

Cibola National Forest Mountain Districts Plan Revision
Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Process

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2 Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Process

3 **Forest Handbook Direction**

4 As part of the forest land management plan revision process, the Forest Service shall conduct a
5 comprehensive inventory and evaluation to determine which rivers on the forest are eligible for
6 inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System¹.

7 Based on this direction, the Cibola National Forest proposes the following process for wild and scenic
8 river study in the current plan revision process.

9 **Coordination with Previous Eligibility Study**

10 In the early 2000s, the Cibola National Forest completed an eligibility study of potential wild and scenic
11 rivers (WSRs) (number of rivers assessed was approximately 365, according to the accompanying
12 Environmental Assessment) and released an environmental assessment (EA). The Forest amended the
13 1985 Forest Land and Resource Management Plan in 2002 based on this information (see Amendment
14 10 of the 1985 Cibola National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan: 10/17/2002- Identify
15 eligible wild and scenic rivers across the Forest).

16 The FSH 1909.12 directs Forests to identify the eligibility of rivers², “unless a systematic inventory has
17 been previously completed and documented, and there are no changed circumstances that warrant
18 additional review.”³ The FSH Directives state that if such an inventory has already been completed, “[..]
19 the extent of the study process during plan development or revision can be limited to evaluation of any
20 rivers that were not previously evaluated for eligibility and those with changed circumstances.”⁴

21 The first step in the study process for the current forest plan revision effort was to examine the
22 documentation from the previous study and determine if the documentation was sufficient enough to
23 address only changed circumstances in the current forest plan revision efforts. Forest planning
24 specialists researched existing documentation for the previous study in September 2015. The following
25 were concluded from this examination:

- 26 • The directives require that all rivers named on a standard USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle map be
27 studied for eligibility. The previous study does not list the entirety of what was studied, so it is
28 unknown if all of the 435 rivers named on the USGS quads for the forest were reviewed during
29 the previous study.
- 30 • Sufficient documentation was found for only 88 of the rivers reviewed in the previous study.
31 This documentation contained the criteria being used to evaluate each river, and site-specific
32 information about how that particular river was rated using the criteria.

¹ FSH 1909.12 Chapter 80 and **36 CFR sec. 219.7(c) (2) (vi)**

² A flowing body of water or estuary, or a section, portion, or tributary thereof, including rivers, streams, creeks, runs, kills, rills, and small lakes. The river’s corridor is the geographic area generally encompassed within one-quarter mile on either side of a river studied for eligibility or suitability that contains the river and its outstandingly remarkable values

³ FSH 1909.12, Chapter 80, page 6

⁴ FSH 1909.12, Chapter 80, pg. 6

- 1 • The criteria from the original study differs from the criteria outlined in Chapter 80 of the final
2 FSH, therefore it is difficult to examine the previous 88 rivers (those which contain sufficient
3 documentation) for any changed circumstances.
- 4 • The region of comparison for the Forest was not defined in found documentation for the
5 previous study, therefore a new region of comparison must be defined for the new eligibility
6 study. Without a documented region of comparison, it is difficult to examine the previous 88
7 rivers (those which contain sufficient documentation) for any changed circumstances.

8 In summary, the previous eligibility study was done using a different set of criteria and different region
9 of comparison than will be used going forward in the current evaluation under the current forest plan
10 revision efforts. Since there are only 88 documented evaluation records found, analyzing any remaining
11 rivers that do not have records would present skewed results.

12 The Cibola National Forest conducted a new eligibility study in the current forest plan revision efforts
13 based on the above findings. This process is outlined step-by-step below.

14 **Step 1: Identify named streams**

15 The directives require that all named rivers on standard USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle maps be studied
16 for eligibility. The Cibola National Forest created maps showing all named rivers and streams for use in
17 the eligibility analysis. These maps include a minimum of a 1/2 mile-wide corridor (¼ mile section on
18 either side of the river) for analysis, as required by the directives. The number of rivers and streams to
19 be analyzed in the forest plan revision process is 435.

20 The National Hydrographic Database (NHD) was used to develop an initial map of rivers on the forest,
21 and was cross-referenced to USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle maps to ensure consistency. A number of
22 streams and rivers named on the 7.5 minute quadrangle maps were not in the NHD dataset, so were
23 added by forest geographic information systems specialists.

