



**U.S. Forest Service
Cibola National Forest and
National Grasslands**

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The final Decision Notice has been signed for the Zuni Mountain Trails Project

Albuquerque, NM, May 17, 2017 – Alvin Whitehair, District Ranger from the Mt. Taylor Ranger District of Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands, signed the final Decision Notice (DN) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Zuni Mountain Trails project earlier this week.

The Environmental Analysis (EA), draft DN, and FONSI were released in March, which began a 45-day objection period. Those who had previously submitted comments about the project had the opportunity to raise concerns about the EA, DN, or FONSI. No objections were received, so the project can now move from the planning phase to implementation.

“The fact that there were no objections is evidence of the successful collaborative efforts that our partners and cooperating agencies engaged in since this project began more than 20 years ago,” Whitehair stated. “I want to thank the many people who have remained persistent and unwavering in this journey to make the project a reality - the Counties of Cibola and McKinley, and my entire staff – especially Arnold Wilson who has been involved from Day 1,” he added.

“Through this collaborative effort, we will ensure that outdoor enthusiasts from near and far can experience all that this special area has to offer,” **said U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich**. “I am proud to support the communities in Cibola and McKinley Counties who have worked for years to make the Zuni Mountain Trails project a reality. This new trail system will boost outdoor recreation and economic development in western New Mexico. I welcome this announcement and thank all who helped make it possible.”

This decision will add approximately 186 miles of new trails to the existing system. The trails will be managed for multiple uses including horseback riding, mountain biking, and hiking. The trails are designed to protect soil and watershed resources and provide additional dispersed recreation opportunities. Other improvements will include the construction of five new trailheads and the redesign of the existing Quartz Hill parking area, mountain bike cattle guards, and cowboy gates. Unauthorized routes will be rehabilitated.

For additional information about the Zuni Mountain Trails project, or to get involved with the Zuni Mountain Collaborative, please contact Alvin Whitehair at 505-287-8833.

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News Release

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