 **Recommended Wilderness**

21 **Mt. Taylor Ranger District:**

22 None

23 **Magdalena Ranger District:**

- 24 1. Portion of D3\_5K10- Recommend for recommended wilderness (redraw boundary to align
- 25 with IRA, exclude decommissioned rds and 14\*A)
- 26 2. Portion of D3\_5K11- Recommend Blue Mesa (east of Chamisa Canyon) to Madre Mountain
- 27 as recommended wilderness
- 28 3. Portion of D3\_ADJ8- Manage area with wilderness character as recommended wilderness
- 29 with continuance of authorized and permitted uses.
- 30 4. Portion of D3\_ADJ8.b- Manage area with wilderness character as recommended wilderness
- 31 5. Portion of D3\_ADJ8.c- Manage area with wilderness character as recommended wilderness
- 32

33 **Mountainair Ranger District:**

- 34 1. Portion of D4\_ADJ7- portion not managed as Wilderness Portal
- 35 2. All of D4\_ADJ8
- 36

37 **Sandia Ranger District:**

38 None

1 **Alternative C-(No New Designated Areas Emphasis)**

2 This Alternative meets the four core themes with a lesser level of scale and intensity than  
3 Alternatives B and D due to no new management areas, designated areas or recommended  
4 wilderness. Alternative C would consist of Forest-wide and Existing Designated Area plan  
5 component implementation. This Alternative may ultimately reduce the scale and intensity of  
6 adhering to all of the core themes, especially for the themes of Respecting Cultural, Traditional,  
7 Historical, and Contemporary Landscapes and Uses, Valuing Unique Places and Features and  
8 Managing for Sustainable Recreation.

9

10 Existing Designated Areas as described in Alternative A

11 Updated Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers

12 No Alternative Management Areas

13 No Recommended Wilderness

14

15 **Alternative D- (Alternative Management Areas and Recommended**  
16 **Wilderness Emphasis)**

17 This Alternative is similar to Alternative B in adhering to the four core themes with a high level of  
18 scale and intensity; however, different Management Areas and recommended wilderness areas are  
19 proposed within Alternative D. As well, Alternative D proposes less recommended wilderness with a  
20 total of 16,500 acres than Alternative B which proposes 49,500 acres of recommended wilderness.  
21 There may be a lower scale and intensity of adhering to the core themes of Valuing Unique Places  
22 and Features and Managing for Sustainable Recreation under this Alternative.

23 Existing Designated Areas as described in Alternative A

24 Updated Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers

25 Alternative Management Areas

26 **Mt. Taylor Ranger District:**

27 None

28 **Magdalena Ranger District:**

29 1. Backcountry Wildlife Conservation Areas-

30 a. These areas are located in the San Mateo Mountains and emphasize wildlife habitat  
31 improvement, allowing for and encouraging prescribed and managed fire, habitat  
32 conservation, semi-primitive non-motorized travel, maintaining existing recreation  
33 improvements and opportunities, allow existing permitted grazing and range  
34 improvements.

35 b. While other existing uses should be allowed, habitat conservation within the  
36 Backcountry Wildlife Conservation Area should be prioritized over other uses, all

- 1 motorized use should be limited to those roads designated in the Magdalena Ranger  
2 District's forthcoming travel management plan.
- 3 c. The construction of new roads or motorized trails within the Backcountry Wildlife  
4 Conservation Area should be prohibited.
- 5 d. Temporary or permanent closure of roads that adversely affect key habitat areas  
6 should be allowed as needed.
- 7 e. Motorized use off legal routes should be prohibited, except by agency staff in  
8 emergencies or during search and rescue operations, forest and vegetation  
9 management should be limited to wildlife habitat improvement projects, where there  
10 is a demonstrated need.
- 11 f. Other wildlife improvement projects, such as the installation of guzzlers and water  
12 sources for wildlife, should also be allowed, wildfire prevention and mitigation  
13 activities should be limited to areas where structures, private development, or critical  
14 infrastructure is threatened.
- 15 g. Prescribed fire should be allowed and encouraged, existing grazing rights should be  
16 honored and grazing improvements should be implemented to ensure ecosystem  
17 health, all existing camping, biking or other recreational facilities would be  
18 maintained.
- 19 h. Future recreational development would be allowed only if it could be shown not to  
20 diminish the area's backcountry and wildlife habitat values, wildlife habitat  
21 protection should be prioritized over demand for developed recreation.
- 22 2. Enchanted Towers-
- 23 a. National destination for climbing, Climbing/falcons (seasonal use)
- 24 3. OHV Areas Nogal and South San Mateos- Not Mapped

25

26 **Mountainair Ranger District:**

- 27 1. Gross Kelley Allotment-
- 28 a. Grass Seed Bank no communal grazing
- 29 2. Bighorn Sheep-
- 30 a. all of wilderness phase inventory polygons D4\_ADJ7 and D4\_ADJ8

