

Taos Community Conservation
Plan Final Report:
Online Only Appendices 1-5

Appendix 1: References and Planning Context

Appendix 1: Taos County Community Conservation Plan References

Planning Context: Related Plans and Reports

2016 Taos County Comprehensive Plan Update: Goals, Vision, Strategies. The 2004 Taos County Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2016 to respond to current conditions of the county and to reflect the needs of the residents. This updated plan created goals for each of the following elements: land and water; economic development; housing; transportation; infrastructure/community facilities; and hazards mitigation.

Taos Valley Watershed Coalition/TNC Rio Grande Water Fund. The Rio Grande Water Fund is an initiative to help protect watersheds in northern New Mexico, as tributaries of the Rio Grande provide water to more than half of New Mexico's population. The watersheds are at risk from fires and floods, threatening water supplies for Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Native American Pueblos. This Fund is to generate funding for a sustainable program to restore the watersheds, including thinning forests, restoring streams, and rehabilitating areas after flooding.

Taos Regional Water Plan. Accepted in 2008, The New Mexico Office of the State Engineer/Interstate Stream Commission created a Taos Regional Water Plan that incorporates most of Taos County, with a main focus on the Rio Grande. The objective of this plan is to ensure the region is protect water resources while ensuring Taos is prepared to meet future water demands. Issues facing the Taos Region include: water rights, drought vulnerability, infrastructure needs, water quality, public education, protection of water rights, planning for growth, watershed protection, and data gaps.

2014 Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area Management Plan. The Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area covers 10,000 square miles, encompassing eight Pueblos and the Jicarilla Apache Nation. Within this area, there are many natural, cultural, and historic resources. The management plan was created with the mission to sustain the communities, heritages, languages, cultures, traditions, and environment of Northern New Mexico through partnerships, education and interpretation.

2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219) / Carson National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Revision. In 1986, the Carson National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, with a current revision underway to incorporate new conditions, best available science, and now public issues. The 2012 planning rule has now encouraged a revision of this plan and includes three distinct phases: 1) assessment of the current conditions and trends of forest resources and multiple uses, 2) development of a revised plan, and 3) monitoring and implementation of the final approved plan.

2009 Taos County CWPP Update Living with Wildfire. This document is in accordance with the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, created by the New Mexico Wildfire Planning Task Force and Taos County. Goals of this document include planning around ensuring a safe and sustainable water quality and quantity with proper management.

Town of Taos Community Economic Strategic Foundational Plan and Community Economic Development Element of the Taos Comprehensive Plan (Updated 2013). This plan was intended to be a foundational plan to help build economic development and community development in the region. The

document includes an analysis discussing development in measures of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). Within this plan lists areas of focus and priority projects for the region.

Vision 2020. Created in 1999, Vision 2020 is a document discussing goals around land use, agricultural and open space preservation, economic development, community design, infrastructure, housing, and community facilities. The document is currently being rewritten to incorporate a zoning plan.

Taos County Growth Management Plan Phase II: Taos County Neighborhood Land Use Plans. This document defines the types of uses allowed (permit or special use), discussing development standards and district designations for the following areas: Canon Neighborhood, Hondo Mesa Neighborhood, Las Colonias West Mesa neighborhood, Latir/Versylvia Neighborhood, Lower Des Montes Neighborhood, Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood, Taos Canyon Neighborhood, and Irrigate (phrasing?) Agricultural Land and Acequias.

Town of Taos Bicycle Master Plan. The Taos Bicycle Master Plan was signed and adopted in 2009 to help promote alternative transportation in Taos County. Implementation of this plan would include 68 miles of bike lanes and 14 miles of bike routes. This plan emerged from the Taos Trail Plan, adopted in 2002, and the Town of Taos Vision 2020 Master Plan, adopted from 1999. The Town of Taos Bicycle Master Plan includes planning policies that incorporate the Enchanted Circle.

References from Taos County Community Conservation Plan Final Report

Taos County Overview

Taos Pueblo. <http://taos.org/art/historic-landmarks?/item/1/Taos-Pueblo>. Accessed April 2017.

