



Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts

Wilderness Character Evaluation Criteria Matrix



AREA ID/NAME:

Sandia Ranger District, Foothills Area

D5_ADJ6: T11N R4E; 626.55 acres

Evaluation Interdisciplinary Team Meeting Date: 12/1/15

Interdisciplinary Evaluation Team (IDT): Forest Service personnel: Jessica Dunn (Recreation, Scenery, Designated Areas Specialist on FPR Core Team), Champe Green (Forest Planner), Sarah Browne (Assistant Planner), Cynthia Benedict (Tribal Liaison), Ian Fox (Planning Staff Officer), Bob Heiar (District Recreation Staff), Natalie Heberling (GIS Specialist), Crystal Powell (Acting District Ranger), Aaron Johnson (District Forester), Kerry Wood (District Trails and Wilderness Program Manager), Elke Shuster (District Special Uses Program Manager). **Landscape Team members:** Chuck Shultz (NM Department of Game and Fish), Rebecca Skartwed (San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant), Arturo Archuleta (NM Land Grant Council). **Facilitator:** Kathleen Bond

Forest Plan Revision Steering Committee Review and Decision Date: 1/21/16

Criterion 1- Apparent naturalness: The degree to which an area generally appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.

Question 1a. What is the composition of plant and animal communities? The purpose of this question is to determine if plant and animal communities appear substantially unnatural.

Considerations for 1a:

- How are concentrations of nonnative plants and/or animals distributed across the land?
 - **Narrative:** There may be some cheatgrass in area. Public comment received that perennial pepperweed is common in area. No other information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Other (Describe the dominant vegetation types, associations, and plant and animal communities. Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Area contains grama mix vegetation typical to the foothills area. Public comment received that animal life is sparse and soils are highly compacted. FS specialists report that species composition and diversity of the area is poor due to the adjacency to subdivisions, particularly along the borders. Landscape Team member comments that bear, bobcat, deer, and mountain lion have been spotted.

Question 1a Findings

The area receives a finding of **Moderate**, due to isolated incidences of nonnative species in the area.

Question 1b. What is the extent to which the area appears to reflect ecological conditions that would normally be associated with the area without human intervention?

Considerations for 1b:

- Vegetation restoration treatments (e.g. thinning) or timber harvest areas and distribution across the land (broadly dispersed vs. concentrated). This also includes associated railroad beds, skid trails, and logging decks of timber harvest areas
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

- Does the vegetation appear natural (consider elements, including but not limited to vegetation species composition and structure,¹ wildlife, soil, air, etc.)?
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Other:
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 1b Findings

The area receives a **High** finding, due to area appearing natural throughout or common to the area.

Question 1c. What is the extent to which improvements² included in the area represent a departure from apparent naturalness?

Considerations for 1c:

- Consider the extent to which the improvements cause the appearance to depart from apparent naturalness to the area as a whole. Consider the presence and concentrations of all improvements listed below:
 - Appearance of airstrips, heliports, and/or landing zones. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance and concentration of linear travelways, including maintenance level 1 roads,³ system non-motorized and motorized trails, and known unauthorized routes (includes decommissioned, temporary, and user created). Consider length and spatial distribution (broadly interspersed vs. concentrated).
 - Appearance and concentration of fences and pipelines. Include miles of fencing or pipeline per square mile.
 - Appearance and concentrations of areas of mining activity, including exploration and prospecting, that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory.⁴ Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance of range or wildlife improvements that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance of watershed treatment areas (such as contouring, diking, channeling) that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance and concentration of other improvements (including but not limited to water tanks, aviation crash locations, wreckage sites, locations of cemeteries or gravesites, bombing or ordinance locations, and watershed analysis for proposed developments)
 - Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Multiple system trails occur in the area and a large amount of user-created trails dominate the area. Fencing occurs along existing Wilderness boundary and along boundary adjacent to Elena Gallegos Open Space. Public comment received that a wildlife drinker occurs in the area and some wire fencing is present. District specialists report drinker is outside of the boundary- on Elena Gallegos. There is another water tank outside the boundary near FR 302c.

Question 1c Findings

¹ Species composition is the number and proportion of species present. Structure refers to the size, density, and arrangement of plants.

² The use of the term "improvements" in this context is taken from the Forest Service Handbook, and means the evidence of past human activities in the area as a whole.

³ For a glossary of road terminology, please see the *Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts Assessment Report, Vol, II*, page 258.

⁴ See Appendix A for Substantially Noticeable criteria used in Phase 3 inventory, and Appendix B for results from the Phase 3 Inventory.

This area receives a **Low** finding, due to pervasive, obvious evidence of human activity detracting from apparent naturalness in most areas.

Criterion 2- Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation: the degree to which the area has outstanding opportunities for solitude or for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Note: The word “or” means that an area only has to possess one or the other. The area does not have to possess outstanding opportunities for both elements, nor does it need to have outstanding opportunities on every acre.

Question 2a. Consider impacts that are pervasive and influence a visitor’s opportunity for solitude within the evaluated area.

Note: Factors to consider may include topography, presence of screening, distance from impacts, degree of permanent intrusions, and pervasive sights and sounds from outside the area.

Considerations for 2a:

- Describe the general topography of the area in context of sight, sound, and screening. Can a traveler see or hear evidence of civilization from within the area? Is the area quiet and free from motorized noise?
 - **Narrative:** Public comment received on the close proximity of the area to civilization, where subdivision elements such as streets, backyards, pools, patios, dogs barking, children playing, and other evidence of human civilization are pervasive. Vegetation type characteristic to area does not provide screening from these impacts. Public comment received that the area is crowded with other users and noises from emergency vehicles, garbage trucks, construction, and loud cars which make it impossible to have a wilderness experience. Public comment received that the high encounter with other users detracts from feelings of solitude.
- Proximity to area of recreation developments and high use areas, private lands and associated infrastructure, non- Forest Service roads, and/or activities that impact opportunities for solitude. Consider effects of the area’s adjacent, cherry-stemmed roads.⁵
 - **Narrative:** More public comment received that area does not meet solitude requirements due to close proximity to subdivisions and the city of Albuquerque, and that lights from the city dominate the area at night. Area is also adjacent to city open space areas and roads.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment

Question 2a Findings

The area has a finding of **Low**, due to extent of pervasive human activities; the presence of civilization is unavoidable.

Question 2b. Consider the opportunity to engage in primitive-type or unconfined recreation activities that lead to a visitor’s ability to feel a part of nature.

Note: Examples of primitive-type recreation activities include observing wildlife, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, floating, kayaking, cross-country skiing, camping, and enjoying nature. This question also relates to miles of fence information from Criterion 1, Question 1c, due to the potential for miles of fence to restrict unconfined recreation opportunities.

Considerations for 2b:

- Describe the types of primitive recreation activities in the area.

⁵ The term “cherry stemmed” road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase 1 Inventory process.

- **Narrative:** Hiking, backpacking, trail running, wildlife-viewing, and horse-back riding all are popular within this area.
- Describe other types of recreation activities in the area.
 - **Narrative:** Mountain biking, rock climbing, trail events, and photography are very popular in this area. Wilderness access also occurs from this area.
- Percent of area with semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.⁶
 - **Narrative:** 1.4% SPNM ROS class.
- Percent of area with a semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.
 - **Narrative:** 0% SPM ROS Class.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Discussion: the encounters with mountain bikers and other users are so frequent that a visitor's opportunity to feel a part of nature is compromised. Team discussed area receives a Low finding; there are a few opportunities to engage in primitive recreation, but the encounters with mountain bikers and other users are so frequent that a visitor's opportunity to feel a part of nature is compromised.

Question 2b Findings

This area receives a **Low** finding; there are a few opportunities to engage in primitive recreation, and opportunities for primitive unconfined recreation are poor.

Criterion 3- Stand-alone area of less than 5,000 acres that is not adjacent to existing wilderness or administratively recommended wilderness: evaluate how an area less than 5,000 acres is of sufficient size to make its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition practicable.

Note: If an area on the Phase 3 Inventory maps is under 5,000 acres, it will be evaluated using the other Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 4. Therefore, there are no separate considerations for Criterion 3.

- **Narrative:** This area is adjacent to existing wilderness, so this criterion does not apply.

Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities: the degree to which the area may contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Note: These values are not required to be present in an area for the area to be recommended for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, but their presence should be identified and evaluated where they exist.

Question 4a. Does the area contain rare plant or animal communities or rare ecosystems?

Note: Rare in this context is defined as local or regional.

Considerations for 4a:

- Presence of threatened, endangered, or rare species (from Natural Heritage database and other data sets as available).

⁶ The Forest Service's Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) provides a framework which allows administration to manage and users to enjoy a variety of recreation environments. ROS is not a land classification system; it is a management objective, a way of describing and providing a variety of recreation opportunities. The ROS Inventory Existing Condition maps have been completed for the Forest, and the existing condition of semi-primitive non-motorized (SPNM) and semi-primitive motorized (SPM) ROS classes are being used as measures. SPNM ROS settings are areas characterized by a predominantly natural or natural-appearing environment, low interaction between users. Primitive activities occur in this setting, and include the following: viewing scenery, hiking, walking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, nature study, mountain climbing, swimming, fishing, etc. Motorized use is not permitted in SPNM ROS settings. SPM ROS class areas provide the same experience and setting as SPNM, but motorized use occurs in addition to primitive-types of recreation. Primitive ROS classes only exist on the Forest in the ROS Inventory Existing Condition within existing wilderness, so are not being used as a measure. These maps are only existing condition, and are subject to change based on desired recreation opportunity spectrum classes developed during the interdisciplinary process of Forest Plan Revision. Please refer to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Handbook and Primer for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/rosfieldguide/ros_primer_and_field_guide.htm

- **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment

Question 4a Findings

Areas receive a **Low** finding for rare plant and animal communities, since no known populations occur.

Question 4b. Are there any outstanding landscape features such as waterfalls, mountains, viewpoints, waterbodies, or geologic features?

Considerations for 4b:

- Description of any unique geologic features in the area.
 - **Narrative:** There are some geologic features in area, but none are considered outstanding. No other information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Presence of outstanding scenic features within the area or percent of area with distinctive scenic attractiveness class.⁷
 - **Narrative:** 100% is Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness Class. This is not an indicator of outstanding scenic features, but is used as information to inform the team discussion.
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above):
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4b Findings

Area receives a **Low** finding; there are few to no outstanding landscape features in the area.

Question 4c. Are there historic and cultural resource sites in the area?

Considerations for 4c:

- Presence of structures, dwellings, and other relics of past occupation when they are considered part of the historical and cultural landscape of the area. Also consider potential historical railroad beds/berms associated with timber harvest areas from Criterion 1, Question 1b.
 - **Narrative:** Landscape team member reports that some archaeological sites are said to be present. Forest Service archaeologist rates area as a Moderate; the percent surveyed is 48.8%. team concurred with FS archaeologist’s finding.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment

Note: (Confidentiality requirements with respect to cultural resource sites must be respected (25 U.S.C 3056)).

⁷ The Forest Service’s Scenery Management System (SMS) provides the framework to effectively inventory, assess, and manage scenic resources. Scenic Attractiveness is a component of the SMS inventory, and is the primary indicator of the intrinsic scenic beauty based on commonly held perceptions of preferred scenery and landscape features. The three scenic attractiveness classes are: Class A-distinctive; Class B-typical; Class C-indistinctive. To determine these classes, the landscape elements of landform, vegetation, rocks, cultural features and water features are mapped using General Terrestrial Ecosystem Survey (GTES) information for the Forest, with District personnel input on areas of the Forest that were not picked up at the GTES scale. The Scenic Attractiveness map is based largely on existing landscape features. Refer to the Forest Service Scenery Management Handbook for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/landscape_aesthetics_handbook_701_no_append.pdf

Question 4c Findings

This area receives a **Moderate** finding; area has some historical and cultural resource sites.

Question 4d. Are there any research natural areas?

Considerations for 4d:

- Percent of area that is part of a research natural area.
 - **Narrative:** 0%
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4d Findings

This receives a **Low** finding; 0% of the area contains a Research Natural Area.

Question 4e. Are there any high quality water resources or important watershed features?

Considerations for 4e:

- Presence and extent of high quality water resources in the area.
 - **Narrative:** There are a few ephemeral drainages in the area, Domingo Baca and Pino arroyos, but none are considered outstanding water features.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above, including whether the water resource meets state water quality standards)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment

Question 4e Findings

The area receives a **Low** finding, due to no outstanding water features in the area.

