



Fall Greetings from the Wilderness Ranger...2010

My name is Lorraine Cuevas and I'm the Pecos Wilderness Ranger for the Espanola RD.

With such a large area to cover, I may only see a few of you on the trails. By leaving you a note, I hope to reach more of you. Let's call it Virtual Rangering just for fun. Please feel free to contact me at the district office, 505-753-7331 or write to me; my e-mail is [ljcuevas@fs.fed.us](mailto:ljcuevas@fs.fed.us). The office address is: PO Box 3307 Espanola NM 87533.

The Winsor Trail is by far the most popular, thus the most crowded. If you want a true wilderness experience, try exploring some of the other trails within the wilderness. You will likely not see another soul during your trip. We are in the process of posting trail updates/conditions. Check out our website for the current conditions of where you want to hike. <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfe/districts/espanola/index.html>.

Autumn is upon us and the winter season is fast approaching. The leaves' transformation to their fall colors is a good excuse to get out and hike. Even though the monsoon season is over, the possibility of lightening still exists, so start your hikes early, especially if you plan to climb any peaks. They can be a dangerous place to be with the cooling temperatures and increasing chances of snow.

Many people enjoy hiking with their dogs, and it's nice to see them enjoying the trails too, especially when they are leashed. A leashed dog is safer for other users, as well as for the dog. There are bears in the wilderness, and a dog is no match for a bear. The bears are not normally a problem, but can become a nuisance if they get used to eating human food. Please be vigilant about keeping a clean camp and using bear canisters or hanging your food/toiletries.

When camping, try to use an existing campsite. This prevents numerous campsites from developing in an area and helps to maintain the wilderness atmosphere. Also try to avoid building campfires; they leave an ugly scar. Cooking with a stove is easy and efficient, and carrying a candle to burn in the evening is an easy alternative for light. If you must have a campfire, be sure to check for fire restrictions before your trip.

Pooping in the woods is never a pleasant topic, but an important one. Finding another person's "toilet" is not a nice experience. Be sure to dig a cathole 6-8" deep and cover it when you are done. Unfortunately, some animals like to dig up our waste, but they have no interest in the paper and leave it strewn about. That's why it's important to pack it out, as well as any other trash you accumulate.

All of these suggestions will help keep our wilderness wild and help others to have a wonderful wilderness experience by leaving no trace of your visit behind.

Many thanks go out to the volunteers who help us maintain and clear the trails. It's a big job that we cannot do alone. If you are interested in helping out, call our Volunteer Coordinator, Jennifer Sublett at 505-753-7331.

Have a wonderful autumn and winter while experiencing the great outdoors!

Please have respect and kindness for this great place...travel safely and enjoy...and hope to see you on the trail.

LC ☺