31 **Sandia Ranger District:**

- 32 1. Communal Grazing-
- 33 a. one area in northeast portion of Sandia Ranger District and another area south of I-  
34 40 and west of highway 337-
- 35 b. restore historical communal grazing boundaries of the Cedro (Canon de Carnual)  
36 Land Grant, the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant and the San Pedro Land  
37 Grant

38 **Alternative Recommended Wilderness**

39 **Mt. Taylor Ranger District:**

- 40 1. Portion of D2\_ADJ3- Eastern side as wilderness

41

1 **Magdalena Ranger District:**

2 None

3 **Mountainair Ranger District:**

4 1. D4\_ADJ4- Manage Area north of Fourth of July canyon as recommended wilderness

5 2. D4\_ADJ1- Entire polygon

6 3. D4\_ADJ2- Manage southern portion as recommended wilderness

7

8 **Sandia Ranger District:**

9 1. D5\_ADJ9- Manage area as recommended wilderness with the boundary to provide a  
10 northern buffer west of Canon de Carnuel

11

12 **Alternative E- (Backcountry Emphasis)**

13 This Alternative is similar to Alternative B in adhering to the four core themes with a high level of  
14 scale and intensity; however, different Management Areas and recommended wilderness areas are  
15 proposed within Alternative E. As well, Alternative E proposes more recommended wilderness with  
16 a total of 94,300 acres than Alternative B which proposes 49,500 acres of recommended wilderness.  
17 Alternative E emphasizes wilderness and backcountry types of management which might increase  
18 the level of scale and intensity for adhering to the core themes of Valuing Unique Places and  
19 Features and Managing for Sustainable Recreation. An emphasis on wildlife habitat improvement  
20 may potentially result in tradeoffs for other resources.

21 Existing Designated Areas as described in Alternative A

22 Updated Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers

23 Alternative Management Areas

24 **Mt. Taylor Ranger District:**

25 NONE

26 **Magdalena Ranger District:**

27 1. Backcountry Wildlife Conservation Areas-

28 a. These areas are located in the San Mateo Mountains and emphasize wildlife habitat  
29 improvement, allowing for and encouraging prescribed and managed fire, habitat  
30 conservation, semi-primitive non-motorized travel, maintaining existing recreation  
31 improvements and opportunities, allow existing permitted grazing and range  
32 improvements.

33 b. While other existing uses should be allowed, habitat conservation within the  
34 Backcountry Wildlife Conservation Area should be prioritized over other uses, all  
35 motorized use should be limited to those roads designated in the Magdalena Ranger  
36 District's forthcoming travel management plan.

37 c. The construction of new roads or motorized trails within the Backcountry Wildlife  
38 Conservation Area should be prohibited.

- 1 d. Temporary or permanent closure of roads that adversely affect key habitat areas
- 2 should be allowed as needed.
- 3 e. Motorized use off legal routes should be prohibited, except by agency staff in
- 4 emergencies or during search and rescue operations, forest and vegetation
- 5 management should be limited to wildlife habitat improvement projects, where there
- 6 is a demonstrated need.
- 7 f. Other wildlife improvement projects, such as the installation of guzzlers and water
- 8 sources for wildlife, should also be allowed, wildfire prevention and mitigation
- 9 activities should be limited to areas where structures, private development, or critical
- 10 infrastructure is threatened.
- 11 g. Prescribed fire should be allowed and encouraged, existing grazing rights should be
- 12 honored and grazing improvements should be implemented to ensure ecosystem
- 13 health, all existing camping, biking or other recreational facilities would be
- 14 maintained.
- 15 h. Future recreational development would be allowed only if it could be shown not to
- 16 diminish the area's backcountry and wildlife habitat values, wildlife habitat
- 17 protection should be prioritized over demand for developed recreation.
- 18 2. Expand the size of the Dark Skies Area-
- 19

20 **Mountainair Ranger District:**

- 21 1. Gross Kelley Allotment-
- 22 a. Grass Seed Bank no communal grazing
- 23

24 **Sandia Ranger District:**

- 25 1. Communal Grazing-
- 26 a. one area in northeast portion of Sandia Ranger District and another area south of I-
- 27 40 and west of highway 337-
- 28 b. restore historical communal grazing boundaries of the Cedro (Canon de Carnual)
- 29 Land Grant, the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant and the San Pedro Land
- 30 Grant
- 31

32 **Alternative Recommended Wilderness**

33 **Mt. Taylor Ranger District:**

- 34 1. Portion of D2\_ADJ3- Eastern side of the canyon rim as recommended wilderness
- 35 2. Portion of D2\_5K8- In the middle of the central and eastern portion (Timber Canyon area;
- 36 Sec 33 and parts of 4)
- 37