Criterion 5- Management: the degree to which the area may be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics.

Question 5a. Can the area be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics?

Considerations for 5a:

- Presence and extent of legally established rights or uses within the area. (e.g. active mining claims, grazing allotments, easements, water rights, acequias)
 - **Narrative:** Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) has an easement along the Albuquerque Academy property access road with an underground distribution line that is still showing some locations within the area boundaries. This distribution line requires maintenance.
- Presence and extent of any specific Federal or State laws that may be relevant to availability of the area for wilderness or the ability to manage the area to protect wilderness characteristics (including but not limited to designated or proposed critical habitat).
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment
- Presence and extent of non-Federal land and access in the area⁸
 - **Narrative:** North American Electric Reliability requirements apply to maintenance along the Sandia Tram (which is excluded from area). Area is bordered on north and west sides, and in

⁸ This consideration, in addition to “Describe management of adjacent lands” and “Presence and extent of ‘cherry stemmed’ roads or other linear features” informs the consideration of shape and configuration as outlined in FSH 1909.12 Chapter 70

some case east sides, by other management such as Open Space, private lands, City of Albuquerque, as well as Sandia Pueblo.

- Describe management of adjacent lands.
 - **Narrative:** Adjacent lands are managed by multiple other entities (Open Space managed according to designation and west areas are managed as R1 where R1 zoning laws apply). Eastern edge borders existing wilderness for the majority of the area. Public comment received that the area will be hard to manage due to the variability in management of surrounding areas.
- Describe presence and extent of cultural and traditional uses of the area (e.g. shrines, ceremonial use, etc.)
 - **Narrative:** Traditional uses are present in the area but are not in conflict with management of the area as wilderness.
- Presence and extent of wildland urban interface in the area. Include acres if possible.
 - **Narrative:** 100% of the area is in a wildland urban interface.
- Describe any other management activities or restrictions within in the area (e.g. upcoming management decisions).
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Describe existence and extent of motorized and mechanized uses within the area (trails, routes, special activities).
 - **Narrative:** District specialists indicate mountain biking is very popular in the area. Public comment received confirmed this use is prevalent and popular across the area. Many unauthorized trails occur across the area.
- Presence and extent of special use permits and authorizations within the area.
 - **Narrative:** Annual foothills race event with permitted special use authorization occurs in the area. Proposals for guided mountain biking outfitter and guides have been accepted (are pending and imminent), and are about to be published in the Schedule of Proposed Actions. Signed permits for these proposals are expected in spring of 2016.
- Presence and extent of “cherry stemmed”⁹ roads or other linear features.
 - **Narrative:** One road and two distribution lines cross the area and fragment the parcel into three separate areas which would affect manageability.
- Other (Include presence of Inventoried Roadless Areas and any additional information related to the question above.)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 5a Findings

This area receives a **Low** finding, due to the variability of management of adjacent lands, 100% presence of area within a wildland urban interface, fragmentation of area due to excluded improvements, and the pervasiveness of other uses and activities across most of the area that conflict with managing for wilderness character. It would be difficult to manage this area as wilderness.

IDT Findings and Preferred Proposal Discussion (How should this area be managed? Include any suggested alternatives), 12/1/15:

Finding: The team proposes that this area does not have wilderness character and should not be managed as wilderness. **Preferred Proposal:** The team proposes that the area should be managed for multiple uses, potentially with an emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking)

⁹ The term “cherry stemmed” road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase I Inventory process.

and resource protection. Alternative: Public comment was received that this area should be managed as Non-Motorized General Recreation land.

Steering Committee Decision, 1/21/16:

<p><u>Finding:</u> This area does not have wilderness character.</p> <p><u>Preferred Proposal:</u> Manage area for other multiple uses, potentially with an emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking) and resource protection.</p>

Wilderness Evaluation Findings and Summary Table

Area ID:		D5_ADJ6 IDT Findings 12/1/15	D5_ADJ6 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16
Criterion Question*	1a	Moderate	Moderate
	1b	High	High
	1c	Low	Low
	2a	Low	Low
	2b	Low	Low
	3	N/A	N/A
	4a	Low	Low
	4b	Low	Low
	4c	Moderate	Moderate
	4d	Low	Low
	4e	Low	Low
	5a	Low	Low
	Summary		Required: 1H, 1M, 4L Supplemental: 1M, 4L
Evaluation Finding		No	No
Preferred Proposal		Multiple uses, potentially with an emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking) and resource protection.	Multiple uses, emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking) and resource protection.
Alternatives for Area		---	---

* Required criteria are bold—Criterion 1: Apparent Naturalness, Criterion 2: Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive Type of Recreation, and Criterion 3: Manageability. Criterion 3: Areas under 5,000 acres does not have separate considerations, and are evaluated using the other criteria. Criterion 4: Unique and outstanding values is an optional/supplemental criteria that is not required to be present in an area.

Steering Committee Review Notes, 1/21/2016:

STC concurred with all findings and proposal. STC edited proposal language.

STC considered suggested alternative to manage as general recreation non-motorized land; this proposal aligns with preferred proposal so a separate alternative is not necessary.

DRAFT



Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts

Wilderness Character Evaluation Criteria Matrix



AREA ID/NAME:

Sandia Ranger District, Placitas Area

D5_ADJ1.b: T12N R4E; 48.58 acres
 D5_ADJ2: T12N R4E, T12N R5E; 268.27 acres
 D5_ADJ3: T12N R5E; 94.78 acres

Evaluation Interdisciplinary Team Meeting Date: 11/30/15

Interdisciplinary Evaluation Team (IDT): Forest Service personnel: Elaine Kohrman (Forest Supervisor), Jessica Dunn (Recreation, Scenery, Designated Areas Specialist on FPR Core Team), Champe Green (Forest Planner), Natalie Heberling (GIS Specialist), Sarah Browne (Assistant Planner), Michael Carpinelli (Vegetation Specialist on FPR Core Team), Sarah Beck (Wildlife Specialist on FPR Core Team), Cynthia Benedict (Tribal Liaison), Ian Fox (Planning Staff Officer), Daniel LeVrier (GIS Specialist) Bob Heiar (District Recreation Staff), Crystal Powell (Acting District Ranger), Aaron Johnson (District Forester), Kerry Wood (District Trails and Wilderness Program Manager), Elke Shuster (District Special Uses Program Manager), Antonio Garcia (District Volunteer Coordinator). **Landscape Team members:** Chuck Shultz (NM Department of Game and Fish), Rebecca Skartwed (San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant), Arturo Archuleta (NM Land Grant Council), Greg Kauffman (NM Environment Department), Chelsea Farrell (Kirtland Airforce Base), Kent Swanson (City of Albuquerque Open Space Division), Wayne Sandoval (San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant). **Facilitator:** Kathleen Bond
Forest Plan Revision Steering Committee Review and Decision Date 1/21/16

Criterion 1- Apparent naturalness: The degree to which an area generally appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.

Question 1a. What is the composition of plant and animal communities? The purpose of this question is to determine if plant and animal communities appear substantially unnatural

Considerations for 1a:

- How are concentrations of nonnative plants and/or animals distributed across the land?
 - **Narrative:** Salt cedar monoculture occurs in the eastern portion of D5_ADJ2 through canyon drainage. District staff reports that the areas are by and large free of invasive species.
- Other (Describe the dominant vegetation types, associations, and plant and animal communities. Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** The geospatial data reports that D5_ADJ3 is sparsely vegetated; east portion of D5_ADJ2 is mostly pinon-juniper and west portion is sparsely vegetated, with a small portion of alder-leaf mountain mahogany mix. D5_ADJ1 is a mixture of pinon-juniper and sparsely vegetated.

Question 1a Findings

D5_ADJ1.b receives a **High** finding, because plant and animal communities do not appear substantially unnatural.
 D5_ADJ2 receives a **Moderate** finding; nonnative plants are confined to one area, within a drainage (Plant and animal communities appear substantially unnatural in isolated spots or scattered throughout).
 D5_ADJ3 receives a **High** finding, because plant and animal communities do not appear substantially unnatural.

Question 1b. What is the extent to which the area appears to reflect ecological conditions that would normally be associated with the area without human intervention?

Considerations for 1b:

- Vegetation restoration treatments (e.g. thinning) or timber harvest areas and distribution across the land (broadly dispersed vs. concentrated). This also includes associated railroad beds, skid trails, and logging decks of timber harvest areas
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Does the vegetation appear natural (consider elements, including but not limited to vegetation species composition and structure,¹ wildlife, soil, air, etc.)?
 - **Narrative:** No public comment provided for this consideration.
- Other:
 - **Narrative:** Team discussed large feral horse populations in area. District staff reports no evidence of feral horses within the areas. Landscape team reports feral horse presence in D5_ADJ3 (200-250 horses at one time).

Question 1b Findings

All three areas receive a **High** finding, due to no known departures from apparent naturalness; areas appear natural.

Question 1c. What is the extent to which improvements² included in the area represent a departure from apparent naturalness?

Considerations for 1c:

- Consider the extent to which the improvements cause the appearance to depart from apparent naturalness to the area as a whole. Consider the presence and concentrations of all improvements listed below:
 - Appearance of airstrips, heliports, and/or landing zones. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance and concentration of linear travelways, including maintenance level 1 roads,³ system non-motorized and motorized trails, and known unauthorized routes (includes decommissioned, temporary, and user created). Consider length and spatial distribution (broadly interspersed vs. concentrated).
 - Appearance and concentration of fences and pipelines. Include miles of fencing or pipeline per square mile.
 - Appearance and concentrations of areas of mining activity, including exploration and prospecting, that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory.⁴ Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance of range or wildlife improvements that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance of watershed treatment areas (such as contouring, diking, channeling) that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).

¹ Species composition is the number and proportion of species present. Structure refers to the size, density, and arrangement of plants.

² The use of the term "improvements" in this context is taken from the Forest Service Handbook, and means the evidence of past human activities in the area as a whole.

³ For a glossary of road terminology, please see the *Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts Assessment Report, Vol, II*, page 258.

⁴ See Appendix A for Substantially Noticeable criteria used in Phase 3 inventory, and Appendix B for results from the Phase 3 Inventory.

- Appearance and concentration of other improvements (including but not limited to water tanks, aviation crash locations, wreckage sites, locations of cemeteries or gravesites, bombing or ordinance locations, and viewshed analysis for proposed developments)
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
- **Narrative:** D5_ADJ1 has one system trail crossing the area, and one historic mine reported in geospatial data. Subtle mining activity remnants occur in D5_ADJ1 with land modification. Received public comment that D5_ADJ1 and D5_ADJ2 are laced with social trails, which is confirmed by District staff. Multiple system trails occur within ADJ2, and two reported historic mines are reported in geospatial data. Buried water pipeline providing water to private land (with a Special Use Authorization) runs along National Forest System Road (NFSR) 231 which is already excluded; some improvements associated with the water pipeline occur within the area (old ponds with retaining walls below spring) in D5_ADJ2. Tunnel Springs Trailhead is at the end of NFSR 231, which is already excluded. District staff reports that D5_ADJ2 has evident old road beds associated with historic mines in area (mines are reported in geospatial data). One unauthorized route is reported in geospatial data. District staff reports multiple old road beds within D5_ADJ3. One unauthorized route is reported in geospatial data in D5_ADJ3.

Question 1c Findings

All areas receive a **Low** finding, due to concentrations of evidence of human activities and disturbance throughout the area (user-created trails, old roadbeds, and pipeline improvements), detracting from apparent naturalness in most areas.

Criterion 2- Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation: the degree to which the area has outstanding opportunities for solitude or for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Note: The word “or” means that an area only has to possess one or the other. The area does not have to possess outstanding opportunities for both elements, nor does it need to have outstanding opportunities on every acre.

Question 2a. Consider impacts that are pervasive and influence a visitor’s opportunity for solitude within the evaluated area.

Note: Factors to consider may include topography, presence of screening, distance from impacts, degree of permanent intrusions, and pervasive sights and sounds from outside the area.

