



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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IN REPLY REFER TO:
1610 (010)

Dear Reader:

This document, "The El Malpais Plan," is the culmination of the planning process for management of El Malpais National Conservation Area (NCA) and certain adjoining lands. The Albuquerque Field Office completed the formal land-use planning process for the El Malpais Plan Area in September 2001 with the approval of the Record of Decision for the *Proposed El Malpais Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (September 2000). The Approved El Malpais Plan amends the *Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan* (RMP), the land management plan for the entire Albuquerque Field Office. The Approved Plan also included activity-level decisions for management of the resources of the Plan Area. The Albuquerque Field Office has prepared this "stand-alone plan"—The El Malpais Plan—to consolidate all decisions and management guidance currently applicable to the El Malpais Plan Area. The majority of the decisions and guidance are taken from the Approved El Malpais Plan. However, since RMP decisions applicable to the El Malpais Plan Area continue to be valid except as they were amended by the Approved Plan, decisions and guidance from the *Rio Puerco RMP* and its amendments which are applicable to the El Malpais Plan Area are included in this stand-alone El Malpais Plan. In addition, activity-level decisions from the Approved Plan and activity-level decisions tiered from the Rio Puerco RMP are also included in this stand-alone plan.

The El Malpais Plan is arranged as twenty-one separate management plans for the various resources managed by the Albuquerque Field Office in the El Malpais Plan Area. It has been prepared as a resource to be utilized by the AFO resource specialists who will implement the Plan. Those decisions and guidance that apply to more than one resource are duplicated in each resource section. Thus, each of the twenty-one resource plan sections is complete on its own to make implementation of the Plan by Field Office resource specialists as straightforward as possible. An understanding that there is duplication from section to section should help resource specialists and interested members of the public utilize the El Malpais Plan. It should also help members of the public with specific resource interests to be able to focus on the specific resource plan sections applicable to their interests.

We appreciate your interest in the planning process that has culminated in The El Malpais Plan, and hope that you will continue to work with us as we begin to implement the Plan. Implementation of the El Malpais Plan will conserve public resources while allowing for their use and enjoyment by the American people.

Sincerely,

(Signed by Edwin Singleton)

Edwin J. Singleton
Field Manager