



## Friends of the Nambé Badlands

### Please Provide Your Input to the BLM for Trails in the Nambé Badlands

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Taos Field Office is preparing a [Travel Management Plan \(TMP\) and Environmental Assessment \(EA\)](#) for the Nambé Badlands and [Sombrillo Area of Critical Environmental Concern](#) (ACEC). The TMP and EA are required by law under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

In 2011, members of the [Santa Fe Fat Tire Society](#) (SFFTS) began [constructing](#) (shoveling and cutting trees) mountain bike trails in the [Sombrillo ACEC](#), violating the BLM's [Federal Lands Policy and Management Act](#), [National Historic Preservation Act](#), and [NEPA](#). As responsible mountain bikers we urged the BLM to curb these illegal activities. In 2012, the BLM held a meeting declaring that all trail construction cease. We, along with BLM and SFFTS, reclaimed the illegal trails. BLM closed the illegal trails. Please see the [historical timeline](#) for details and photographs.

Between [2012-2018](#) these illegal trails were resurrected and posted the internet. In addition, more miles of new [illegal trails](#) were constructed during this period.

The rate of illegal trail construction accelerated between 2019-2021. Illegal trails remain on social media and bike club [websites](#). In 2021 illegal trail signs were erected, which BLM Law Enforcement then demanded the bike club(s) remove.

We are working with new leadership at the Taos BLM Office to promote responsible mountain biking and resource protection. The BLM recently gave another cease-and-desist order to illegal trail builders and cited some individuals. The BLM has ongoing investigations of illegal activities in the Nambé Badlands.

#### Position Statement by the Friends of Nambé Badlands

- 1) All post-2011 trails in the [Sombrillo ACEC](#) should be closed. The illegal trail segment numbers are: { (2P,4P); (1984,18P); (73); (77); (24P); (19P); (1985); (1987); (22P); (23P); (8P,9P) }. Please see the hyperlinked segment numbers above and this [webpage](#) for maps and details.
- 2) All pre-2011 existing and proposed trails need to be evaluated for ecological, paleontological, and archeological impacts. The [Sombrillo ACEC](#) is a highly erodible landscape. The ACEC was [designated](#) to protect significant paleontological sites and cultural resources. If the [Sombrillo ACEC](#) cannot be protected from increased mountain biking use it should be closed to biking.
- 3) Further, mountain bike trail development on the east side of NM 503 must consider the other users of that area, in particular equestrians. The granitic soil in this area is less erodible than the [Sombrillo ACEC](#) and is more robust to mountain biking. However, trail designs should avoid parallel trails that encourage short-cutting between trails.

We look forward to working closely with you and the BLM Taos Field Office to protect the resources of this area.

Please [e-mail](#) the BLM Taos Field Office to express your concerns and suggestions.