

PECOS RIVER CANYONS COMPLEX

Nominated ACEC: Pecos Rivers Canyons Complex ACEC

Nominated by: BLM

Size: 4,100 acres

Scenic Value

Relevance

The nominated ACEC contains Pierce and Cedar Canyons, 30- to 40-foot limestone and sandstone canyons, which serve as intermittent tributaries to the Pecos River. These canyons provide dramatic transitions in color and form as the tan, loamy upland soils give way to the reddish, sandy soils of the canyon walls and bottom. The canyon walls and other fragile erosional features provide dramatic contrast to the flat plateaus of the uplands. The canyons vary in width from 200 feet to more than 1,000 feet. At the widest points, one can view the rows of plateaus that make up the canyon walls on the opposite side. Green shrubs dot the landscape of both the uplands and canyons.

Importance

- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.

Natural System or Process

Relevance

The canyons may provide vegetative habitats for Tharp's Blue Star (*Amsonia tharpii*), a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service species of concern, BLM special status species, and State of New Mexico Endangered species. The Tharp's Blue Star is a perennial suffrutescent herb with stems from a woody rootstock and pale-blue or greenish-white flowers.

Importance

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.