Population and Housing

U.S. Census Bureau. 2010. Resident Population and Net Change for Taos County.
http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long_PST120214.htm Accessed April 2017.

Community Health

Holy Cross Hospital. 2013. Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan.
http://taoshospital.org/uploads/files/HCH-CHNA_Report_5-15-13.pdf. Accessed April 2017.

Economy

Bruce Krasnow. 2015. Report: Tourists added record \$6.1B to New Mexico economy in 2014. The Taos News. October 2015. <http://www.taosnews.com/stories/report-tourists-added-record-61b-to-new-mexico-economy-in-2014,29314>. Accessed April 2017

Headwaters Economics. A Summary Profile: Taos County.
<https://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/economic-profile-system/>. Accessed April 2017.

Land Use and Ownership

- Congress.Gov. 113th Congress. 2014. S.776 – Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Act. December 2014.
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/776>. Accessed April 2017.
- J.R. Logan. 2012. Troubled Taos, torn apart by a battle over historic Hispano Land Grants. High Country News. August 2012. <https://www.hcn.org/issues/44.14/troubled-taos-torn-apart-by-a-battle-over-hispano-land-grants>. Accessed April 2017.
- New Mexico Commission of Public Records. State Records Center and Archives: Land Grants.
<http://www.nmcpr.state.nm.us/archives/research-resources/land-grants/>. Accessed October 22, 2015.
- Riograndedelnorte.org. Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. <http://www.riograndedelnorte.org/>. Accessed April 2017.
- Ron Gardiner. 2009. Taos County CWPP Update Living With Wildfire.
<http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/FireMgt/documents/TaosCounty2009CWPPUpdate.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.
- Taos County Comprehensive Plan. October 2004.

Water, Acequias, and Water Quality

- A. L. Benson. 2004. New Mexico Geological Society. Groundwater Geology of Taos County.
https://nmgs.nmt.edu/publications/guidebooks/downloads/55/55_p0420_p0432.pdf. Accessed April 2017.
- Daniel B. Stevens and Associates, Inc. Taos Acequias Executive Summary.
<http://taosacequias.org/plans/TRWP/TaosExecutiveSummary.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.
- Daniel B. Stevens and Associates, Inc. 2008. Taos Regional Water Plan. April 2008.
http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/RWP/Regions/07_Taos/2008/0a-Vol1-FrontMatter.pdf. Accessed April 2017.
- Jose A. Rivera. 2014. A Brief Acequia History. The Green Fire Times. January 2014.
http://taosacequias.org/pressroom/2014/GrenFireTimes_140101c.pdf. Accessed April 2017.
- Paula Garcia. 2014. New Mexico Acequia Association – 25 Years and Counting. The Green Fire Times. January 2014. http://taosacequias.org/pressroom/2014/GrenFireTimes_140101d.pdf. Accessed April 2017.
- Taos Acequias Executive Summary. Acequia Map. <http://taosacequias.org/Documents/AcequiaMap.jpg>. Accessed October 2015.
- Taos County Comprehensive Plan. October 2004.
- Taos County Comprehensive Plan Update 2016: Vision, Goals, and Strategies. November 2016.
<http://www.communitybydesign.biz/Taos%20County%20Draft%20Comprehensive%20Plan.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.
- Taos County Historical Society. <http://taoscountyhistoricalsociety.org/taoshistory.html>. Accessed April 2017.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Taos County Watersheds. August 2015.
http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/county.cfm?fips_code=35055. Accessed April 2017.

Wildlife

Report County Species List for Taos. Biota Information System of New Mexico. New Mexico Game and Fish. <http://www.bison-m.org/speciesreports.aspx>. Accessed April 2017.

Scheider, K., Taos for the Birds, accessed October 19, 2015,

http://taos.org/html-assets/file/TAOS%20Birding%20Itinerary_online.pdf.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Environmental Conservation Online System, Species by County Report. http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/reports/species-by-current-range-county?fips=35055. Accessed October 2015.