Considerations for 2a:

- Describe the general topography of the area in context of sight, sound, and screening. Can a traveler see or hear evidence of civilization from within the area? Is the area quiet and free from motorized noise?
 - **Narrative:** Vegetation is sparse and low in the areas, so the north and west viewsheds of the areas contain pervasive sights of subdivisions, powerlines, roadways, and highway traffic. Noise is pervasive in the areas. The east viewshed from D5_ADJ3 also has pervasive sights and sounds of civilization. The east viewshed from D5_ADJ1.b and D5_ADJ2 is existing wilderness. Public comment received that these areas are scenic with great views of the Sandia Mountains, but not much potential for solitude.
- Proximity to area of recreation developments and high use areas, private lands and associated infrastructure, non- Forest Service roads, and/or activities that impact opportunities for solitude. Consider effects of the area’s adjacent, cherry-stemmed roads.⁵
 - **Narrative:** All areas are in close proximity to private lands and developments, non-FS roads, and recreation developments. D5_ADJ2 has a cherry-stemmed road within it, which is a moderately

⁵ The term “cherry stemmed” road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase 1 Inventory process.

used road accessing multiple recreation sites. D5_ADJ3 has NM 165 adjacent to the eastern boundary. D5_ADJ1.b has a powerline adjacent to the western boundary, which is pervasive to the western viewshed.

- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 2a Findings

All areas receive a **Low** finding for opportunities to experience solitude within the area, due to close proximity to developments and high evidence of civilization.

Question 2b. Consider the opportunity to engage in primitive-type or unconfined recreation activities that lead to a visitor's ability to feel a part of nature.

Note: Examples of primitive-type recreation activities include observing wildlife, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, floating, kayaking, cross-country skiing, camping, and enjoying nature. This question also relates to miles of fence information from Criterion 1, Question 1c, due to the potential for miles of fence to restrict unconfined recreation opportunities.

Considerations for 2b:

- Describe the types of primitive recreation activities in the area.
 - **Narrative:** Hiking and horseback riding occur in the areas. D5_ADJ2 and D5_ADJ3 contain largely primitive types of recreation.
- Describe other types of recreation activities in the area.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ1.b and D5_ADJ2 have reported mountain biking activities within the area.
- Percent of area with semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.⁶
 - **Narrative:** 6.4% is semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class for D5_ADJ1.b; 0% semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class for D5_ADJ2; 4.2% semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class for D5_ADJ3
- Percent of area with a semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.
 - **Narrative:** 92.3% is semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class for D5_ADJ1.b; 0% semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class for D5_ADJ2; 0% semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class for D5_ADJ3.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Team discussed a Low to Moderate finding for D5_ADJ1.b and D5_ADJ2; the team was split on this finding, due to the proximity of the areas to Placitas and the frequency of users on trails (rationale for Low) and the ability to follow trails into wilderness (rationale for Moderate).

Question 2b Findings

D5_ADJ3 receives a **High** finding for outstanding opportunities to engage in primitive type recreation activities; primitive activities dominate the area.

⁶ The Forest Service's Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) provides a framework which allows administration to manage and users to enjoy a variety of recreation environments. ROS is not a land classification system; it is a management objective, a way of describing and providing a variety of recreation opportunities. The ROS Inventory Existing Condition maps have been completed for the Forest, and the existing condition of semi-primitive non-motorized (SPNM) and semi-primitive motorized (SPM) ROS classes are being used as measures. SPNM ROS settings are areas characterized by a predominantly natural or natural-appearing environment, low interaction between users. Primitive activities occur in this setting, and include the following: viewing scenery, hiking, walking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, nature study, mountain climbing, swimming, fishing, etc. Motorized use is not permitted in SPNM ROS settings. SPM ROS class areas provide the same experience and setting as SPNM, but motorized use occurs in addition to primitive-types of recreation. Primitive ROS classes only exist on the Forest in the ROS Inventory Existing Condition within existing wilderness, so are not being used as a measure. These maps are only existing condition, and are subject to change based on desired recreation opportunity spectrum classes developed during the interdisciplinary process of Forest Plan Revision. Please refer to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Handbook and Primer for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/rosfieldguide/ros_primer_and_field_guide.htm

D5_ADJ1.b and D5_ADJ2 both receive a **Low** finding; due to few opportunities to engage in primitive recreation (mountain biking is prevalent in area)

Criterion 3- Stand-alone area of less than 5,000 acres that is not adjacent to existing wilderness or administratively recommended wilderness: evaluate how an area less than 5,000 acres is of sufficient size to make its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition practicable.

Note: If an area on the Phase 3 Inventory maps is under 5,000 acres, it will be evaluated using the other Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 4. Therefore, there are no separate considerations for Criterion 3.

- **Narrative:** This area is adjacent to existing wilderness, so this criterion does not apply.

Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities: the degree to which the area may contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Note: These values are not required to be present in an area for the area to be recommended for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, but their presence should be identified and evaluated where they exist.

Question 4a. Does the area contain rare plant or animal communities or rare ecosystems?

Note: Rare in this context is defined as local or regional.

Considerations for 4a:

- Presence of threatened, endangered, or rare species (from Natural Heritage database and other data sets as available).
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4a Findings

All areas receive a **Low** finding for rare plant or animal communities. No known populations are present.

Question 4b. Are there any outstanding landscape features such as waterfalls, mountains, viewpoints, waterbodies, or geologic features?

Considerations for 4b:

- Description of any unique geologic features in the area.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ2 (eastern side) contain unique geologic features- sandstone rock features known locally as “mini-Moab.”

- Presence of outstanding scenic features within the area or percent of area with distinctive scenic attractiveness class.⁷
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ1.b: 0% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness Class; D5_ADJ2: 3.8% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness Class; D5_ADJ3: 0% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness Class. This is not an indicator of outstanding scenic features, but is used as information to inform the team discussion.
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above):
 - **Narrative:** In D5_ADJ2, Tunnel Springs contains a natural spring.

Question 4b Findings

D5_ADJ1.b and ADJ3 both receive a **Low** finding, due to no known unique or outstanding features within the area. D5_ADJ2 receives a **Moderate** finding, due to presence of spring and unique geologic features.

Question 4c. Are there historic and cultural resource sites in the area?

Considerations for 4c:

- Presence of structures, dwellings, and other relics of past occupation when they are considered part of the historical and cultural landscape of the area. Also consider potential historical railroad beds/berms associated with timber harvest areas from Criterion 1, Question 1b.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ1.b: Forest Service archaeologist reports a finding of Low; percent surveyed: 0.8%. D5_ADJ2: Forest Service archaeologist reports a finding of Low; percent surveyed 1.8%; a historic mine is present. ADJ3: Forest Service archaeologist reports a finding of Unknown; percent surveyed 0%. Public comment received of a ruin along Placitas Knobs trail; IDT believes this occurs in existing wilderness.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ2 and D5_ADJ3: Capulin Springs road (old mining road) has a large amount of chokecherry trees which have cultural significance to the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant. Significant herbs are gathered along the riparian areas within the area. Tunnel Springs spring has cultural significance to the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant.
 - Team discussed a High to Low finding for D5_ADJ2 and D5_ADJ3, due to presence of several important traditional and cultural sites important to land grant communities in the east portion. Team discussed a Low finding for the west portions of D5_ADJ2 and D5_ADJ3.
 - Note: (Confidentiality requirements with respect to cultural resource sites must be respected (25 U.S.C 3056)).

Question 4c Findings

D5_ADJ2 and D5_ADJ3 receive a **Moderate** finding, due to presence of several important traditional and cultural sites important to land grant communities in the east portion and none in the west portions. D5_ADJ1.b receives a **Low** finding.

Question 4d. Are there any research natural areas?

⁷ The Forest Service's Scenery Management System (SMS) provides the framework to effectively inventory, assess, and manage scenic resources. Scenic Attractiveness is a component of the SMS inventory, and is the primary indicator of the intrinsic scenic beauty based on commonly held perceptions of preferred scenery and landscape features. The three scenic attractiveness classes are: Class A-distinctive; Class B-typical; Class C-indistinctive. To determine these classes, the landscape elements of landform, vegetation, rocks, cultural features and water features are mapped using General Terrestrial Ecosystem Survey (GTES) information for the Forest, with District personnel input on areas of the Forest that were not picked up at the GTES scale. The Scenic Attractiveness map is based largely on existing landscape features. Refer to the Forest Service Scenery Management Handbook for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/landscape_aesthetics_handbook_701_no_append.pdf

Considerations for 4d:

- Percent of area that is part of a research natural area.
 - **Narrative:** 0%
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4d Findings

This receives a **Low** finding, due to 0% of area containing RNA.

Question 4e. Are there any high quality water resources or important watershed features?

Considerations for 4e:

- Presence and extent of high quality water resources in the area.
 - **Narrative:** Tunnel Springs spring in southeastern portion of D5_ADJ2 is a unique watershed feature. These areas contain watershed contributing features; ephemeral creeks and surface runoff.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above, including whether the water resource meets state water quality standards)
 - **Narrative:** Team discussed a finding of Moderate to Low for D5_ADJ2, due to the presence of Tunnel Springs spring, which is an important watershed feature in the southeastern portion.

Question 4e Findings

D5_ADJ2 has a **Moderate** finding, due to the presence of Tunnel Springs spring, which is an important watershed feature in the southeastern portion. D5_ADJ1.b and D5_ADJ3 have a **Low** finding; no important watershed features are present.

Criterion 5- Management: the degree to which the area may be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics.

Question 5a. Can the area be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics?

Considerations for 5a:

- Presence and extent of legally established rights or uses within the area. (e.g. active mining claims, grazing allotments, easements, water rights, acequias)
 - **Narrative:** Permittee has water rights to Tunnel Springs spring. No other legally established rights or uses are reported by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment. Comment received by specialist on Land Grant Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) and maintenance needs of acequia being in conflict with wilderness character; tribal liaison reported that TCP is actually outside of the area boundaries, so this is not an issue. Geospatial data also confirmed that the TCP boundary is outside of the area.
- Presence and extent of any specific Federal or State laws that may be relevant to availability of the area for wilderness or the ability to manage the area to protect wilderness characteristics (including but not limited to designated or proposed critical habitat).
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Presence and extent of non-Federal land and access in the area⁸

⁸ This consideration, in addition to "Describe management of adjacent lands" and "Presence and extent of 'cherry stemmed' roads or other linear features" informs the consideration of shape and configuration as outlined in FSH 1909.12 Chapter 70

- **Narrative:** Private land is adjacent to all of the areas. D5_ADJ3 (north and eastern boundaries are adjacent to private land). D5_ADJ2: all of north boundary is adjacent to private land. Public comment received that D5_ADJ2 is adjacent to private development, and private residences access D5_ADJ2 along northern boundary.
- Describe management of adjacent lands.
 - **Narrative:** All areas are adjacent to private land and San Antonio de las Huertas Land Grant lands. All areas are also adjacent to existing Sandia Wilderness.
- Describe presence and extent of cultural and traditional uses of the area (e.g. shrines, ceremonial use, etc.)
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ2 and D5_ADJ3 have cultural and traditional uses within the area, but these uses are not in conflict managing for wilderness characteristics.
- Presence and extent of wildland urban interface in the area. Include acres if possible.
 - **Narrative:** 0% of D5_ADJ1.b is in a wildland urban interface. 89% of D5_ADJ2 is in a wildland urban interface. 67% of D5_ADJ3 is in a wildland urban interface.
- Describe any other management activities or restrictions within in the area (e.g. upcoming management decisions).
 - **Narrative:** La Madera restoration project is on the Schedule of Proposed Actions, which includes vegetation treatments and designated trails (including mountain biking use) in D5_ADJ1, western portion of D5_ADJ2, and D5_ADJ3. Decision memo signed for additional designated trails (including mountain biking use) in ADJ1 and western portion of D5_ADJ2.
- Describe existence and extent of motorized and mechanized uses within the area (trails, routes, special activities).
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ1.b and D5_ADJ2 receive frequent mountain biking use. Received public comment about frequent mountain biking use as well.
- Presence and extent of special use permits and authorizations within the area.
 - **Narrative:** Special use permit to monitor ground water levels may exist. In D5_ADJ1.b and the western portion of D5_ADJ2, two outfitter and guide proposals for guided mountain biking outfitter and guide have been accepted (are pending and imminent), and about to be published in the Schedule of Proposed Actions. Signed permits for these proposals are expected in spring of 2016. No known site-specific information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Presence and extent of “cherry stemmed”⁹ roads or other linear features.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ2 has NFSR 231 cherry-stemmed within the area boundaries, and provides access to a moderately used recreation area.
- Other (Include presence of Inventoried Roadless Areas and any additional information related to the question above.)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 5a Findings

Areas receive a **Low** finding, due to imminent La Madera restoration activities, frequent and high extent of mountain biking use, high presence of wildland urban interface within the area, and adjacency to private land (informal social trails from repeated access).