24 **Step 2: Formulate a Core Wild and Scenic River Team**

25 An interdisciplinary team was formed consisting of specialists representing the Outstanding Remarkable
26 Values (ORVs) from the Wild and Scenic River Act. This interdisciplinary team (IDT) included a specialist
27 for the following resources: recreation, scenery, geology, fish, wildlife, historic and cultural values, as
28 well as forest planning specialists and a hydrologist. This core Wild and Scenic River (WSR) IDT
29 conducted a rapid assessment inventorying and evaluating named rivers in compliance with the process
30 outlined in FSH 1909.12 Chapter 80. This rapid assessment took place from September 2015 to February
31 2016.

32 **Step 3: Identify region of comparison for ORVs**

33 As part of the rapid assessment, the core WSR IDT identified the area of consideration for each ORV to
34 serve as the basis for meaningful comparative analysis, called the “region of comparison.” The region of
35 comparison may vary for different rivers or categories of ORV. Alternatively, the responsible official may
36 conclude that a single region of comparison can encompass the evaluation of outstanding remarkable
37 values. Once the region of comparison is identified, a river’s values can then be analyzed in comparison
38 with other rivers in that area.

1 The Cibola National Forest used the state of New Mexico as the region of comparison for all of the rivers
2 and ORVs.

3 **Step 4: Define criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Values**

4 The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) established categories for ORVs, and the FSH 1909.12 Chapter 80
5 directives have established criteria for these categories (see Table 1). The core WSR IDT defined the
6 evaluation criteria to identify ORVs in the eligibility study.

7 The Cibola National Forest used the criteria provided in the FSH 1909.12 Chapter 80 directives for the
8 following categories: scenery, recreation, geology, fish, wildlife, historic and cultural values, and other
9 similar river-related values (see table 1 for the Cibola National Forest's definitions).

10 Eligibility criteria for each resource area will be documented and included in the Wild and Scenic River
11 Eligibility Analysis Appendix of the Forest Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement.

12 **Step 5: Identify free-flowing named streams**

13 The WSRA defines "free-flowing" as existing or flowing in a natural condition without impoundment,
14 diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. The existence of low dams,
15 diversion works, or other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion in the NWSRS
16 does not automatically disqualify it for designation, but future construction of such structures is not
17 allowed. The directives state, "the fact that a river segment may flow between large impoundments will
18 not necessarily preclude its designation. Such segments may qualify if conditions within the segment
19 meet the eligibility criteria."

20 "Free flowing" includes rivers with intermittent flows that are enough to maintain the ORV. The river
21 doesn't have to be perennial, but just has to have enough of a flow to maintain the ORV.⁵ Additionally,
22 the fact that a river may flow between large impoundments will not necessarily preclude its designation.
23 In these cases, the beginning point for the segment being evaluated should be established to exclude
24 dam-related structures and should indicate where the river is generally natural in appearance.

25 During the rapid assessment, the WSR IDT considered each river and stream to determine if it is free-
26 flowing.

27 **Step 6: Evaluate named streams and determine if they possess ORVs**

28 All features considered as outstandingly remarkable **should be directly river-related**, and should meet
29 one of the following criteria:

- 30 • Be located in the river or its corridor (generally within ¼ mile on either side of the river),
- 31 • Contribute substantially to the functioning of the river ecosystem, and/or
- 32 • Owe their location or existence to the presence of the river

33 This evaluation considered the area within one-quarter mile on both sides of a river, and other features
34 outside this corridor if their inclusion is essential for the protection of the river's ORVs (for example,
35 tributaries outside the corridor that support rearing and spawning habitat).

1 The WSR IDT considered each named river on the forest for ORVs. The WSR IDT determined if the values
2 are unique, rare, or exemplary within the region of comparison (the state of New Mexico). The IDT 1)
3 identified the particular value; 2) compared the value in the river being evaluated to other rivers in the
4 region of comparison. To be outstandingly remarkable, a river-related value must be unique, rare, or
5 contain exemplary features that are significant when compared with similar values from other rivers at
6 the regional or national scale. These features are those that are among the best representatives of
7 these features, within a region or the nation.

8 The determination that a river area does or does not contain one or more ORV is a professional
9 judgment on the part the responsible official as informed by an interdisciplinary team, best available
10 scientific information, and public participation. A concise, qualitative discussion about how each value is
11 or is not unique, rare, or exemplary (for each river) is incorporated as part of the rationale.