Recreation

Bruce Krasnow. 2015. Report: Tourists added record \$6.1B to New Mexico economy in 2014. The Taos News. October 2015. <http://www.taosnews.com/stories/report-tourists-added-record-61b-to-new-mexico-economy-in-2014,29314>. Accessed April 2017.

Congress.Gov. 113th Congress. 2014. S.776 – Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Act. December 2014. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/776>. Accessed April 2017.

National Forest Foundation. Carson National Forest. <https://www.nationalforests.org/our-forests/find-a-forest/carson-national-forest>. Accessed April 2017.

Taos County Historical Society. <http://taoscountyhistoricalsociety.org/taohistory.html>. Accessed April 2017.

The Town of Taos. Parks Division. <http://www.taosgov.com/recreation/parks.php>. Accessed April 2017.

US Department of Agriculture. Carson National Forest Recreation. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recmain/carson/recreation>. Accessed April 2017.

US Department of Agriculture. 2015. Carson National Forest's Needs to Change Management Direction of Its Existing 1986 Forest Plan. US Forest Service. September 2015. https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd475213.pdf. Accessed April 2017.

US Department of Agriculture. Carson National Forest Wheeler Peak Wilderness. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/carson/recreation/?cid=stelprdb5350403>. Accessed April 2017.

Agricultural Lands

Aileen O’Catherine. 2017. Acequias Bring Water, and With It, Life. About Travel. February 2017. http://albuquerque.about.com/od/New_Mexico_Culture/ss/Acequias-And-Ditches.htm. Accessed April 2017.

A. L. Benson. 2004. New Mexico Geological Society. Groundwater Geology of Taos County. https://nmgs.nmt.edu/publications/guidebooks/downloads/55/55_p0420_p0432.pdf. Accessed April 2017.

Daniel B. Stevens and Associates, Inc. Taos Acequias Executive Summary. <http://taosacequias.org/plans/TRWP/TaosExecutiveSummary.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.

Daniel B. Stevens and Associates, Inc. 2008. Taos Regional Water Plan. April 2008. http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/RWP/Regions/07_Taos/2008/0a-Vol1-FrontMatter.pdf. Accessed April 2017.

- J.R. Logan. 2012. Troubled Taos, torn apart by a battle over historic Hispano Land Grants. High Country News. August 2012. <https://www.hcn.org/issues/44.14/troubled-taos-torn-apart-by-a-battle-over-historic-hispano-land-grants>. Accessed April 2017.
- J.R. Logan. 2014. Losing ag status could affect Taos County water rights. The Taos News. April 2014. http://www.taosnews.com/news/article_e9230f34-bb64-11e3-9b57-001a4bcf887a.html. Accessed April 2017.
- J.R. Logan. 2014. Losing ag status hits old Taos Families. The Taos News. January 2014. <http://www.taosnews.com/stories/losing-ag-status-hits-old-taos-families,1349>. Accessed April 2017.
- Jose A. Rivera. 2014. A Brief Acequia History. The Green Fire Times. January 2014. http://taosacequias.org/pressroom/2014/GrenFireTimes_140101c.pdf. Accessed April 2017.
- New Mexico State University. 2015. The Economic Base of Taos County, New Mexico, Prepared by The Office of Policy Analysis at Arrowhead center, New Mexico State University. July 2015. <http://arrowheadcenter.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Taos-County-2013.pdf/>. Accessed April 2017.
- New Mexico Commission of Public Records. State Records Center and Archives: Land Grants. <http://www.nmcpr.state.nm.us/archives/research-resources/land-grants/>. Accessed October 22, 2015.
- Paula Garcia. 2014. New Mexico Acequia Association – 25 Years and Counting. The Green Fire Times. January 2014. http://taosacequias.org/pressroom/2014/GrenFireTimes_140101d.pdf. Accessed April 2017.
- Regional Review: New Mexico Agriculture. Quarterly labor market information across New Mexico. Volume 4, Issue 3; Summer 2014. https://www.jobs.state.nm.us/admin/gsipub/htmlarea/uploads/Regional_Review_Summer_2014.pdf.
- Riograndedelnorte.org. Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. <http://www.riograndedelnorte.org/>. Accessed April 2017.
- Ron Gardiner. 2009. Taos County CWPP Update Living With Wildfire. <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/FireMgt/documents/TaosCounty2009CWPPUpdate.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.
- USDA Census of Agriculture. 2012. Taos County, New Mexico. https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/New_Mexico/cp35055.pdf. Accessed October 2015.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Taos County Watersheds. August 2015. http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/county.cfm?fips_code=35055. Accessed April 2017.
- Taos Acequias Executive Summary. Acequia Map. <http://taosacequias.org/Documents/AcequiaMap.jpg>. Accessed October 2015.
- Taos County Comprehensive Plan. October 2004.
- Taos County Comprehensive Plan Update 2016: Vision, Goals, and Strategies. November 2016. <http://www.communitybydesign.biz/Taos%20County%20Draft%20Comprehensive%20Plan.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.