⁹ The term “cherry stemmed” road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase I Inventory process.

IDT Findings and Preferred Proposal Discussion (How should this area be managed? Include any suggested alternatives), 11/30/15: Finding: Areas do not have wilderness character. Preferred Proposal: Manage the area for multiple uses, potentially with an emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking), protection of cultural and traditional uses, and protection of important watershed features and emphasis on forest restoration.

Steering Committee Decision, 1/21/16:

Finding:
 These areas do not have wilderness character, based on the rationale provided for the individual criteria findings.

Preferred Proposal:
 Manage the area for other multiple uses, with an emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking), protection of cultural and traditional uses, and protection of important watershed features and emphasis on forest restoration.

Wilderness Evaluation Findings and Summary Table

Area ID:		D5_ADJ1.b IDT Findings 11/30/15	D5_ADJ1.b Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	D5_ADJ2 IDT Findings 11/30/15	D5_ADJ2 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	D5_ADJ3 IDT Findings 11/30/15	D5_ADJ3 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16
Criterion Question*	1a	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	1b	High	High	High	High	High	High
	1c	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	2a	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	2b	Moderate/Low	Low	Moderate/Low	Low	High	High
	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	4a	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	4b	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
	4c	Low	Low	High/Low	Moderate	High/Low	Moderate
	4d	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	4e	Low	Low	Moderate/Low	Moderate	Low	Low
5a	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	
Summary		Required: 2H, 1M/L, 3L Supplemental: 5L	Required: 2H, 4L Supplemental: 5L	Required: 1H, 1M, 1M/L, 3L Supplemental: 1H/L, 1M, 1M/L, 2L	Required: 1H, 1M, 4L Supplemental: 3M, 2L	Required: 2H, 1M, 3L Supplemental: 1 H/L, 4L	Required: 2H, 1M, 3L Supplemental : 1 M, 4L

Evaluation Finding	No	No	No	No	No	No
Preferred Proposal	Manage the area for multiple uses, recreation (mountain biking), protection of cultural and traditional uses, protection of watershed features and restoration.	Multiple uses, recreation (mountain biking), traditional cultural uses, watershed protection, forest restoration	Manage the area for multiple uses, recreation (mountain biking), protection of cultural and traditional uses, protection of watershed features and restoration.	Multiple uses, recreation (mountain biking), traditional cultural uses, watershed protection, forest restoration	Manage the area for multiple uses, recreation (mountain biking), protection of cultural and traditional uses, protection of watershed features and restoration.	Multiple uses, recreation (mountain biking), traditional cultural uses, watershed protection, forest restoration
Alternatives for Area	---	---	---	---	---	---

* Required criteria are bold—Criterion 1: Apparent Naturalness, Criterion 2: Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive Type of Recreation, and Criterion 3: Manageability. Criterion 3: Areas under 5,000 acres does not have separate considerations, and are evaluated using the other criteria. Criterion 4: Unique and outstanding values is an optional/supplemental criteria that is not required to be present in an area.

Steering Committee Review Notes, 1/21/2016:

STC decided on a Low finding for 2b for D5_ADJ1.b and D5_ADJ2

STC decided on a Moderate finding for 4c and 4e for D5_ADJ2.

STC decided on a Moderate finding for 4c for D5_ADJ3.

STC concurred with all other findings. STC edited proposal language.

On 3/11/16: STC decided to move horse issue to 1b, and decided on a finding of High for D55_ADJ3, 1a.



Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts

Wilderness Character Evaluation Criteria Matrix



AREA ID/NAME:

Sandia Ranger District, Sandia Crest Area

D5_ADJ4: T12N R5E, T11N R5E; 1664.20 acres
 D5_ADJ4.c: T11N R5E; 6.30 acres
 D5_ADJ5: T11N R5E; 1215.96 acres

Evaluation Interdisciplinary Team Meeting Date: 12/1/15

Interdisciplinary Evaluation Team (IDT): Forest Service personnel: Jessica Dunn (Recreation, Scenery, Designated Areas Specialist on FPR Core Team), Champe Green (Forest Planner), Natalie Heberling (GIS Specialist), Sarah Browne (Assistant Planner), Cynthia Benedict (Tribal Liaison), Ian Fox (Planning Staff Officer), Daniel LeVrier (GIS Specialist), Bob Heiar (District Recreation Staff), Crystal Powell (Acting District Ranger), Aaron Johnson (District Forester), Kerry Wood (District Trails and Wilderness Program Manager), Elke Shuster (District Special Uses Program Manager) **Landscape Team members:** Chuck Shultz (NM Department of Game and Fish), Rebecca Skartwed (San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant), Arturo Archuleta (NM Land Grant Council); **Facilitator:** Kathleen Bond

Forest Plan Revision Steering Committee Review and Decision Date: 1/21/16

Criterion 1- Apparent naturalness: The degree to which an area generally appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.

Question 1a. What is the composition of plant and animal communities? The purpose of this question is to determine if plant and animal communities appear substantially unnatural.

Considerations for 1a:

- How are concentrations of nonnative plants and/or animals distributed across the land?
 - **Narrative:** Landscape Team member reports no known nonnatives in the area. Landscape team member reports pockets of nonnative plants (Siberian Elm) in both areas. Forest Service District staff reports no encounters, but presumes they would be isolated if any. Public comment also mentions pockets of Siberian elm and thistle.
- Other (Describe the dominant vegetation types, associations, and plant and animal communities. Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Areas are predominantly mixed conifer zone, white fir mix. Public comment received describing D5_ADJ5 as beautiful forested slope descending from the Crest, populated with deer and bear. Another public comment received that area provides habitat for wildlife, including deer, bear, and turkeys.

Question 1a Findings

The areas receive a **Moderate** finding, due to reports of isolated pockets of nonnative plant populations.

Question 1b. What is the extent to which the area appears to reflect ecological conditions that would normally be associated with the area without human intervention?

Considerations for 1b:

- Vegetation restoration treatments (e.g. thinning) or timber harvest areas and distribution across the land (broadly dispersed vs. concentrated). This also includes associated railroad beds, skid trails, and logging decks of timber harvest areas

- **Narrative:** There are vegetation projects shown in geospatial area outside of the area boundaries. Large-scale timber cut along Ellis trail; this has already been excluded from the areas. Public comment received that area has been historically logged- however, geospatial and specialist information reports that all vegetation restoration treatments occur outside of inventoried areas. Public comment received that numerous piles of chainsaw-cut large trees occur along 10k in D5_ADJ4, but this occurs in isolated pockets and is not pervasive. No apparent vegetation restoration treatments occur within the area boundaries.
- Does the vegetation appear natural (consider elements, including but not limited to vegetation species composition and structure,¹ wildlife, soil, air, etc.)?
 - **Narrative:** District Specialist reports area is mostly natural except for timber cut along Ellis trail, which is outside the polygon. Public comment received that the area appears totally natural for vegetation, wildlife, soil, and air and that the air is very clean and easy to breathe except when experiencing high altitude. Commenter continues that soils are typical soils for Forest.
- Other:
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 1b Findings

Areas receive a **High** finding; no apparent treatments or evident departures from apparent naturalness.

Question 1c. What is the extent to which improvements² included in the area represent a departure from apparent naturalness?

Considerations for 1c:

- Consider the extent to which the improvements cause the appearance to depart from apparent naturalness to the area as a whole. Consider the presence and concentrations of all improvements listed below:
 - Appearance of airstrips, heliports, and/or landing zones. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance and concentration of linear travelways, including maintenance level 1 roads,³ system non-motorized and motorized trails, and known unauthorized routes (includes decommissioned, temporary, and user created). Consider length and spatial distribution (broadly interspersed vs. concentrated).
 - Appearance and concentration of fences and pipelines. Include miles of fencing or pipeline per square mile.
 - Appearance and concentrations of areas of mining activity, including exploration and prospecting, that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory.⁴ Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance of range or wildlife improvements that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance of watershed treatment areas (such as contouring, diking, channeling) that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).

¹ Species composition is the number and proportion of species present. Structure refers to the size, density, and arrangement of plants.

² The use of the term "improvements" in this context is taken from the Forest Service Handbook, and means the evidence of past human activities in the area as a whole.

³ For a glossary of road terminology, please see the *Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts Assessment Report, Vol, II*, page 258.

⁴ See Appendix A for Substantially Noticeable criteria used in Phase 3 inventory, and Appendix B for results from the Phase 3 Inventory.

- Appearance and concentration of other improvements (including but not limited to water tanks, aviation crash locations, wreckage sites, locations of cemeteries or gravesites, bombing or ordinance locations, and viewshed analysis for proposed developments)
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ4 (and D5_ADJ4.c): 10K Trailhead is a popular mountain biking starting point, but use occurs outside of area boundaries (largely parallels the road). There are some user created trails outside of the Capulin Snow Play Area; District geospatial data shows GPS-ed user created trails concentrated around Capulin Snow Play Area. D5_ADJ4.c has one system trail running north-south through this area. D5_ADJ4 has 10k trail running north-south through it, and some system trails around Capulin Snow Play Area. District specialist reports no likelihood of user created trails; if any occur, they will be concentrated in southern boundary near Capulin Snow Play Area and are not pervasive to the area. District specialist reports that system trails in area not highly developed, and are maintained to trail class 2-3 standard. Public comment was received that there are barbed wire fence remnants in area. Three historic mine points appear in geospatial data, but information is not known about contributions these points may make to detracting from apparent naturalness. Public comment was received that mining remnants include shallow excavations approximately 5 feet deep and 20-30 feet in diameter. These mines were not determined to be substantially noticeable in inventory phase. Public comment received that an unnatural road cut appears along Ellis Trail, which is outside the area boundaries.
 - D5_ADJ5: System trails run through this polygon: Tree Springs trail, 10k, and Faulty National Forest System Trails (NFST). District specialist reports that system trails in area are not highly developed, and are maintained to trail class 2-3 standard. Two historic mine points appear in geospatial data, but information is not known about contributions these points may make to detracting from apparent naturalness. These mines were not determined to be substantially noticeable in inventory phase. Public comments received that an abandoned road grade exists within the polygon, and reports that it is a clear sign of human use that makes it poor candidate for wilderness designation. District specialists reports that the old Crest highway roadbed borders the current highway in that area, so areas of this old roadbed still occur within the inventoried area boundaries (geospatial GPS-ed layer confirms this). Public comment received that historic mining remnants, including exposed tailings, road systems, and runoff grades, but no photographs were submitted and no evidence was seen in geospatial data and District specialists report no evidence of historic mining remnants (except for historic road bed). Additionally, the old La Madera ski area (Tree Spring Winter Area as noted in geospatial data) occurs within the polygon along the eastern boundary (a large cleared area).
 - Team discussion about a strong Moderate finding for D5_ADJ4, due to evidence of human activity (user created trails) only occurring in isolated spots around Capulin Snow Play Area. Team discussed that southern boundary could be adjusted to exclude evidence of human activity around Capulin Snow Play Area and the area would receive a High finding.
 - Team discussed a strong Moderate finding for D5_ADJ5, due to evidence of human activity (road beds and old La Madera ski area, known as Tree Spring Winter Area in GIS) only occurring in isolated spots along eastern border. Team discussed that eastern boundary could be adjusted to exclude evidence of human activity and the area would receive a High finding.

Question 1c Findings

D5_ADJ4: receives two finding, based on geography.

The portion east of 10k trail and north of Las Huertas Canyon receives a **High** finding due to little or no evidence of human activity in this portion. The remainder of the area receives a **Low** due to concentration of improvements in those areas.

D5_ADJ5: area receives a **Moderate** finding, due to evidence of human activity (road beds and old La Madera

ski area, known as Tree Spring Winter Area in geospatial data) occurring in isolated spots along eastern border.

Criterion 2- Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation: the degree to which the area has outstanding opportunities for solitude or for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Note: The word “or” means that an area only has to possess one or the other. The area does not have to possess outstanding opportunities for both elements, nor does it need to have outstanding opportunities on every acre.

Question 2a. Consider impacts that are pervasive and influence a visitor’s opportunity for solitude within the evaluated area.

Note: Factors to consider may include topography, presence of screening, distance from impacts, degree of permanent intrusions, and pervasive sights and sounds from outside the area.

