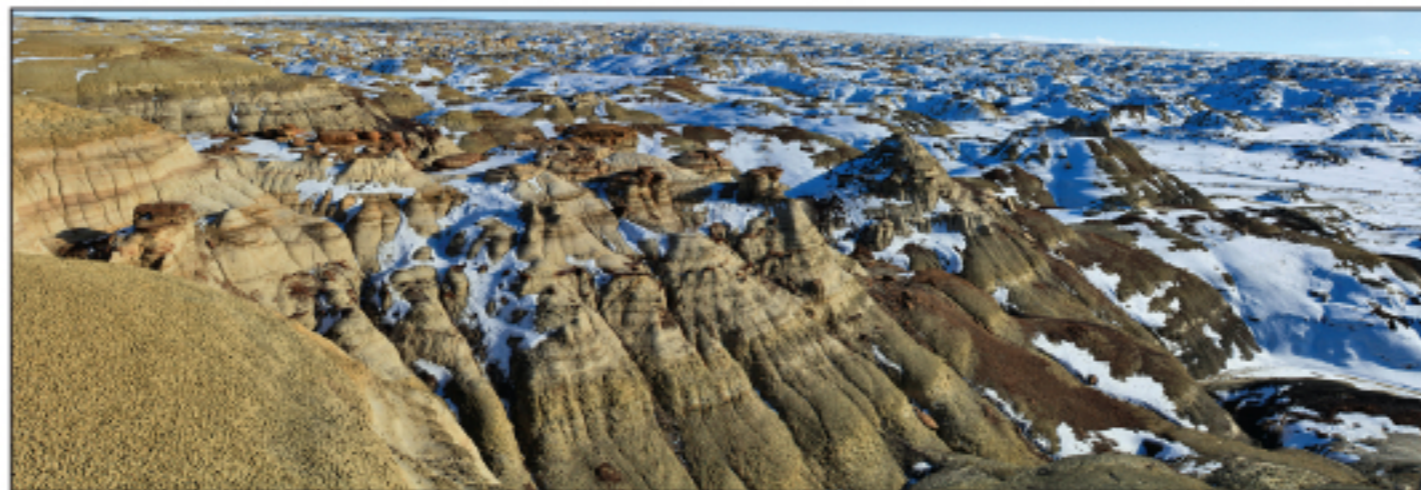




In the heart of Arizona's Sonoran Desert, Organpipe Cactus Wilderness encompasses 312,600 acres.



An other-worldly area, New Mexico's Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness protects 41,170 acres of bizarrely eroded badlands.



Another New Mexico gem, the Chama River Canyon Wilderness entails 50,300 acres of dense pine forests and grasslands.