Taos County Historical Society. <http://taoscountyhistoricalsociety.org/taoshistory.html>. Accessed April 2017.

Taos Pueblo. <http://taos.org/art/historic-landmarks?/item/1/Taos-Pueblo>. Accessed April 2017.

Taos Pueblo. Welcome to Taos Pueblo. <http://pages.towson.edu/brenda/newmexico/taos.htm>. Accessed October 22, 2015.

Appendix 2: Conservation Finance Report

CONSERVATION FINANCE FEASIBILITY STUDY | SEPTEMBER 2017

TOWN OF TAOS AND TAOS COUNTY, NEW MEXICO



THE
TRUST
FOR
PUBLIC
LAND

Funding for this report was generously provided by
The LOR Foundation.

Copyright © September 2017, The Trust for Public Land.
All rights reserved.
Cover photo: Todd Barbee.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Executive Summary	5
Choosing a Local Funding Strategy	7
Local Conservation Financing Options	9
General Obligation Bonds	9
Property Tax	11
Gross Receipts/Sales Tax.....	13
Lodging Tax	15
Special Districts	16
Election Analysis	18
State Conservation Funding Programs	19
New Mexico Transportation Alternatives Program	19
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish	19
New Mexico State Parks	19
New Mexico Natural Heritage Conservation Act	20
Federal Funding Opportunities	21
State Directed Federal Grants	21
Direct Federal Acquisition	25
Urban Park and Trail Federal Grants	27
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).....	29
National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).....	30
Appendices	33
Appendix A: New Mexico Conservation Finance Ballot Measures	34
Appendix B: Further Information About Property Taxes.....	36
Appendix C: Bernalillo County Property Tax Ballot Language	37

INTRODUCTION

The Trust for Public Land is a national nonprofit land conservation organization working to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being. The Trust for Public Land helps conserve land for parks, greenways, recreation areas, watersheds and wilderness. To help public agencies or land trusts acquire land, the Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance program assists communities in identifying and securing public financing. The Trust for Public Land offers technical assistance to elected officials, public agencies and community groups to design, pass, and implement public funding measures that reflect popular priorities.

Helping communities to secure dedicated conservation funding is often the tipping point that can lead to deeper ecological responsibility, including more prudent land use, better managed growth, and the increased protection of natural landscapes. To stimulate engagement across jurisdictions and constituencies, the Trust for Public Land has historically found effective partnerships among a broad spectrum of players from the environmental left to the fiscally conservative right and recognizes that it is important to consistently explore new tools, such as economic benefits research, that can encourage and strengthen the willpower of the voters to seek dedicated conservation funds. This focused, up-front investment pays dividends over the long-term in voter-supported funding that is dedicated to conservation.

Since 1996, the Trust for Public Land has been involved in nearly 500 successful ballot measures and twenty successful legislative campaigns that have created more than \$57 billion in new funding for parks, restoration, and land conservation. Voters have approved 81 percent of the ballot measures assisted by the Trust for Public Land. In New Mexico, the Trust for Public Land has supported ten local conservation finance ballot measures since 1996. All of these measures passed, generating nearly \$94.5 million for parks and land conservation purposes. The Trust for Public Land most recently helped Bernalillo County pass a 15-year property tax levy of \$0.20 per \$1,000 taxable value for open space and acquisition and maintenance of other natural areas in November 2014. The measure was approved with 72 percent support.