Considerations for 2a:

- Describe the general topography of the area in context of sight, sound, and screening. Can a traveler see or hear evidence of civilization from within the area? Is the area quiet and free from motorized noise?
 - **Narrative:** Eastern boundary of both areas borders NM-165 and NM-536 (the Crest Highway). Public comment received that motorcycle noise is audible in areas; this is confirmed by District specialists (report that noise was heard up at 10k trailhead). Views are mostly screened from evidence of civilization, except for areas with large clearings that show East Mountain developments. Western boundaries of areas border Wilderness, which is free of evidence of civilization. Public comment received that D5_ADJ4 has good potential for solitude and primitive recreation and should be part of Sandia Wilderness. More public comment received that D5_ADJ4 is extremely quiet with places of meditation, free from noise and motorized sounds. Comment reported that D5_ADJ4 is less frequently visited that part of the Wilderness area south of ski area. Scenic with beautiful stands of trees; commenter suggested modifying southern border from curve opposite 9 Mile Picnic Grounds, down to the Capulin Snow Play Area, so as not to bisect the east-west mountain bike trail that parallels north side of Hwy 536. Public comment received that D5_ADJ5 is a buffer to the impact of humans, it also allows for people to get into the forest but still be near the transportation of Crest road. Commenter reports D5_ADJ5 is loud and one can hear cars, trucks, and motorcycles going up and down the road all times of the day and someone cannot have an outstanding opportunity for solitude. More public comment received that there is good opportunity for solitude in area south of Tree Springs trail along Oso Corridor. Landscape team member reports good opportunity for solitude in both polygons. D5_ADJ4: Public comment received that area does not have wild and secluded feel one should have in wilderness. Comment from District specialists that both parcels received high winter and summer recreation trail use (more so on D5_ADJ5) with concentrations on system trails. More public comment received that D5_ADJ5 is free of motorized noise, and experiences of stillness and quiet are possible.
- Proximity to area of recreation developments and high use areas, private lands and associated infrastructure, non- Forest Service roads, and/or activities that impact opportunities for solitude. Consider effects of the area’s adjacent, cherry-stemmed roads.⁵
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ4: Public comment received that the area is noisy and close to roads; commenter provided a picture of the road viewed from within area. Geospatial data shows that Capulin Snow Play Area and Las Huertas Picnic Grounds are in proximity to area. D5_ADJ5 has

⁵ The term “cherry stemmed” road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase 1 Inventory process.

trailheads. Ski area is adjacent to north boundary of D5_ADJ5. Public comment received that the area is not affected by the sights and sounds of this development. Embudo Cave is just off the ski run but it covered and hidden by vegetation.

- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Team discussed a finding of Moderate to Low for D5_ADJ4, due to mixed comments of ability to experience solitude (noise being pervasive but also reports of experiencing solitude received from public).

Question 2a Findings

D5_ADJ4 receives a **Moderate** finding, due to mixed comments of ability to experience solitude (noise being pervasive but also reports of experiencing solitude from public); and D5_ADJ5 receives a **Low** finding, due to more activity reported in the area and more pervasive impacts to opportunities for solitude.

Question 2b. Consider the opportunity to engage in primitive-type or unconfined recreation activities that lead to a visitor's ability to feel a part of nature.

Note: Examples of primitive-type recreation activities include observing wildlife, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, floating, kayaking, cross-country skiing, camping, and enjoying nature. This question also relates to miles of fence information from Criterion 1, Question 1c, due to the potential for miles of fence to restrict unconfined recreation opportunities.

Considerations for 2b:

- Describe the types of primitive recreation activities in the area.
 - **Narrative:** Public comment received that D5_ADJ5 contains prime opportunity through area for primitive and unconfined recreation, including hiking and winter snowshoeing. Horseback riding is popular in area, along Ellis and 10k trails. Popularity of hiking and cross-country skiing is prevalent in area. Bow-hunting is also popular in areas adjacent to Crest highway in D5_ADJ4 but also allowed in D5_ADJ5. Non-motorized camping and picnicking occurs in isolated areas of D5_ADJ4.
- Describe other types of recreation activities in the area.
 - **Narrative:** Mountain biking is prevalent in D5_ADJ5, and occurs in D5_ADJ4 concentrated in southern portion, somewhat on system trails and frequently on user-created trails.
- Percent of area with semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.⁶
 - **Narrative:** 55.6% in D5_ADJ4 of semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.; 0% in D5_ADJ4.c of semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.; 33.1% semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class in D5_ADJ5
- Percent of area with a semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.
 - **Narrative:** 0% semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class in all areas.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)

⁶ The Forest Service's Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) provides a framework which allows administration to manage and users to enjoy a variety of recreation environments. ROS is not a land classification system; it is a management objective, a way of describing and providing a variety of recreation opportunities. The ROS Inventory Existing Condition maps have been completed for the Forest, and the existing condition of semi-primitive non-motorized (SPNM) and semi-primitive motorized (SPM) ROS classes are being used as measures. SPNM ROS settings are areas characterized by a predominantly natural or natural-appearing environment, low interaction between users. Primitive activities occur in this setting, and include the following: viewing scenery, hiking, walking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, nature study, mountain climbing, swimming, fishing, etc. Motorized use is not permitted in SPNM ROS settings. SPM ROS class areas provide the same experience and setting as SPNM, but motorized use occurs in addition to primitive-types of recreation. Primitive ROS classes only exist on the Forest in the ROS Inventory Existing Condition within existing wilderness, so are not being used as a measure. These maps are only existing condition, and are subject to change based on desired recreation opportunity spectrum classes developed during the interdisciplinary process of Forest Plan Revision. Please refer to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Handbook and Primer for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/rosfieldguide/ros_primer_and_field_guide.htm

- **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 2b Findings

D4_ADJ4 receives a **Moderate** finding due to some outstanding opportunities to engage in primitive types of recreation, while D5_ADJ5 receives a **Moderate** finding due to some opportunity to engage in primitive recreation.

Criterion 3- Stand-alone area of less than 5,000 acres that is not adjacent to existing wilderness or administratively recommended wilderness: evaluate how an area less than 5,000 acres is of sufficient size to make its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition practicable.

Note: If an area on the Phase 3 Inventory maps is under 5,000 acres, it will be evaluated using the other Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 4. Therefore, there are no separate considerations for Criterion 3.

- **Narrative:** This area is adjacent to existing wilderness, so this criterion does not apply.

Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities: the degree to which the area may contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Note: These values are not required to be present in an area for the area to be recommended for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, but their presence should be identified and evaluated where they exist.

Question 4a. Does the area contain rare plant or animal communities or rare ecosystems?

Note: Rare in this context is defined as local or regional.

Considerations for 4a:

- Presence of threatened, endangered, or rare species (from Natural Heritage database and other data sets as available).
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4a Findings

Areas receive a **Low** finding for rare plant and animal communities.

Question 4b. Are there any outstanding landscape features such as waterfalls, mountains, viewpoints, waterbodies, or geologic features?

Considerations for 4b:

- Description of any unique geologic features in the area.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ4: Public comment received that the slopes of Las Huertas canyon offer sweeping views to the east including rugged Palomas Peak. A shelter cave has been reported in the cliffs above the private summer camp. D5_ADJ5: Wolf Spring, Bill Spring, and Tree Spring all occur in the area. Tejano Canyon and Canon Madera occur within the area. Public comment received that fossils in rocks along Tree Spring trail are evident and there are rocky outcrops but no outstanding geologic features

- Presence of outstanding scenic features within the area or percent of area with distinctive scenic attractiveness class.⁷
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ4: 65.3% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness Class and D5_ADJ5 is 19.2% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness Class. This is not an indicator of outstanding scenic features, but is used as information to inform the team discussion.
 - Public comment received that scenic landscape are experiences and small things like wildflowers and country unaffected by force of humans contribute to attractiveness.
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above):
 - **Narrative:** Capulin Creek follows the southeastern boundary of D5_ADJ4 and is an important water source for the canyon, and Las Huertas Creek comes through D5_ADJ4. Las Huertas is special due to the fact that it is perennial surface water, but those flowing portions are outside of the area. Canon Media is along the northern boundary.

Question 4b Findings

Area receives a **Low** finding; none of the features are outstanding.

Question 4c. Are there historic and cultural resource sites in the area?

Considerations for 4c:

- Presence of structures, dwellings, and other relics of past occupation when they are considered part of the historical and cultural landscape of the area. Also consider potential historical railroad beds/berms associated with timber harvest areas from Criterion 1, Question 1b.
 - **Narrative:** A few historic mining features occur in the areas. Public comment received that no historic and cultural sites are in area. D5_ADJ4: Traditional Cultural Property boundary falls within the northeast corner of the area, where herbs are gathered and timber was gathered historically (herb gathering occurs throughout canyon). In and surrounding the Las Huertas picnic ground are apple trees brought with settlers that are still growing in that area. For ADJ4, FS archaeologist reports a finding of High, percent surveyed: 5.6%; for ADJ4.c, FS archaeologist reports a finding of Low, percent surveyed 100%; for ADJ5, FS archaeologist reports a finding of High, percent surveyed 9.3%.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Based on information that could be shared in the geospatial information, team discussed that the areas deserved a Moderate finding due to presence of some historic and cultural resource sites.

Note: (Confidentiality requirements with respect to cultural resource sites must be respected (25 U.S.C 3056)).

Question 4c Findings

These areas receive a **Moderate** finding, due to presence of some historic and cultural resource sites.

Question 4d. Are there any research natural areas?

⁷ The Forest Service's Scenery Management System (SMS) provides the framework to effectively inventory, assess, and manage scenic resources. Scenic Attractiveness is a component of the SMS inventory, and is the primary indicator of the intrinsic scenic beauty based on commonly held perceptions of preferred scenery and landscape features. The three scenic attractiveness classes are: Class A-distinctive; Class B-typical; Class C-indistinctive. To determine these classes, the landscape elements of landform, vegetation, rocks, cultural features and water features are mapped using General Terrestrial Ecosystem Survey (GTES) information for the Forest, with District personnel input on areas of the Forest that were not picked up at the GTES scale. The Scenic Attractiveness map is based largely on existing landscape features. Refer to the Forest Service Scenery Management Handbook for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/landscape_aesthetics_handbook_701_no_append.pdf

Considerations for 4d:

- Percent of area that is part of a research natural area.
 - **Narrative:** 0%
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4d Findings

This receives a **Low** finding, due to 0% of area containing RNA.

Question 4e. Are there any high quality water resources or important watershed features?

Considerations for 4e:

- Presence and extent of high quality water resources in the area.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ4: Las Huertas creek is a perennial stream and has associated drainages; these all replenish the aquifer and feeds acequias downstream (outside the area boundaries), and also provides riparian habitat. D5_ADJ5 has few to no important watershed features.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above, including whether the water resource meets state water quality standards)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4e Findings

D5_ADJ4 has a **High** finding, due to presences of Las Huertas Creek and associated drainages (presence of several or many high quality water resources). D5_ADJ5 has a **Low** finding, due to few to no important watershed features.

Criterion 5- Management: the degree to which the area may be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics.

Question 5a. Can the area be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics?