12 ORVs for each stream were documented, including a description of each ORV for all eligible streams.
13 This description is detailed enough to illustrate that the river has outstanding values worthy of
14 protection.

15 **Step 7: Review level of development along eligible streams and determine their** 16 **classification**

17 Once a watercourse was determined eligible in the rapid assessment, the level of development was
18 reviewed to determine which preliminary classification category it fell into (see Table 2 for classification
19 criteria):

- 20 • Wild
- 21 • Scenic, or
- 22 • Recreational⁶

23 Each eligible segment was reviewed using the classification matrix in FSH 1909.12 Chapter 80. At this
24 time, the IDT also identified the lengths/segment termini for each river that was identified as eligible in
25 the rapid assessment.

26 Potential classification should be based on the situation existing at the time of the study. It should not
27 anticipate expected development or other changes along the river corridor; this is an aspect of
28 evaluating suitability, *which will be deferred to another time and not a part of forest plan revision.*

29 **Step 8: Coordinate with Districts and Landscape Teams on preliminary findings**

30 After completion of the rapid assessment, maps were produced to show 1) the set of rivers evaluated
31 for eligibility on the Forest during the rapid assessment and 2) the initial findings of rivers determined to
32 be eligible during the rapid assessment.

⁶ No criteria are prescribed by the WSRA regarding water quality for scenic or recreational classifications. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 made it a national goal that all waters of the United States are made fishable and swimmable. Therefore, rivers will not be precluded from scenic or recreational classification because of poor water quality at the time of their study, provided a water quality improvement plan exists or is being developed in compliance with applicable federal and state laws.

1 These initial results from the core WSR IDT rapid assessment were released to Forest District specialists
2 and cooperating agency partners for review and consideration during a Forest Plan Revision retreat in
3 March 2016. Comments and changes based on this review were incorporated into a draft set of maps
4 and documentation for public release, review, and comment.

5 **Step 9: Develop draft forest land management plan direction for Eligible WSRs**

6 Draft forest plan direction for interim management of eligible rivers including desired future conditions,
7 standards and guidelines, and management area direction were developed by Forest specialists, and
8 were reviewed at the Forest Plan Revision Retreat with Forest staff and cooperating agency partners in
9 March 2016.

10 Plan content related to eligible wild and scenic rivers was then refined and edited to incorporate
11 feedback from the Forest Plan Revision Retreat. ⁷

12 **Step 10: Public participation**

13 The initial WSR eligibility findings and draft plan direction will be shared with the public with the draft
14 plan release in summer 2016. At this time, the public will have the opportunity to comment on the
15 history of past WSR study processes on the Forest, as well as the new evaluation study process, the
16 region of comparison, eligibility criteria, and initial eligibility findings (for a summary of these initial
17 findings, see Table 3).

18 The Responsible Official shall ensure that the Forest Plan Revision team documents the process used to
19 analyze the named streams for eligibility in the national wild and scenic rivers program. The analysis
20 documentation and maps will be released for public review with the forest plan revision Draft
21 Environmental Impact Statement at minimum.

22 When a final plan is selected, the responsible official will make a decision regarding which of the rivers
23 are eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

24 **Table 1: Summary of Outstanding Remarkable Values Criteria⁸**

Scenery	Landscape elements of landform, vegetation, water, color, and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features or attractions. Additional factors, such as seasonal variations in vegetation, scale of cultural modifications, and the length of time negative intrusions are viewed, may be considered. Scenery and visual attractions may be highly diverse over different parts of the river or river segment. Outstandingly remarkable scenic features may occupy only a small portion of a river corridor.
Recreation	Recreational opportunities are high quality and attract, or have the potential to attract, visitors from throughout or beyond the region of comparison; or the recreational opportunities are unique or rare within the region. River-related

⁷ From FSH 1909.12 Chapter 80. Pgs. 11-12: *Wilderness Act & Wild and Scenic Rivers Act*

Note: Along with interim management direction, additional statutory, regulatory, or policy requirements may also apply if the study river is located within a wilderness area or other designated area. This direction is found in Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2354.42e. FSH 1909.12 states that any portion of a component of the national wild and scenic rivers system that is within the national wilderness preservation system, as established by or pursuant to the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), shall be subject to the provisions of both the Wilderness Act and this chapter, with respect to preservation of such river and its immediate environment, and in case of conflict between the provisions of the Wilderness Act and this chapter the more restrictive provisions shall apply.