The Trust for Public Land has undertaken a study of potential public funding options to support the strategic planning process to conserve land and water and improve parks and recreational opportunities in the Town of Taos and Taos County, New Mexico. This research provides a stand-alone, fact-based reference document that can be used to evaluate financing mechanisms from an objective vantage point.^{1,2}

¹ The contents of this report are based on the best available information at the time of research and drafting, February-June 2016, with updated revenue estimates as of September 2017.

² This feasibility study is not a legal document and should not be relied upon for legal purposes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many opportunities exist to conserve land in the Town of Taos and Taos County and to provide recreation amenities for residents and visitors. At the heart of the most successful conservation funding programs is a substantial, long-term, dedicated source of local revenue. With a reliable source of funds, local governments can establish meaningful conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources and meet important goals and values. Local governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure and leverage funding from the federal government and attract other local and state government or private philanthropic partners.

In New Mexico, a range of public financing options have been authorized to fund parks and recreation, such as the property tax, local gross receipts/sales taxes, and general obligation bonds. However, many of these mechanisms are limited to capital expenses and may not be used to support regular operations. The mechanism utilized most often in the state for operations is the property tax. Because of the need to leverage funds, this report describes specific local funding opportunities, state funding sources, and federal programs that may be available for land acquisition, parks, and trails in the Town of Taos and Taos County.

This report begins by analyzing local public funding tools available to the Town of Taos and Taos County, including revenue generating capacity and estimated costs to taxpayers where relevant. These tools are summarized below.

- **General Obligation Bonds:** Bonds are the most utilized tool for parks and conservation purposes by local governments in New Mexico, accounting for 12 of 19 measures on the ballot since 1996. The Town of Taos could issue a bond for parks and open space purposes. A \$2 million bond would cost the average household about \$34 per year. Taos County could also issue a bond for open space. A \$9 million bond, for example, would cost the average household about \$33 each year. Voter approval is required.

Bonds provide several advantages over pay-as-you-go funding, including the opportunity to make significant land acquisitions in the near term, presumably before the price of land increases. However, this mechanism is not always appropriate or feasible (e.g. typically bond proceeds may not be used for stewardship purposes).

- **Property Tax:** In New Mexico, one jurisdiction, Bernalillo County, has dedicated a property tax to parks and open space. New Mexico statutes limit the maximum allowable mill levy for county general purposes to \$11.85 per \$1,000 of taxable value, and for municipal general purposes the limit is \$7.65 per \$1,000 of taxable value. Both the Town of Taos and Taos County have capacity to levy a tax for open space under these caps.

For example, the Town of Taos could increase the mill levy by 0.5 per \$1,000 assessed value, which would generate more than \$161,000 per year at a cost of \$37 to the average homeowner. Similarly, Taos County could increase the mill levy by 0.5 per \$1,000 assessed value, which would generate more than \$716,000 per year at a cost of \$36 to the average homeowner.

- **Gross Receipts/Sales Tax (GRT):** The State of New Mexico has a statewide GRT and Compensating tax rate of 5.125 percent. New Mexico's municipalities and counties are authorized to impose local option gross receipts taxes for select purposes. The combined gross receipts tax rate in the Town of Taos is currently 8.5 percent. The Town of Taos has

capacity to levy an additional 0.125 percent of municipal gross receipts tax, and this tax can be dedicated to parks and open space. Based on budgeted revenue of \$4.3 million from the 1.375 percent municipal gross receipts tax for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, an additional 0.125 percent could be expected to generate about \$394,000 annually.

The Town of Taos may levy a capital outlay gross receipts tax in increments of 0.0625 percent, up to 0.25 percent. Based on budgeted revenue of \$4.3 million from the 1.375 percent municipal gross receipts tax for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, a capital outlay gross receipts tax of 0.25 percent could be expected to generate about \$788,000 annually. The town could also start with smaller increments.