Considerations for 5a:

- Presence and extent of legally established rights or uses within the area. (e.g. active mining claims, grazing allotments, easements, water rights, acequias)
 - **Narrative:** Las Huertas Traditional Cultural Property occurs in northeastern corner of D5_ADJ4. No active mining claims occur within areas. Water rights are associated with Capulin spring and acequias, but these are excluded from the area. Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) reports the SNAN12 distribution line is within the southern portion of the area, with associated easement (where maintenance is needed). Powerline has been excluded out of the area boundary; easement buffer was not identified geospatially, so unknown if easement is within area boundaries. Boundary could be adjusted to exclude this easement.
- Presence and extent of any specific Federal or State laws that may be relevant to availability of the area for wilderness or the ability to manage the area to protect wilderness characteristics (including but not limited to designated or proposed critical habitat).
 - **Narrative:** Public comment received that there is proposed critical habitat in area, but it is outside of the area boundaries.
- Presence and extent of non-Federal land and access in the area⁸

⁸ This consideration, in addition to "Describe management of adjacent lands" and "Presence and extent of 'cherry stemmed' roads or other linear features" informs the consideration of shape and configuration as outlined in FSH 1909.12 Chapter 70

- **Narrative:** Ellis Cooper private inholding is adjacent to D5_ADJ4; no legal access easements occur within area boundaries.
- Describe management of adjacent lands.
 - **Narrative:** Forest Service Lands specialist reports area could be easily managed because of well-established highway but work would need to be done to properly establish the south boundary of the proposed wilderness. A large portion of both areas is adjacent to existing wilderness (west and north on D5_ADJ4 and D5_ADJ4.c). Adjacent non wilderness lands are managed mainly for semi primitive nonmotorized use with some roaded natural. These areas are part of State Game Management Unit 14 which would not conflict with managing for wilderness character.
- Describe presence and extent of cultural and traditional uses of the area (e.g. shrines, ceremonial use, etc.)
 - **Narrative:** There are Native American traditional and Land Grant cultural uses in the area, but those uses are not in conflict with wilderness management. Eastern boundary of D5_ADJ4 is used for cultural use plant harvesting, which is also not in conflict with wilderness character.
- Presence and extent of wildland urban interface in the area. Include acres if possible.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ4: 48% in wildland urban interface; D5_ADJ5: 100% in wildland urban interface. D5_ADJ4: Public comment received that conversion of this area to wilderness would adversely affect fire-fighting in the region.
- Describe any other management activities or restrictions within the area (e.g. upcoming management decisions).
 - **Narrative:** La Madera restoration project is on Schedule of Proposed Actions, which includes vegetation treatments with thinning, masticating, and other planned restoration treatments which would be incompatible with wilderness character. Trailwork and potential new trail construction planned for watershed restoration as part of the La Madera project as well.
- Describe existence and extent of motorized and mechanized uses within the area (trails, routes, special activities).
 - **Narrative:** Public comment received that rock climbing is popular in D5_ADJ4 but District specialists confirm rock climbing is actually outside the area boundaries. Mountain biking is very popular along trails in D5_ADJ5 and also occurs in small concentrations around Capulin Snow Play Area in D5_ADJ4.
- Presence and extent of special use permits and authorizations within the area.
 - **Narrative:** Proposals for guided mountain biking outfitter and guides have been accepted (are pending and imminent), and about to be published in the Schedule of Proposed Actions. Signed permits for these proposals are expected in Spring of 2016.
- Presence and extent of “cherry stemmed”⁹ roads or other linear features.
 - **Narrative:** Capulin Snow Play Area has been cherry-stemmed out of area boundaries.
- Other (Include presence of Inventoried Roadless Areas and any additional information related to the question above.)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 5a Findings

Areas receive a **Low** finding, due to imminent La Madera restoration activities throughout both areas that are incompatible with managing for wilderness character and high presence of wildland urban interface within the area.

⁹ The term “cherry stemmed” road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase I Inventory process.

IDT Finding and Preferred Proposal Discussion (How should this area be managed? Include any suggested alternatives), 11/30/15: D5_ADJ4 and D5_ADJ4.c: Finding: The team finds that D5_ADJ4 and D5_ADJ4.c with its current boundaries does not have wilderness character. Preferred Proposal: The IDT was split on a preferred proposal for D5_ADJ4. Portions of the team recommends that the interior portion of D5_ADJ4 contains wilderness character and could be included in an alternative with the boundaries modified to exclude multiple uses/activities incompatible with wilderness character (exclude the 10K trail to the west and the trails concentrated around Capulin). In another alternative, portions of the team would like to see the area managed as general forest area (as well as D5_ADJ4.c) to protect important watershed features, wildland urban interface, and forest restoration, which are the objectives of the pending La Madera project. Additionally, cultural and traditional uses should be an emphasis of this area.

D5_ADJ5: Finding: The team finds that D5_ADJ5 does not have wilderness character. Preferred Proposal: The team recommends that the area be managed as a general forest area to protect wildland urban interface and forest restoration, which are the objectives of the pending La Madera project. Alternative: Public comment has been received that D5_ADJ5 should be managed as an Outdoor Education and Natural Area Designation. Alternative: Additional public comment was received that there should be no new road building in the area and area should be managed to retain its naturalness.

Steering Committee Decision, 1/21/16:

D5_ADJ4 and D5_ADJ4.c

Finding:

D5_ADJ4 and D5_ADJ4.c with current boundaries do not have wilderness character. Interior of D5_ADJ4 does, east of 10K trail and north of Las Huertas Canyon.

Preferred Proposal:

Manage this area as part of a larger Las Huertas watershed management area for specific watershed and cultural values, including to protect important watershed features, downstream acequias and drinking water, cultural and traditional uses (encompassing the Traditional Cultural Property), and to protect wildland urban interface through forest restoration.

D5_ADJ5

Finding:

This area does not have wilderness character, due to rationale provided in each criterion's findings.

Preferred Proposal:

Manage for general Forest-wide desired conditions, to protect wildland urban interface through forest restoration and provide dispersed recreation, with emphasis on mountain biking.

Alternatives:

Manage this area with an emphasis on outdoor education and nature-based activities, focus special use authorizations that support and are consistent with this focus. Manage infrastructure to support this emphasis.

Wilderness Evaluation Findings and Summary Table

Area ID:		D5_ADJ4.c IDT Findings 11/30/15	D5_ADJ4.c Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	D5_ADJ4 IDT Findings 11/30/15	D5_ADJ4 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	D5_ADJ5 IDT Findings 11/30/15	D5_ADJ5 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16
Criterion Question*	1a	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	1b	High	High	High	High	High	High
	1c	Moderate/High	High/Low	Moderate/High	High/Low	Moderate/High	Moderate
	2a	Moderate/Low	Moderate	Moderate/Low	Moderate	Low	Low
	2b	High	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	4a	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	4b	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	4c	Low	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate/High	Moderate
	4d	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	4e	High	High	High	High	Low	Low
	5a	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Summary		Required: 2H, 1M/H, 1M, 1M/L, 1L Supplemental: 1H, 4L	Required: 1H, 1H/L, 3M, 1L Supplemental: 1H, 1M, 3L	Required: 2H, 1M/H, 1M, 1M/L, 1L Supplemental: 2H, 3L	Required: 1H, 1H/L, 3M, 1L Supplemental: 1H, 1M, 3L	Required: 1H, 2M/H, 2M, 1L Supplemental: 1M/H, 4L	Required: 1H, 3M, 2L Supplemental: 1M, 4L
Evaluation Finding		No	No	Yes, interior (east of 10k and north of Las Huertas Canyon)	Yes, interior (east of 10k and north of Las Huertas Canyon)	No	No
Preferred Proposal for Preliminary Draft Plan		Las Huertas watershed focus on watershed features and traditional cultural values TCP	Las Huertas watershed focus on watershed features and traditional cultural values TCP	Las Huertas watershed focus on watershed features and traditional cultural values TCP or potential wilderness	Las Huertas watershed focus on watershed features and traditional cultural values TCP	General Forest Area, with management objectives of WUI and forest restoration Dispersed recreation	General Forest Area, with management objectives of WUI and forest restoration Dispersed recreation
Alternatives for Area		---	---	Las Huertas watershed focus on watershed features and traditional cultural values TCP or potential wilderness	---	Outdoor education Nature-based activities emphasis	Outdoor education Nature-based activities emphasis

* Required criteria are bold—Criterion 1: Apparent Naturalness, Criterion 2: Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive Type of Recreation, and Criterion 3: Manageability. Criterion 3: Areas under 5,000 acres does not have separate considerations, and is evaluated using the other criteria. Criterion 4: Unique and outstanding values is an optional/supplemental criteria that is not required to be present in an area.

Steering Committee Review Notes, 1/21/2016:

D5 ADJ4: STC decided on a split finding, due to geography, for 1c- High and Low.
STC decided on a finding of Moderate for 2a and 2b.
STC concurred with team’s finding of Moderate for 4c.
STC concurred with all other findings.

STC edited IDT preferred proposal language and made a decision on a preferred proposal, as IDT was originally split on a recommendation.

STC considered an alternative to recommend interior portion as potential wilderness. STC decided that this isolated extension of potential wilderness, surrounded by other uses, would create a wilderness boundary management issue; there is not a logical boundary within the addition area and there is a logical boundary (canyon) currently.

D5 ADJ5: STC decided on a Moderate finding for 1c; improvements were scattered in area boundaries so two findings based on geography was not possible. STC concurred with the IDT team’s finding of Moderate for 4c.
STC concurred with all other findings.
STC reviewed suggested alternatives for area from public comment and decided on alternative language.

DRAFT



Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts

Wilderness Character Evaluation Criteria Matrix



AREA ID/NAME:

Sandia Ranger District, Tijeras Area

- D5_ADJ7 - T10N R5E; 4.88 acres
- D5_ADJ8 - T10N R5E; 68.96 acres
- D5_ADJ9 - T10N R5E; 332.56 acres
- D5_ADJ10 – T1N R4W; 640.51 acres

Evaluation Interdisciplinary Team Meeting Date: 12/2/15

Interdisciplinary Evaluation Team (IDT): Forest Service personnel: Jessica Dunn (Recreation, Scenery, Designated Areas Specialist on FPR Core Team), Champe Green (Forest Planner), Sarah Browne (Assistant Planner), Cynthia Benedict (Tribal Liaison), Bob Heiar (District Recreation Staff), Natalie Heberling (GIS Specialist), Crystal Powell (Acting District Ranger), Aaron Johnson (District Forester), Kerry Wood (District Trails and Wilderness Program Manager), Elke Shuster (District Special Uses Program Manager) **Landscape Team members:** Chuck Shultz (NM Department of Game and Fish), Arturo Archuleta (NM Land Grant Council), Wayne Sandoval (San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant), John Barney (Bernalillo County Open Space), LM Garcia y Griego (Canon de Carnuel Land Grant/Acequia Madre Carnuel) **Facilitator:** Kathleen Bond

Forest Plan Revision Steering Committee Review and Decision Date: 1/21/16

Criterion 1- Apparent naturalness: The degree to which an area generally appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.

Question 1a. What is the composition of plant and animal communities? The purpose of this question is to determine if plant and animal communities appear substantially unnatural.

Considerations for 1a:

- How are concentrations of nonnative plants and/or animals distributed across the land?
 - **Narrative:** Landscape team member reports some nonnative plants in D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ10. D5_ADJ9 is mostly native plants. Public comment received that perennial pepperweed is very common in D5_ADJ10, reflecting the long-term presence of man’s work.
- Other (Describe the dominant vegetation types, associations, and plant and animal communities. Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7: predominately pinon-juniper plant association. D5_ADJ8: alderleaf mountain mahogany mix. D5_ADJ9: combination of sparsely vegetated and alderleaf. ADJ10: sparsely vegetated with a small pocket of pinon-juniper. Species diversity and composition appear natural to the average visitor. Landscape team member reports that deer, bear, bobcat, mountain lion have been spotted in the area. Topography is generally rugged, making human intervention difficult.

Question 1a Findings

D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ10 receive a **Moderate** finding, due to isolated spots of nonnative plants. D5_ADJ9 receives a **High** finding due to no known nonnative plant concentrations and general natural appearance of plant and animal communities.

Question 1b. What is the extent to which the area appears to reflect ecological conditions that would normally be associated with the area without human intervention?

Considerations for 1b:

- Vegetation restoration treatments (e.g. thinning) or timber harvest areas and distribution across the land (broadly dispersed vs. concentrated). This also includes associated railroad beds, skid trails, and logging decks of timber harvest areas
 - **Narrative:** Public comment received that no treatments are known to exist. No further information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Does the vegetation appear natural (consider elements, including but not limited to vegetation species composition and structure,¹ wildlife, soil, air, etc.)?
 - **Narrative:** Public comment received that this part of the mountain appears natural with scant vegetation and likely habitat for cougar, bear, and deer, as well as a known area for bird watching. Commenter continued that soil is rocky and dry, areas are mostly unforested except for juniper and oak, and air quality is likely natural due to being away from highway.
- Other:
 - **Narrative:** No further information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 1b Findings

These areas receive a **High** finding; areas appear natural and reflect ecological conditions that would normally be associated with area without human intervention.

Question 1c. What is the extent to which improvements² included in the area represent a departure from apparent naturalness?

Considerations for 1c:

- Consider the extent to which the improvements cause the appearance to depart from apparent naturalness to the area as a whole. Consider the presence and concentrations of all improvements listed below:
 - Appearance of airstrips, heliports, and/or landing zones. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
 - Appearance and concentration of linear travelways, including maintenance level 1 roads,³ system non-motorized and motorized trails, and known unauthorized routes (includes decommissioned, temporary, and user created). Consider length and spatial distribution (broadly interspersed vs. concentrated).
 - Appearance and concentration of fences and pipelines. Include miles of fencing or pipeline per square mile.
 - Appearance and concentrations of areas of mining activity, including exploration and prospecting, that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory.⁴ Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).

¹ Species composition is the number and proportion of species present. Structure refers to the size, density, and arrangement of plants.

