

Bijou Basin Info

In the early 1800's the Bijou Basin was the location of a stage stop. Later in the 1870's, when the railroad was being built, a community of approximately 430 people settled in the basin. Fremont Fort, a prominent rock bluff on the eastern edge of the basin has been used by many as a landmark.

The Bijou Basin is a distinctive landscape that contains many of the features that characterize El Paso County's natural and cultural heritage. The basin itself is a well-watered grassland nestled in an enclosed valley surrounded by pine ridges and interesting landforms such as Fremont Fort. In many places the pines feather into the grassland or extend into the basin along the drainages, creating an interesting mosaic of vegetation.

The historic Bijou Springs Ranch is also located in the lower portion of the Basin along a branch of Bijou Creek. The historic ranch buildings and irrigated meadows speak to the county's early settlement and heritage as a ranching economy. While some subdivision activity has begun on the west side of the valley at the fringe of the forest, the east side of the valley is untouched by development.

In addition to its outstanding scenic values, the basin includes important wildlife habitat as defined by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and conservation sites delineated by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. The heritage program sites are noted for containing significant examples of ponderosa pine woodland and a rich understory that includes big bluestem. Peregrine falcons have also been sited within the basin along with daily deer and antelope sightings.