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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

NATIONAL BACK COUNTRY BYWAY NOTICE OF DEDICATION

✓ Socorro

I, hereby, approve the Tinajas road and associated scenic corridor as shown on the accompanying map as a component of the National Back Country Byway System within the State of New Mexico. This road is classified as a Type II, Back Country Byway.

Date: JUN 20 1989 Approved: /s/ Norman P. Duquette
for State Director, New Mexico

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Tinajas road is located approximately 5 miles east of Socorro in central New Mexico. The route is 25 miles in length.

The road traverses an unusual desert landscape consisting of narrow incised canyons which drain a rough broken landscape of sedimentary rocks. The area is relatively undeveloped and also characterized by colorful escarpments and arroyos, interesting geologic features, and outstanding scenic vistas. There are Indian pictographs on some of the canyon walls. There are also sinkhole features from which the area gets its name. Because of this diversity of values, the area has been identified as an area of critical environmental concern.

BACKCOUNTRY BYWAY

Description of Proposal

1. Statement of Significance: The proposed backcountry byway traverses an unusual desert landscape situated east of the Rio Grande Valley. The area is relatively undeveloped and characterized by colorful escarpments and arroyos, rugged canyons, interesting geologic features, and outstanding scenic vistas. The area is primarily classified in a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II with A and B scenic quality ratings. The unusual Tinajas (Arroyo del Tajo) Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) is adjacent to the proposed byway. The strong contrasts in color between the lush green Rio Grande riparian vegetation and the reds, browns, and grays of the adjacent desert landscape make up the primary scenic values of the area.

2. Factors: Approximately a Type II road requiring high clearance vehicles in places. The road is a maintained dirt road which can be negotiated with a two wheel drive high clearance vehicle without undue difficulty.

3. Mileage:

BLM State Private

21

4. Location: Approximately 5 miles east of Socorro, New Mexico.

5. Relationship To Other Significant Tourist/Recreation Attraction:

A. Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge and San Pasqual Wilderness Area are 15 miles south.

B. Withington and Apache Kid USFS Wilderness Areas are 25 miles southwest.

C. Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge is 8 miles north.

D. La Joya State Wildlife Refuge is 20 miles north.

E. Four BLM Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are located within 5-10 miles of the proposed byway. The byway actually divides two WSAs.

6. Population Proximity:

	<u>Socorro</u>	<u>Las Cruces</u>	<u>Albuquerque</u>	<u>Santa Fe</u>
Time:	15 minutes	3 hours	1½ hours	2½ hours
Population:	10,000	75,000	500,000	50,000

7. Proximity To Major Tourist Routes: The proposed byway is located about 5 miles east of I-25 which is heavily utilized by tourists who are traveling to the Gila, Albuquerque, Taos, and Santa Fe for a variety of reasons. Also about 5 miles from Highway 380.

8. Existing Support Facilities: Some signing exists along the road, but it is primarily regulatory. Interpretive signing does exist at the Tinajas ACEC. Prehistoric pictographs are interpreted at this site.

9. Existing Designations: Scenic State and County Roads unknown for Socorro and Catron County.

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