² The use of the term "improvements" in this context is taken from the Forest Service Handbook, and means the evidence of past human activities in the area as a whole.

³ For a glossary of road terminology, please see the *Cibola National Forest Mountain Ranger Districts Assessment Report, Vol, II*, page 258.

⁴ See Appendix A for Substantially Noticeable criteria used in Phase 3 inventory, and Appendix B for results from the Phase 3 Inventory.

- Appearance of range or wildlife improvements that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
- Appearance of watershed treatment areas (such as contouring, diking, channeling) that were not eliminated in the Phase 3 inventory. Include size of area and description of disturbance (soils, vegetation).
- Appearance and concentration of other improvements (including but not limited to water tanks, aviation crash locations, wreckage sites, locations of cemeteries or gravesites, bombing or ordinance locations, and watershed analysis for proposed developments)
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
- **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7 has a system trail crossing the area, user created trails, and an old road bed. D5_ADJ8 contains one reported historic mine. D5_ADJ9: One known monitoring well occurs in with some barricades to keep vehicles out of the monitoring area along the arroyo. Public comment received that there are unauthorized routes near current wilderness boundary; confirmed by District specialists. One system trail crosses the area north to south. D5_ADJ10: District specialists report user created trails occur, accessing the eye of the Sandia.

Question 1c Findings

D5_ADJ8 receives a **High** finding, due to only one known improvement without much associated detracting from apparent naturalness, and little or no evidence of human activity detracting from apparent naturalness overall. D5_ADJ9 receives a **Moderate** finding due to some concentration and evidence of human activity within some areas (user created trail and barricaded monitoring well). D5_ADJ7 and D5_ADJ10 receive **Low** findings due to high concentration of human activity and evidence of disturbance in most areas (user-created trails and road bed).

Criterion 2- Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation: the degree to which the area has outstanding opportunities for solitude or for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Note: The word “or” means that an area only has to possess one or the other. The area does not have to possess outstanding opportunities for both elements, nor does it need to have outstanding opportunities on every acre.

Question 2a. Consider impacts that are pervasive and influence a visitor’s opportunity for solitude within the evaluated area.

Note: Factors to consider may include topography, presence of screening, distance from impacts, degree of permanent intrusions, and pervasive sights and sounds from outside the area.

Considerations for 2a:

- Describe the general topography of the area in context of sight, sound, and screening. Can a traveler see or hear evidence of civilization from within the area? Is the area quiet and free from motorized noise?
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7: District specialists report that the area is adjacent to Canyon Estates neighborhood; homes surround area and are very visible due to very little screening and noise is heard throughout. Trailhead and trail are directly adjacent. Interstate noise is prevalent. Three sides of the area are wilderness. User-created trail exists in area and is used frequently for Carlito Springs access. High opportunity to encounter other visitors in this small area. Concrete plant noise is constant and pervasive in the area. Landscape Team member confirms no opportunity for solitude. Public comment received that the general topography is steep and rocky, dry south-facing slopes. Commenter continues that the area is far enough away from the Interstate for quiet solitude, few visitors use this area except D5_ADJ9, and visitors are screened from view of Interstate (except D5_ADJ8, but this is a steep canyon) and views are south toward the Manzano Mountain Range.

- Additional public comment received that D5_ADJ7 is immediately adjacent to many houses and has a city park along with a private easement with structures; area is not free of city noise.
- D5_ADJ8: Public comment received that the general topography is steep and rocky, with dry south-facing slopes. Commenter continues that the area is far enough away from the Interstate for quiet solitude; few visitors use this area except D5_ADJ9, visitors are screened from view of Interstate (except D5_ADJ8, but this is a steep canyon), and views are south toward the Manzano Mountain Range. D5_ADJ8 is close to highway so motorized vehicle noise is likely. No known unauthorized trails are within the area, according to District specialists. Area is not screened from outside pervasive sights of human civilization (cement plant and freeway). Public comment received that this small area is a logical extension of Sandia Wilderness, because it is unvisited due to lack of access from adjacent freeway.
 - D5_ADJ9: Public comment received that the general topography is steep and rocky, dry south-facing slopes. Commenter continues that the area is far enough away from the Interstate for quiet solitude, few visitors use this area except ADJ9, and visitors are screened from view of Interstate (except D5_ADJ8, but this is a steep canyon) and views are south toward the Manzano Mountain Range. Forest Service specialists report that since area is adjacent to Tres Pistolas Open Space, there is some buffer from sounds of civilization, but topography starts to climb and vegetation is sparse so screening is not significant. District specialists report that this is a popular area for activity.
 - D5_ADJ10: Area is immediately adjacent to a major powerline and is loud with freeway noise. Entire western edge is a powerline without any screening. Area has beautiful vistas of the city. Area is heavily used by mountain bikers, runners, hikers, etc. Probable encounters with other visitors are high. Public comment received that area is within eyesight and hearing of I-40 and solitude is problematic.
 - Proximity to area of recreation developments and high use areas, private lands and associated infrastructure, non- Forest Service roads, and/or activities that impact opportunities for solitude. Consider effects of the area's adjacent, cherry-stemmed roads.⁵
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7: Trailhead and trail are directly adjacent. Southwestern corner adjacent to County Open Space (Carlito Springs), southeastern corner adjacent to Canyon Estates Neighborhood. Three sides are adjacent to existing wilderness. Road and visitor activity is concentrated in the small area, detracting from opportunities for solitude.
 - D5_ADJ8: Area is fragmented and located directly northwest of I-40 (highway is 700 ft away) and near commercial and residential developments, all of which impact opportunities for solitude. Public comment received that area is northwest of a mine or other industrial facility (cement plant). Public comment received that area is close to private land but due to rugged canyon, one would not notice this infrastructure.
 - D5_ADJ9: Area is adjacent to open space and wilderness and residential developments. Public comment that area is essentially used as a backyard for Monticello subdivision and the proximity to houses and extensive use by locals does not provide solitude. Additional public comment received that area is less than a ½ mile from I-40. District specialists and Landscape Team members report that some parts of the area do afford opportunities for solitude due to screening and distance from impacts.
 - D5_ADJ10: Entire western edge is a powerline (150K powerline) without any screening. Beautiful vistas of the city- evidence of civilization is pervasive. East edge borders existing wilderness. South edge borders Sandia Foothills Open Space. Public comment received that area is fairly close to highly

⁵ The term "cherry stemmed" road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase 1 Inventory process.

used Trail 365 in ABQ Open Space and solitude is problematic. Additional public comment received that area is not close to rec developments and high use areas.

- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment

Question 2a Findings

D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ10: These areas receive a **Low** finding, due to the unavoidable and pervasive presence and activities of humans and little opportunity to feel alone.

D5_ADJ9: This area receives a **Moderate** finding; signs of civilization are possible but feeling of being alone in some areas and experiencing solitude is also possible.

Question 2b. Consider the opportunity to engage in primitive-type or unconfined recreation activities that lead to a visitor's ability to feel a part of nature.

Note: Examples of primitive-type recreation activities include observing wildlife, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, floating, kayaking, cross-country skiing, camping, and enjoying nature. This question also relates to miles of fence information from Criterion 1, Question 1c, due to the potential for miles of fence to restrict unconfined recreation opportunities.

Considerations for 2b:

- Describe the types of primitive recreation activities in the area.
 - **Narrative:** All areas are popular hiking, horseback riding, photography, and wildlife viewing areas. Public comment received that all of the areas provide opportunities for wildlife viewing, bird watching, hiking, hunting, backpacking, and enjoying nature. Commenter continues that the areas are too dry for snow activities and not wet enough for fishing or water activities. District specialists and Landscape Team members report that D5_ADJ8 is not accessed by any system trails, but can be accessed informally from the existing wilderness. D5_ADJ9 is a popular bouldering location. D5_ADJ9 allows for a feeling to be a part of nature and experience primitive types of recreation activities.
- Describe other types of recreation activities in the area.
 - **Narrative:** Public comment received that mountain biking is popular in D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ9, and D5_ADJ10; District specialists and Landscape team members confirm it is popular in D5_ADJ10 but not prevalent in D5_ADJ7 and D5_ADJ9. ADJ10: District specialists also report trail events and trail running are popular here.
- Percent of area with semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.⁶
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7: 0% SPNM ROS Class, D5_ADJ8: 1.1% SPNM ROS Class, D5_ADJ9: 18.9 % SPNM ROS Class, D5_ADJ10: 22.9% SPNM ROS Class
- Percent of area with a semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class.
 - **Narrative:** 0% SPM ROS Class for all.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)

⁶ The Forest Service's Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) provides a framework which allows administration to manage and users to enjoy a variety of recreation environments. ROS is not a land classification system; it is a management objective, a way of describing and providing a variety of recreation opportunities. The ROS Inventory Existing Condition maps have been completed for the Forest, and the existing condition of semi-primitive non-motorized (SPNM) and semi-primitive motorized (SPM) ROS classes are being used as measures. SPNM ROS settings are areas characterized by a predominantly natural or natural-appearing environment, low interaction between users. Primitive activities occur in this setting, and include the following: viewing scenery, hiking, walking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, nature study, mountain climbing, swimming, fishing, etc. Motorized use is not permitted in SPNM ROS settings. SPM ROS class areas provide the same experience and setting as SPNM, but motorized use occurs in addition to primitive-types of recreation. Primitive ROS classes only exist on the Forest in the ROS Inventory Existing Condition within existing wilderness, so are not being used as a measure. These maps are only existing condition, and are subject to change based on desired recreation opportunity spectrum classes developed during the interdisciplinary process of Forest Plan Revision. Please refer to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Handbook and Primer for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/rosfieldguide/ros_primer_and_field_guide.htm

- **Narrative:** No further information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment

Question 2b Findings

D5_ADJ7 and D5_ADJ10: Areas receive a **Low** finding, due to few outstanding opportunities to engage in primitive recreation or feel a part of nature.

D5_ADJ8 and D5_ADJ9: Areas receive a **Moderate** finding, due to some opportunities to engage in primitive recreation and ability to feel a part of nature.

Criterion 3- Stand-alone area of less than 5,000 acres that is not adjacent to existing wilderness or administratively recommended wilderness: evaluate how an area less than 5,000 acres is of sufficient size to make its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition practicable.

Note: If an area on the Phase 3 Inventory maps is under 5,000 acres, it will be evaluated using the other Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 4. Therefore, there are no separate considerations for Criterion 3.

- **Narrative:** This area is adjacent to existing wilderness, so this criterion does not apply.

Criterion 4- Unique and outstanding qualities: the degree to which the area may contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Note: These values are not required to be present in an area for the area to be recommended for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, but their presence should be identified and evaluated where they exist.

Question 4a. Does the area contain rare plant or animal communities or rare ecosystems?

Note: Rare in this context is defined as local or regional.

Considerations for 4a:

- Presence of threatened, endangered, or rare species (from Natural Heritage database and other data sets as available).
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4a Findings

All areas receive a **Low** finding for rare plant or animal communities. No known populations are present.

Question 4b. Are there any outstanding landscape features such as waterfalls, mountains, viewpoints, waterbodies, or geologic features?

Considerations for 4b:

- Description of any unique geologic features in the area.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ9: District specialists report all grand geologic features including southern Sandias; boulder fields and other interesting rock formations. High scenic value. D5_ADJ8: District specialists report two canyons as well and unique features, but not outstanding. D5_ADJ10: Public comment received that there are no known geologic features in area.

- Presence of outstanding scenic features within the area or percent of area with distinctive scenic attractiveness class.⁷
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7: 0% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness class; D5_ADJ8: 80.6% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness class; D5_ADJ9: 17.4% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness class; D5_ADJ10: 100% Distinctive Scenic Attractiveness class
- Other (include any additional information related to the question above):
 - **Narrative:** No known information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4b Findings

D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, D5_ADJ10 receive **Low** findings, due to few to no outstanding landscape features. D5_ADJ9 receives a **Moderate** finding due to some outstanding geologic features in the area.

Question 4c. Are there historic and cultural resource sites in the area?

Considerations for 4c:

- Presence of structures, dwellings, and other relics of past occupation when they are considered part of the historical and cultural landscape of the area. Also consider potential historical railroad beds/berms associated with timber harvest areas from Criterion 1, Question 1b.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ8 contains a historic mine shown in geospatial data. D5_ADJ7: Forest Service archeologist reports a High with 20% surveyed. D5_ADJ8: Forest Service archeologist reports High with 8.7% surveyed. Land grant reports historic incidences of grazing in area. D5_ADJ9: Forest Service archeologist reports Unknown- no surveyed have been completed. District specialists report that visitors have found artifacts in area and area was used in the past for many cultural uses so there is potential for some historic and cultural resource sites. Land grant reports historic incidences of grazing in area. D5_ADJ10: Forest Service archeologist reports a High with 30% surveyed.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Note: (Confidentiality requirements with respect to cultural resource sites must be respected (25 U.S.C 3056)).