38 **Magdalena Ranger District:**

- 39 1. Portion of D3\_5K7.d- northeast portion

- 1 2. Portion of D3\_5K7- Western portion (Sections 31, 6 and 7)
- 2 3. Portion of D3\_5K7.b- Eastern portion (Sections 36, 1 and 12)
- 3 4. Portion of D3\_5K2- Interior portion void of constructed features and system trails
- 4 5. Portion of D3\_5K3- southwest lobe of the area
- 5 6. D3\_5K10- Area as a whole: redraw boundaries to align with Datil IRA, exclude
- 6 decommissioned roads in northern portion, exclude NFSR 14\*A
- 7 7. D3\_5K11- Area from Blue Mesa (east of NFSR 440/Chamisa Canyon) to Madre Mountain
- 8 has wilderness character
- 9 8. D3\_ADJ3.c- entire area
- 10 9. D3\_ADJ3.d- entire area
- 11 10. D3\_ADJ3.f- entire area
- 12 11. D3\_ADJ3.h- entire area
- 13 12. D3\_ADJ3.i- entire area
- 14 13. Portion of D3\_ADJ7- Northern portion
- 15 14. D3\_5K19- North of the cherry-stemmed road (including entire area north of southern edge
- 16 of sections 24, 19, 20, and 21), particularly in the Casa Grande area
- 17 15. D3\_ADJ8- Area along the southern portion immediately adjacent to the existing Apache Kid
- 18 Wilderness (excluding the southern tip) and continuing north to Grassy Flat Lookout.
- 19 16. D3\_ADJ8.b- Within NW portion; south of the range allotment boundary fence and extending
- 20 just south of Cold Spring Canyon
- 21 17. D3\_ADJ8.c- Within the northern area (north of Holdup tanks), excluding the Holdup range
- 22 improvement area, the Cooks Cabin area, and the closed mining claims/prospecting sections.
- 23 18. D3\_ADJ8.d- North of Garcia canyon, within the Inventoried Roadless Area boundaries
- 24 19. D3\_ADJ8.e- Within IRA and small portion north of IRA boundary.
- 25

26 **Mountainair Ranger District:**

- 27 1. D4\_ADJ4- Manage Area north of Fourth of July canyon as recommended wilderness
- 28 2. D4\_ADJ1- Area as a whole
- 29 3. D4\_ADJ2- Area as a whole
- 30 4. Portion D4\_5K2- interior portion
- 31 5. D4\_ADJ7- Area as whole
- 32 6. D4\_ADJ8- Area as a whole
- 33

34 **Sandia Ranger District:**

- 35 1. D5\_ADJ9- Manage area as recommended wilderness with the boundary to provide a
- 36 northern buffer west of Canon de Carnuel
- 37 2. D5\_ADJ4- Interior portion: east of 10K and north of Las Huertas Canyon
- 38

1 **Consideration of suggested alternative to maintain and restore the roadless values and**  
2 **wilderness character of Chapter 70 inventoried areas that are not recommended for wilderness**

3 The Planning Directives outline the intent of the inventory as follows (1909.12, Chapter 70, Sec.71):

4 “The intent is to identify lands that may be suitable, so that they can be evaluated and to  
5 allow for public input and feedback [...] Inclusion in the inventory is not a designation that  
6 conveys or requires a particular kind of management.”

7 The purpose of the evaluation step of the four-step process is to then determine if areas in the  
8 inventory have wilderness character. Those that are not found to have wilderness character are not  
9 required to move forward into NEPA, per 1909.12, Chapter 70, Sec.72: "The Responsible Official is  
10 not required to carry all lands evaluated forward for further NEPA analysis as potential  
11 recommendations for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System (secs. 73 and 74 of  
12 this Handbook). "

13 The CNF has determined which areas of the inventory possess wilderness character, and those will  
14 go on to be analyzed in alternatives. The remaining portions of the inventory have not been included  
15 within any of the proposed alternatives in this preliminary draft plan for a particular kind of  
16 management, pursuant to the intent of the Chapter 70 inventory and evaluation process.

17 **Consideration of request for recreation suitability in the Forest Plan Revision process:**

18 As stated in the Federal Register for the National Forest System Land Management Planning  
19 Volume 77 #68 page 21264 Section 219.7 (c)(e)(v) and further reiterated in the FSH 1909.12 Land  
20 Management Planning Handbook, Chapter 20 Land Management Plan, Section 22.15 Suitability of  
21 Lands: “The suitability of lands need not be identified for every use or activity.”

22 The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is the Forest Service’s system for managing recreation  
23 environments. The system is built on the assumption that people choose different settings for the  
24 activities and experiences they desire. The system acts as a ‘zoning’ tool, with six distinct classes  
25 representing a range (or spectrum) of settings, activities, development levels, access, remoteness,  
26 naturalness, social encounters, etc. At the forest-wide planning scale, ROS helps to provide a context  
27 within which various activities and settings are deemed appropriate. The final ROS map in the Forest  
28 Plan will be used during project-level planning to ensure recreation is being considered equally with  
29 all other resources. It will be used to guide projects and activities toward desired conditions for  
30 recreation, and to measure the effects of projects and activities on recreation resources. ROS  
31 classifications will also help project managers understand the level of development and infrastructure  
32 that is appropriate in a particular setting. The CNF has determined that using ROS to establish forest-  
33 wide classifications is sufficient for identifying which recreation activities are appropriate in  
34 particular settings.

35