⁸ From Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, Chapter 80, pg. 11-12

	recreational opportunities include, but are not limited to, sightseeing, interpretation, wildlife observation, camping, photography, hiking, fishing, hunting, and boating. The river may provide settings for national or regional use or competitive events.
Geology	The river corridor contains one or more examples of a geologic feature, process, or phenomenon that is unique, rare or exemplary within the region of comparison. The feature(s) may be in an unusually active stage of development, represent a “textbook” example, or represent a unique, rare or exemplary combination of geologic features (erosional, volcanic, glacial, or other geologic structures).
Fish	Fish values may be judged on the relative merits of either fish populations or habitat, or a combination of these river-related conditions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Populations</u>. The river is nationally or regionally an important producer of resident and/or anadromous fish species. Of particular significance are a diversity of fish species or the presence of wild stocks and/or Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened, endangered, or species of conservation concern. b. <u>Habitat</u>. The river provides uniquely diverse or high quality habitat for fish species indigenous to the region of comparison. Of particular significance is exemplary habitat for wild stocks and/or Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species, or species of conservation concern. Consider also rare and unique habitats within the corridor.
Wildlife	Wildlife values may be judged on the relative merits of either terrestrial or aquatic wildlife populations or habitat, or a combination of these conditions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Populations</u>. The river, or area within the river corridor, contains nationally or regionally important populations of indigenous wildlife species. Of particular significance are species diversity, species considered to be unique, and/or populations of Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species, or species of conservation concern. b. <u>Habitat</u>. The river, or area within the river corridor, provides uniquely diverse or high quality habitat for wildlife of national or regional significance, and/or may provide unique habitat or a critical link in habitat conditions for Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species, or species of conservation concern. Contiguous habitat conditions are such that the biological needs of the species are met.
Historic and Cultural Values	The river, or area within the river corridor, contains important evidence of historic or pre-historic occupation or use by humans. Sites may have national or regional importance for interpreting history or prehistory. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>History</u>. Sites or features are associated with a significant event, an important person, or a cultural activity of the past that is now rare or unique in the region. A historic site or feature, in most cases, is 50 years old or older. b. <u>Prehistory</u>. Sites of prehistoric human use or occupation may have unique or rare characteristics or exemplary anthropological value such as evidence of prehistoric human practices and modes of living. Areas within the river corridor may have been used for rare sacred purposes, or represent the origin or conflict of cultures.
Other Similar River-related Values	While no specific national evaluation guidelines have been developed for this category, determinations consistent with the preceding guidance and section 82.73 of this Handbook may be developed for other values that may be outstandingly

remarkable, including but not limited to botanic, hydrologic, paleontologic, scientific, and heritage values.

Table 2: Classification Criteria for Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Areas⁹

ATTRIBUTE	WILD	SCENIC	RECREATIONAL
Water Resource Development	Free of impoundment.	Free of impoundment.	Some existing impoundment or diversion. The existence of low dams, diversions, or other modifications of the waterway is acceptable, provided the waterway remains generally natural and riverine in appearance.
Shoreline Development	Essentially primitive. Little or no evidence of human activity. The presence of a few inconspicuous structures, particularly those of historic or cultural value, is acceptable. A limited amount of domestic livestock grazing or hay production is acceptable. Little or no evidence of past timber harvest. No ongoing timber harvest.	Largely primitive and undeveloped. No substantial evidence of human activity. The presence of small communities or dispersed dwellings or farm structures is acceptable. The presence of grazing, hay production, or row crops is acceptable. Evidence of past or ongoing timber harvest is acceptable, provided the forest appears natural from the riverbank.	Some development. Substantial evidence of human activity. The presence of extensive residential development and a few commercial structures is acceptable. Lands may have been developed for the full range of agricultural and forestry uses. May show evidence of past and ongoing timber harvest.
Accessibility	Generally inaccessible except by trail. No roads, railroads, or other provision for vehicular travel within the river area. A few existing roads leading to the boundary of the area are acceptable.	Accessible in places by road. Roads may occasionally reach or bridge the river. The existence of short stretches of conspicuous or longer stretches of inconspicuous roads or railroads is acceptable.	Readily accessible by road or railroad. The existence of parallel roads or railroads on one or both banks as well as bridge crossings and other river access points is acceptable.
Water Quality	Meets, or exceeds criteria, or federally approved State standards for aesthetics, for propagation of fish, and wildlife normally adapted to the habitat of the river, and for primary contact recreation (swimming)	No criteria are prescribed by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 have made it a national goal that all waters of the United States are made fishable and swimmable. Therefore, rivers will not be precluded from scenic or recreational classification because of poor water quality at the time of their study, provided a water quality improvement plan exists, or is being developed in compliance with applicable Federal and State laws.	