## Into the Wild

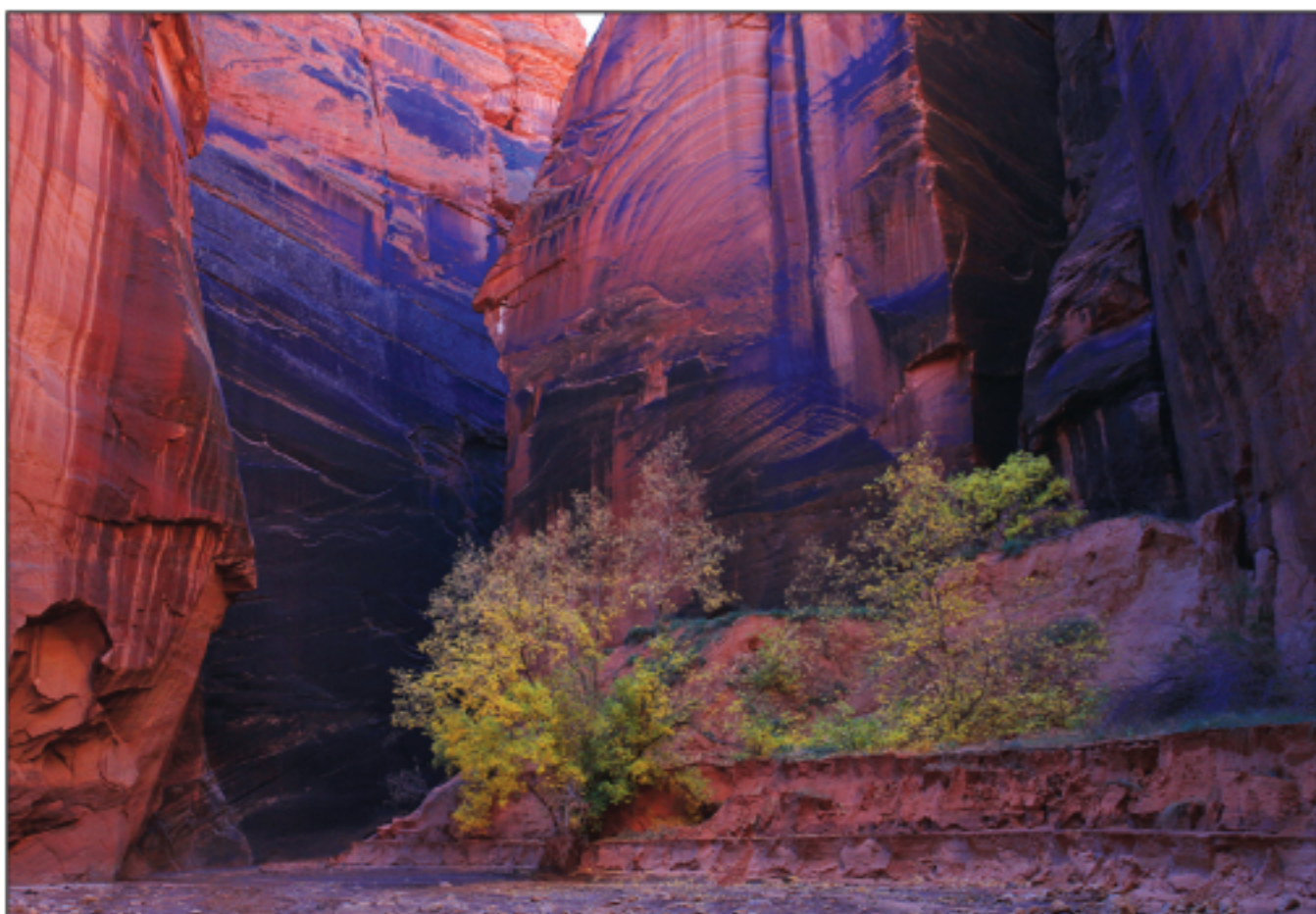
by Steve Egnore

"We need wilderness whether or not we ever set foot in it. We need a refuge even though we may never need to set foot in it. We need the possibility of escape as surely as we need hope; without it the life of the cities would drive all men into crime or drugs or psychoanalysis.

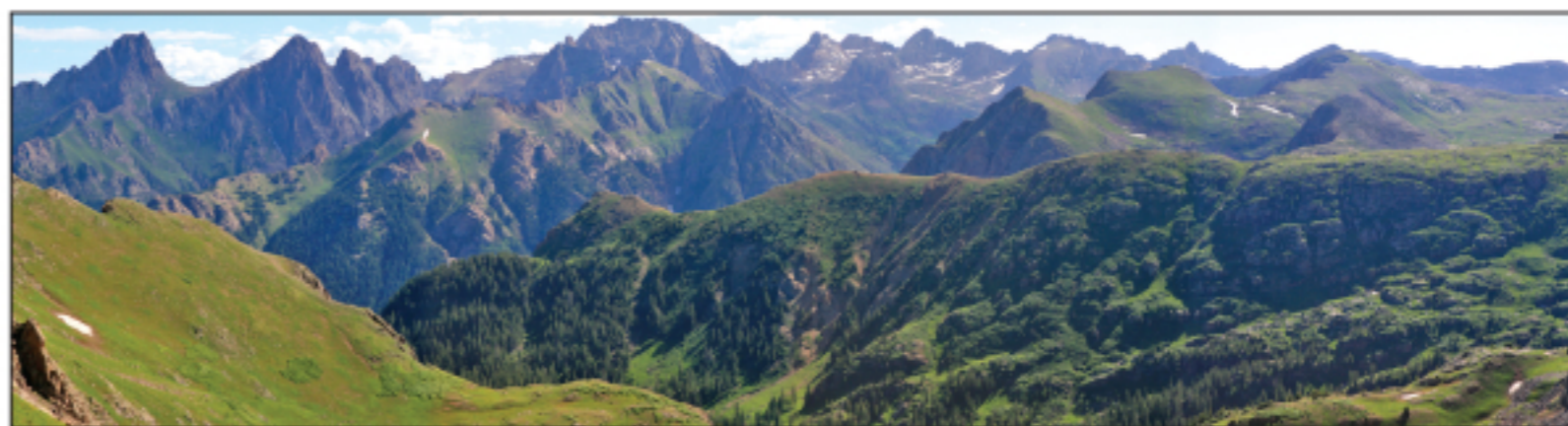
"Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit, and as vital to our lives as water and good bread. A civilization which destroys what little remains of the wild, the spare, the original, is cutting itself off from its origins and betraying the principle of civilization itself." so wrote

the venerable Edward Abbey in his classic tome *Desert Solitaire*.

2014 marks the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon B. Johnson's signing of the Wilderness Act, providing a legal framework in which to protect certain public lands where human impact has been minimal. To date, this includes 756 individual wilderness areas and more than 109 million acres of land throughout the country. In Durango and throughout the West, we are lucky to have a diverse spectrum of protected areas, from remarkable cultural heritage sites to unrivaled mountain and desert beauty.



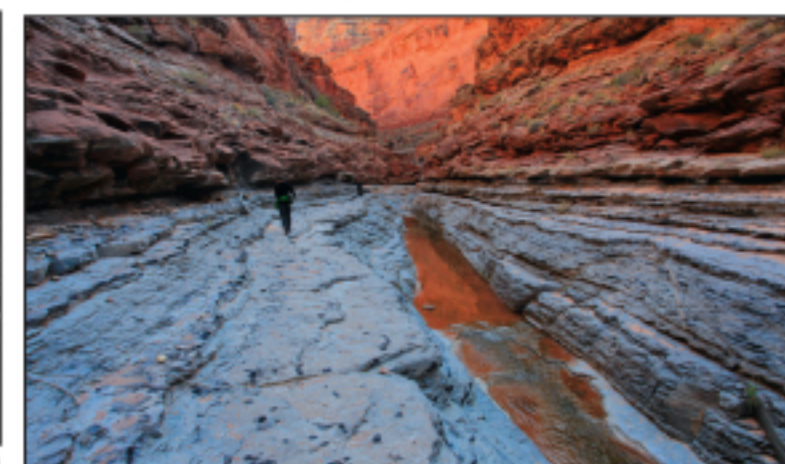
The 89,400-acre Paria Canyon-Vermillion Cliffs Wilderness crosses the Utah/Arizona border and is home to the longest known slot canyon in the world, among scores of other natural wonders.



Colorado's stunning Weminuche Wilderness is the largest wilderness area in the state at 488,340 acres.



The sheer magnitude of Idaho's Frank Church Wilderness is rivaled only by California's Death Valley, and protects a staggering 2.36 million acres.



The remote Dark Canyon Wilderness in Utah offers 47,116 acres of stunning canyon country.