



Taos Mountain Bike Association
Create, Protect, Enhance

May 20, 2019

Re: Miranda Canyon Proposed Closure

Dear Miranda Canyon Collaborative Group and Carson National Forest Camino Real District Ranger,

On behalf of the members and supporters of Taos Mountain Bike Association (TMBA) we are writing to express our objection to the proposal to close Miranda Canyon area of the Carson National Forest to mountain biking, yet leave it open to hiking and horseback riding.

We understand that dumping, illegal wood gathering and property destruction are among the major concerns in the Miranda Canyon area. However, we submit that relatively few (if any) individuals are engaged in these activities while riding mountain bikes.

Further, multiple studies on the ecological impacts of mountain biking have found no statistically significant difference in impact between hiking and biking – both have been shown to have less resource impact than horseback riding.

For these reasons, we object to the arbitrary recommendation to ban mountain bikes while allowing access to other equivalent non-motorized user groups.

Mountain bikers have been recreating in Miranda Canyon for many years, utilizing the the roads and OHV tracks that criss-cross the area. We would be happy to help the Forest Service identify appropriate routes that could easily be rehabilitated to single-track, creating quality recreation experiences for multiple user groups.

Also, TMBA's membership and supporters are ready to assist the Carson National Forest with cleanup and management of Miranda Canyon. Whether you need volunteers to help haul off dump sites, or ambassadors to educate the public on responsible trail usage, TMBA has a large constituency ready to engage.

With that in mind, we respectfully ask that mountain bikes be allowed to maintain the same equal access to Miranda Canyon as other non-motorized groups.

Further, we request that TMBA be included in any future discussion regarding Miranda Canyon – or other matters affecting mountain bike access to our National Forest.

Finally, please let us know how we can best assist you in stewarding responsible recreation on public lands.

Thank you for your time; we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Taos Mountain Bike Association Board
/Jessica Caskey/
Jessica Caskey, Chair