Question 4c Findings

D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ10 receive a **High** finding; area has several cultural or historic resource sites. D5_ADJ9 receives a **Moderate** finding due to potential for some historic and cultural resource sites.

Question 4d. Are there any research natural areas?

Considerations for 4d:

⁷ The Forest Service's Scenery Management System (SMS) provides the framework to effectively inventory, assess, and manage scenic resources. Scenic Attractiveness is a component of the SMS inventory, and is the primary indicator of the intrinsic scenic beauty based on commonly held perceptions of preferred scenery and landscape features. The three scenic attractiveness classes are: Class A-distinctive; Class B-typical; Class C-indistinctive. To determine these classes, the landscape elements of landform, vegetation, rocks, cultural features and water features are mapped using General Terrestrial Ecosystem Survey (GTES) information for the Forest, with District personnel input on areas of the Forest that were not picked up at the GTES scale. The Scenic Attractiveness map is based largely on existing landscape features. Refer to the Forest Service Scenery Management Handbook for more information: http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt/carrying_capacity/landscape_aesthetics_handbook_701_no_append.pdf

- Percent of area that is part of a research natural area.
 - **Narrative:** 0% research natural area.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** No additional information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4d Findings

This receives a **Low** finding, due to 0% of area containing research natural area.

Question 4e. Are there any high quality water resources or important watershed features?

Considerations for 4e:

- Presence and extent of high quality water resources in the area.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ8, D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ9 have a high watershed value due to known surface water from creek and drainages that feed into acequias downstream and replenishes aquifer and ground wells for Land Grant (outside the area boundaries). High riparian value occurs along water bodies in this area. No known features occur in D5_ADJ10.
- Other (Include any additional information related to the question above, including whether the water resource meets state water quality standards)
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

Question 4e Findings

D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ9 receive a **High** finding due to important watershed features including associated drainages (presence of several or many high quality water resources).
D5_ADJ10 receives a **Low** finding due to area having few to no high quality water resources.

Criterion 5- Management: the degree to which the area may be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics.

Question 5a. Can the area be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics?

Considerations for 5a:

- Presence and extent of legally established rights or uses within the area. (e.g. active mining claims, grazing allotments, easements, water rights, acequias)
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ10 has a powerline following the western boundary and the easement may occur somewhat within the area boundaries, where motorized maintenance occurs. Public comment received that motorized maintenance does occur somewhat within the area boundaries due to overlapping of easement with area boundaries. For D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ9, no information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.
- Presence and extent of any specific Federal or State laws that may be relevant to availability of the area for wilderness or the ability to manage the area to protect wilderness characteristics (including but not limited to designated or proposed critical habitat).
 - **Narrative:** No information provided by geospatial information, District staff and specialists, or public comment.

- Presence and extent of non-Federal land and access in the area⁸
 - **Narrative:** All areas are adjacent to areas managed by a variability of entities; Open Space areas, existing wilderness, residential. D5_ADJ7 is adjacent to residential and municipal lands, existing wilderness, and a small portion is adjacent to Carlitos Open Space. D5_ADJ8 is adjacent to existing wilderness and I-40. D5_ADJ8: adjacent to area is a City Hawk-watch Open Space site that occurs southeast of Tres Pistolas Open Space. D5-ADJ9 is adjacent to residential and land grant lands, and all of southern boundary is adjacent to City Open Space. D5_ADJ10 is adjacent to Sandia Foothills Open Space and existing wilderness. Access is primarily from city owned trailheads or resident access.
- Describe management of adjacent lands.
 - **Narrative:** All areas are adjacent to open space areas managed by the city or county and are also adjacent to federal existing wilderness. D5_ADJ9 has adjacency to land grant lands. D5_ADJ8: adjacent to area is a City Hawk-watch Open Space site that occurs southeast of Tres Pistolas Open Space in one small portion; remainder is bordered by Forest Service land and existing wilderness. Site is managed for preservation. Easement for electrical company exists on the western boundary of D5_ADJ10.
- Describe presence and extent of cultural and traditional uses of the area (e.g. shrines, ceremonial use, etc.)
 - **Narrative:** Forest Service specialists report that known traditional uses within the area do not conflict with ability to manage the area to maintain its wilderness characteristics.
- Presence and extent of wildland urban interface in the area. Include acres if possible.
 - **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7: 0% WUI, D5_ADJ8: 96% WUI, D5_ADJ9: 7.6% WUI, D5_ADJ10: 0% WUI
- Describe any other management activities or restrictions within in the area (e.g. upcoming management decisions).
 - **Narrative:** No imminent projects or activities are scheduled for D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ9. D5_ADJ10 contains proposals for guided mountain biking outfitter and guides have been accepted (are pending and imminent), and about to be published in the District Schedule of Proposed Actions. Signed permits for these proposals are expected in Spring of 2016.
- Describe existence and extent of motorized and mechanized uses within the area (trails, routes, special activities).
 - **Narrative:** Some mountain biking occurs informally on user created trails and on system trails in D5_ADJ9, and public comment received that mountain biking occurs in D5_ADJ8, D5_ADJ9, and D5_ADJ10. District confirms that mountain biking does not occur in D5_ADJ8, as it is inaccessible except through the existing wilderness. Public comment received from Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) electrical company that motorized access may occur along powerline easement on western boundary of D5_ ADJ10.
- Presence and extent of special use permits and authorizations within the area.
 - **Narrative:** There is a USGS monitoring well located somewhere in D5_ADJ9, but type and frequency of maintenance and access needs for this well is not known. No current permits and special use authorizations exist for this area currently. D5_ADJ10 contains proposals for guided mountain biking outfitter and guides that have been accepted (are pending and imminent), and about to be published in the District Schedule of Proposed Actions. Signed permits for these proposals are expected in Spring of 2016.
- Presence and extent of “cherry stemmed”⁹ roads or other linear features.

⁸ This consideration, in addition to “Describe management of adjacent lands” and “Presence and extent of ‘cherry stemmed’ roads or other linear features” informs the consideration of shape and configuration as outlined in FSH 1909.12 Chapter 70

- **Narrative:** D5_ADJ7 and D5_ADJ9 both have a small portion of the area containing a cherry-stemmed road with parking lot developments.
- Other (Include presence of Inventoried Roadless Areas and any additional information related to the question above)
 - **Narrative:** Team discussion: For D5_ADJ7, the majority of the team concludes that area receives a High finding for considerations listed under manageability, due to ability to manage for wilderness characteristics high throughout the area. Some team members find a Moderate, due to the cherry-stemmed trailhead. D5_ADJ9 receives a Moderate finding, however IDT recommends that with a boundary modification to remove the sliver surrounded by other managed areas, the area would receive a High finding.

Question 5a Findings

D5_ADJ7: Area receives a **Moderate**, due to cherry-stemmed trailhead encompassing a high proportion of the area.

D5_ADJ8: Area receives a **Moderate** finding, due to majority of area within wildland urban interface but no other manageability factors affecting ability to manage for wilderness characteristics.

D5_ADJ9 receives two findings for geography: a **High** finding for majority of area, with a **Moderate** finding for southern sliver surrounded by other managed areas.

D5_ADJ10 receives a **Low** finding, due to the powerline easement on western boundary, current extent of mountain biking use, imminent outfitter and guide proposals to allow mountain biking, and adjacency to surrounding areas that are managed to allow for mountain biking.

IDT Finding and Preferred Proposal Discussion (How should this area be managed? Include any suggested alternatives), 12/2/15: D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, D5_ADJ10: Finding: The team recommends that D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and ADJ_10 do not have wilderness character and should not be managed as wilderness.

Preferred Proposal: Manage these area for multiple uses, potentially with an emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking) and resource protection. D5_ADJ8 and D5_ADJ10 should also be managed to emphasize watershed protection, due to proximity to Tijeras Canyon.

D5_ADJ9: Finding: The team recommends that D5_ADJ9 does have wilderness character. Preferred Proposal: It is managed close to wilderness currently, as an informal wilderness portal. Team proposes that this area is included in an alternative as wilderness with the boundary adjusted to exclude small sliver (as well as a northern buffer) west of Canon de Carnuel. The team proposes that this area is included in another alternative as a wilderness portal (without wilderness designation) with the boundary adjusted to exclude small sliver (as well as a northern buffer) west of Canon de Carnuel, with primitive types of recreation and watershed protection the focus

Steering Committee Decision, 1/21/16:

D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and D5_ADJ_10

Finding:
D5_ADJ7, D5_ADJ8, and ADJ_10 do not have wilderness character and should not be managed as wilderness.

Preferred Proposal: Manage these area for other multiple uses, potentially with an emphasis on recreation (including mountain biking) and resource protection. D5_ADJ8 and D5_ADJ10 should also be managed to emphasize watershed protection, due to proximity to Tijeras Canyon.

⁹ The term "cherry stemmed" road refers to a road removed from the inventory using the 30 meter (98.4 feet) road buffer screening from the Phase I Inventory process.

D5_ADJ9:Finding:

D5_ADJ9 does have wilderness character in the majority (southwestern sliver of area does not).

Preferred Proposal:

Manage as a wilderness portal (without wilderness designation) with the boundary adjusted to exclude small sliver (as well as a northern buffer) west of Canon de Carnuel, with primitive types of recreation and watershed protection the focus. It is managed close to wilderness currently, as an informal wilderness portal.

Alternative:

Manage area as potential wilderness with the boundary adjusted to exclude small sliver and adjusted to provide a northern buffer west of Canon de Carnuel.

Wilderness Evaluation Findings and Summary Table

Area ID:	D5_ADJ7 IDT Findings 12/2/15	D5_ADJ7 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	D5_ADJ8 IDT Findings 12/2/15	D5_ADJ8 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	D5_ADJ9 IDT Findings 12/2/15	D5_ADJ9 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	D5_ADJ10 IDT Findings 12/2/15	D5_ADJ10 Steering Committee Decision 1/21/16	
Criterion Question*	1a	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
	1b	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
	1c	Low	Low	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
	2a	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
	2b	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	4a	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	4b	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
	4c	High	High	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	4d	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	4e	High	High	High	High	High	High	Low	Low
	5a	High/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High/ Moderate	High/ Moderate	Low	Low
Summary	Required: 1H, 1H/M, 1M,3L Supplemental: 2H, 3L	Required: 1H, 2M, 3L Supplemental: 2H, 3L	Required: 2H, 2M, 2L Supplemental: 2H, 3L	Required: 2H, 3M, 1L Supplemental: 2H,3L	Required: 2H, 1H/M,3M Supplemental: 1H, 2M, 2L	Required:2H ,1H/M,3M Supplemental: 1H,2M,2L	Required: 1H, 1M, 4L Supplemental: 1H,4L	Required: 1H, 1M, 4L Supplemental: 1H,4L	
Evaluation Finding	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	

Preferred Proposal	Multiple use; Recreation; Mountain biking	Multiple use; Recreation; Mountain biking	Multiple use; Recreation; Mountain biking; Watershed protection	Multiple use; Recreation; Mountain biking; Watershed protection	Wilderness portal primitive recreation watershed protection	Wilderness portal primitive recreation watershed protection	Multiple use; Recreation; Mountain biking; Watershed protection	Multiple use; Recreation; Mountain biking; Watershed protection
Alternatives for Area	---	---	---	---	Potential Wilderness; adjust boundaries to exclude sliver next to Carnuel LG	Potential Wilderness; adjust boundaries to exclude sliver next to Carnuel LG	--	---

* Required criteria are bold—Criterion 1: Apparent Naturalness, Criterion 2: Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive Type of Recreation, and Criterion 3: Manageability. Criterion 3: Areas under 5,000 acres does not have separate considerations, and is evaluated using the other criteria. Criterion 4: Unique and outstanding values is an optional/supplemental criteria that is not required to be present in an area.

Steering Committee Review Notes, 1/21/2016:

STC decided on a Moderate finding for D5_ADJ8 2b.
 STC decided on a Moderate finding for D5_ADJ7 5a.
 STC decided on a High/Moderate finding for D5_ADJ9 5a.
 STC concurred with all other findings.

STC edited language in preferred proposals and findings.