⁹ From Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, Chapter 80, pg. 14-15

	except where exceeded by natural conditions.	
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Table 3: Summary of Initial Findings of Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Cibola National Forest Mountain Districts

Ranger District	Stream Name	Location	Reach Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Narrative Description of Values	Classification
Mount Taylor	Agua Remora	T 13N R16W	From Forest Service boundary with Silva Ranch to the east to confluence with Tampico Springs. From to N35°19'38.127", W108°29'39.20" to N35°18' 58.504", W108° 31' 12.964"	Fish Populations	Eligible because of Zuni Bluehead sucker population, a Federally-endangered species for which Agua Remora is one of only 3 locations where the species can still be found in the state of New Mexico and thus represents a nationally important population of this indigenous species.	Wild and Scenic
Mount Taylor	Little Water Canyon	T10N R13W	Narrative: From headwaters off Continental Divide to Forest boundary with private land. From N35° 7'55.510", W108° 14' 9.937" to N35° 6'54.932", W108 ° 15' 30.631"	Other: Botanical	Little Water Canyon is the type locality for the <i>Picea pungens/Cornus stolonifera</i> (blue spruce/red-osier dogwood) plant association, SAF 216, a major riparian blue spruce association of the southwestern United States. Several trees in Little Water Canyon come close to record sizes for the species. The understory has an impressive diversity of shrubs and herbaceous plants; 108 taxa have been recorded on a single visit. The presence of remnant Pleistocene plant community (Colorado blue spruce overstory/fern understory) is outstandingly remarkable in the region of comparison.	Wild and Scenic

Ranger District	Stream Name	Location	Reach Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Narrative Description of Values	Classification
Mount Taylor	Water Canyon #1	T12N R07W	At private land intersection. From N35° 13'50.079", W107°34' 8.077" to N35°14'34.36", W107°36'4.859"	Geology; Scenery	Water Canyon #1 flows from the east side of Mount Taylor, within a large amphitheater-shaped valley, eroded into the side of the truncated cone of the Mount Taylor volcano. The Mount Taylor stratovolcano was active between 3.3 and 1.5 million years ago. Today, Mount Taylor dominates the landscape in west central New Mexico. Therefore, the scenery at the top of Water Canyon #1 is expansive with views that extend to the Rio Grande Valley and north to Colorado. The geologic structure of the volcano can be seen from the top as well, and it is a unique experience to hike down into the interior of a stratovolcano. As the stream descends the mountain, the views are limited but the sense of being surrounded and within a volcanic feature remains. Additionally, the combination of landscape elements including landform, geologic features, vegetation, and water provides for a unique scenic setting of significance to the region of comparison.	Wild

Ranger District	Stream Name	Location	Reach Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Narrative Description of Values	Classification
Mount Taylor	Rinconada	T 11N R08W; T11N R7W; T12N R07W	From midscale vegetation and topo show, the critical piece is within first two miles upstream starting from boundary with Acoma land (section 23 T11N R8W) up to section 12 in T11N R8W (not to extend past 501 road). From N35° 9' 59.166", W107° 39' 7.095" to N35° 11' 19.542", W107° 37' 42.147"	Wildlife Population and Habitat	Rinconada Canyon is a major avian migration corridor on Mount Taylor and may provide a critical link in habitat conditions. The alder/oak bosque within the canyon is a unique deciduous woodland and provides habitat for a unique regionally important species, the Hammond's Flycatcher, which is near the southern limit of its range here and at an elevation lower than is typical. A high diversity of bird species nest here. Rinconada is a Neotropical Bird Management Area on the District, and is included on the BLM's roster of significant riparian areas.	Wild and Scenic

