

Note: The current river segments choices are by-passing environmental impact and economical studies.

Partial Text from Original Letter regarding guidance in scoping for W&SR choices.

November 8, 2002

Marcia Andre, Supervisor

Gila National Forest

3005 E. Camino del Bosque

Silver City, New Mexico 88061-7863

RE: Wild and Scenic River Interim Measures

Dear Ms. Andre,

These comments are being submitted by the Arizona Counties, Apache, Cochise, Gila, Graham,

Greenlee and Navajo and the New Mexico Counties, Catron, Chaves, Eddy, Harding, Hidalgo, Lincoln, Luna,

Otero, Rio Arriba, Sierra, and Socorro along with representation from the timber, farming, livestock, mining,

small business, sportsman and outfitter industries as members of the Coalition of Arizona/ New Mexico

Counties (Coalition). Our representation currently exceeds 592,923 in combined county populations.

Background

The Coalition proposes that the act of selecting the streams as eligible constitutes an action deserving of

analysis in the EA. You have the information in the draft EA, yet we are not to comment. You have even made

the statement, "the decision to be made does not include what rivers or river segments are eligible....."

However, page 1 of Appendix A is clearly labeled, "Eligibility Findings."

Scoping and Public Participation

On February 22, 2002 and April 1, 2002 the Coalition submitted scoping comments on the proposal to

incorporate national guidance for management of Wild and Scenic Rivers into the Gila National Forest Plan.

We identified the following issues in that scoping process:

1. Effects on recreation and how that would affect the counties tax base.
2. Effects on livestock grazing and how that would affect the counties tax base.
3. Effects on private lands and how that would affect the counties tax base.
4. Consideration of consistency of proposed action with the counties land and water use plans and ordinances.
5. Effects on land management actions to improve riparian areas.
6. Effects on water supplies and diversions.

The Coalition is concerned that the decision has been predetermined without sufficient analysis

Sincerely,

Coalition of Arizona/New Mexico Counties

P.O. Box 125

Glenwood, New Mexico 88039

(505) 539-2709