

BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF NEW MEXICO

ACTION ALERT

KEEP BICYCLES OUT OF THE WILDERNESS

OPPOSE H.R. 1349

This alert follows up on the alert sent out by BCHA yesterday evening, which many of you have already received.

If enacted, H.R. 1349 would amend the 1964 Wilderness Act to permit the use of mountain bikes in Wilderness Areas. Currently the Act prohibits the use of all mechanized forms of transportation in Wilderness Areas. H.R. 1349 would change this.

BCHNM members know that bikes in the wilderness are a bad idea. Fast riding bicyclists, horses, and wilderness solitude do not mix. We must tell Congress this before they do something stupid.

The House Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee will hold a hearing on H.R. 1349 on December 7th at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Congressman Pearce sits on this subcommittee.

PLEASE do the following by no later than December 6th – sooner if you can.

1. Call Congressman Pearce at 202-225-2365. This is the best way to get your message to him before the hearing. He can be e-mailed via his webpage if you are from his district (see contact information below) but calling would be better. Use the talking points below if you are unsure what to say. If you are not in his district, call anyway. Remember he is running for governor.
2. If you live in one of the other districts, please call or e-mail Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham or Congressman Ben R. Lujan. Their contact information is below.
3. Encourage all your back country riding friends – BCH members and nonmembers alike – to call or e-mail. Capitol security measures make snail mail much too slow.

Talking Points:

. Bikes in Wilderness would forever alter a key aspect of what Congress intended to be the wilderness experience—the relatively slow, contemplative mode of travel that can be provided on foot, on horseback or via canoe.

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- Wilderness trails were not designed for mountain bikes, which are capable of rapid speeds. Combined with their often silent approach, bikes would create significant safety hazards for horsemen especially on steep, narrow or winding trails.
- Bikes in Wilderness would represent a serious safety hazard for persons on horseback or leading a pack string, when a bike startling the least-trained horse or mule among the pack string could bolt and/or endanger the entire party.
- The Wilderness Act's promise of solitude or a primitive and unconfined recreational experience would be lost if horsemen were forced to constantly scan the trail ahead and over their shoulder for rapidly approaching bikes.

Congressional contact information:

Steve Pearce – 202-225-2365; <https://pearce.house.gov/contact-me/email-me> (webpage where you can e-mail him if you are from his district).

Michelle Lujan Grisham – 202-225-6316; <https://lujangrisham.house.gov/contact> (webpage to send her an e-mail if you are from her district).

Ben R. Lujan – 202-225-6190; <https://lujan.house.gov/email-me>/<https://lujan.house.gov/email-me/> (webpage to send him an e-mail if you are from his district).

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