Ranger District	Stream Name	Location	Reach Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Narrative Description of Values	Classification
Magdalena	West Red Canyon	T7S R7W; T7S R6W; T6S R6W	From below Red John Box, east boundary of section 11, T7S R7W to forest boundary in section 6 T8S R7W. From N33° 39' 5.822", W107° 36' 28.597" to N33° 42' 56.174", W107° 31' 17.293".	Historic and Cultural	West Red Canyon is flanked by archeological sites that compose the West Red Canyon Mimbres community. The community is composed of the remains of a village, farmsteads, fields, and other features dating to between AD 1000 and 1150 that have been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Mimbres were an ancestral Pueblo people best known for their painted pottery. This pottery is considered among the greatest achievements of ancient Native North American art. The West Red Canyon Mimbres community is associated with rare characteristics of exemplary anthropological value, and is a unique place within the history of the state of New Mexico and the American Southwest. The community is the furthest north Mimbres community in the American Southwest, and lies on the frontier between the Mimbres and Cibola traditions of ancestral Pueblo peoples. West Red Canyon is the largest drainage on the western slope of the San Mateo Mountains. West Red Canyon was central to the material and cultural sustenance of the ancestral Pueblo Mimbres people who lived in the community by providing water and soil for farming, stone and mud for construction, and likely a variety of other natural resources.	Recreational

Ranger District	Stream Name	Location	Reach Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Narrative Description of Values	Classification
Mountainair	Tajique Canyon	T6N R5E; T7N R5E; T7N R6E; T6N R6E	Mapped Tajique and an unnamed tributary where main fall color viewing occurs. For unnamed tributary (4th of July Canyon): N 34° 47' 38.163", W106° 23' 5.133" to N34° 47' 23.685", W106° 22' 41.79". For Tajique Canyon (headwaters) N34° 46' 33.175", W106° 24' 43.772" to N34° 47' 34.583", W106° 22' 14.851"	Scenery; Recreation; Other- Botanical	Lots of maple and aspen. Many people use this corridor for fall color viewing. It is recognized nationally for the largest concentration of big tooth maple in the Southwest. Sightseeing, photography, painting, fall color leaf collecting takes place. Recreation is related to fall colors, but there is spring to late fall use. It is a destination recreation spot. Willows attract bird watchers. Big Tooth and Rocky Mountain Maple is an important regional plant community. Land grants, traditional use grazing, firewood gathering has been prevalent in the past and occurs throughout the area. Creek does flow through approximately one-mile or private inholding. During the spring run-off the upper stretch flows continually. Afterwards (after spring run-off) it flows underground to Big Spring. It fluctuates throughout the year above and below ground.	Recreational

Ranger District	Stream Name	Location	Reach Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Narrative Description of Values	Classification
Sandia	Las Huertas Creek	T12N R5E; T13N R5E	Starting at private land boundary in Section 9 T12N R5E to private land boundary between sections 28 and 33 in T12N R5E; Include additional width to east corridor to include Sandia Man Cave NHL. From N35° 16' 56.905", W106° 24' 36.419" to N35° 13' 55.004", W106° 24' 44.981".	Historic and Cultural; Scenery	Las Huertas Canyon contains cultural and historic resources of regional and national significance. The canyon contains historic gathering areas for natural and botanical resources of cultural importance to several American Indian (Native American) tribes and to local Spanish-American traditional communities. Many of these resources are dependent upon the presence of Las Huertas Creek, including riparian ecosystem-dependent plants. While resource gathering areas like this one occur throughout the state of New Mexico, this area is considered exemplary in the historic and anthropological literature, and is outstandingly remarkable in its significance to many communities of differing ethnicities. The gathering areas are complimented by the presence of multiple historic properties ancestral to and significant to these communities, including campsites, trails, acequias (irrigation ditches), caves, and the remains of homesteads and other farming and ranching features. One of these historic properties, Sandia Cave, is a listed National Historic Landmark, and is a property of national significance. The cave has yielded the remains of early human occupation in the Western Hemisphere. It is important to the history of archeological science in the United States, and is a rare example of cave use and ceremonialism by the early Native American occupants of North America at the end of the last ice age (Pleistocene era). It is also a place of great historic and contemporary cultural importance to several American Indian tribes. Additionally, the combination of landscape elements including landform, geologic features, vegetation, water, and cultural landscape features provides for a unique scenic setting of significance to the region of comparison. Scenery is also an ORV.	Recreational

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