The combined gross receipts tax rate in the unincorporated areas of Taos County is currently 7.3125 percent. The county currently imposes the maximum level of capital outlay gross receipts tax. Taos County could amend the capital outlay gross receipts tax ordinance to dedicate a portion to parks and open space, such as 0.0625 percent. Revenue from the 0.25 percent capital outlay gross receipts tax for the 2016-2017 fiscal year was just over \$131,000. Thus dedicating one-quarter, or 0.0625 percent, to parks and open space could be estimated to generate nearly \$33,000 each year.

- **Lodging Tax:** Proceeds from a municipal or county lodging tax may only be used for tourist-related events, facilities, and attractions. The Town of Taos currently imposes the maximum 5 percent lodging tax. Estimated revenue for the 2017-2018 fiscal year was \$1,037,922. Taos could use a portion of this revenue to acquire land for parks, so long as the parks are intended to be used or visited by tourists.

Taos County also imposes the maximum 5 percent lodging tax in the unincorporated areas of the county. Estimated revenue for the 2017-2018 fiscal year was \$285,350. The county could use a portion of this revenue for park land acquisition, provided that the parks are intended to be used or visited by tourists.

- **Special Districts:** The Town of Taos and Taos County have the option of establishing a special district. Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) are authorized to finance various infrastructure and improvements, including streets, trails, parks, public buildings, libraries, cultural facilities, and equipment and related costs of operation and administration. Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDDs) may use tax increment financing to pay for non-vehicular trails, recreational facilities, pedestrian malls, and library/educational/cultural facilities. Infrastructure Development Zones (IDZs) may provide a variety of services, including trails and areas for pedestrian, equestrian, bicycle or other non-motor vehicle use for travel, pedestrian malls, parks, recreational facilities and open space areas for the use of members of the public for entertainment, assembly and recreation, including programming events for the community and public

Finally, the report provides a brief summary of numerous state and federal conservation programs that could potentially be leveraged to support projects within the Town of Taos and Taos County.

CHOOSING A LOCAL FUNDING STRATEGY

At the heart of successful conservation funding programs is a substantial, long-term, dedicated source of local revenue. With a reliable source of funds, local governments can establish meaningful conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources and meet important goals. Local governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure and leverage funding from the federal government and attract other local and state government or private philanthropic partners.

Generally, there are three broad-based types of revenue sources available to local governments to pay for parks and land conservation: discretionary annual spending (i.e. budget appropriation), creation of dedicated funding streams such as voter-approved special taxes, and the issuance of bonds. The financing options utilized by a community will depend on a variety of factors such as taxing capacity, budgetary resources, voter preferences, and political will. While most local governments can create funding for park and recreation through their budgetary process, this either happens infrequently or does not yield adequate funding.

In the Trust for Public Land's experience, local governments that create funding via the budget process provide substantially less funding than those that create funding through ballot measures. As elected officials go through the process of making critical budgetary decisions, funding for land conservation lags behind other public purposes and well behind what voters would support. It is often quite difficult to raise taxes without an indisputable public mandate for the intended purpose.

The power of conservation finance ballot measures is they provide a tangible means to implement a local government's vision. With their own funding, local governments are better positioned to secure scarce funding from state or the federal government or private philanthropic partners. Having a predictable funding source empowers the city, county, or special district to establish long-term conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources, are geographically distributed, and otherwise meet important community goals and values.

Nationwide, a range of public financing options has been utilized by local jurisdictions to fund parks and open space, including general obligation bonds, the local sales tax, and the property tax. Less frequently used mechanisms have included real estate transfer taxes, impact fees, and income taxes. The ability of local governments and special districts to establish dedicated funding sources depends upon state enabling authority.

Conservation finance ballot measures are not right for every local government or they might not be the best approach at the moment. Budget appropriations and other revenue mechanisms that can be used by the local government, such as developer incentives, may serve as short-term funding options, while parks and conservation proponents develop a strategy and cultivate support for longer-term financing options.

The State of New Mexico provides local governments with several options for funding capital purchases, improvements, and operations for parks, trails and open space purposes including general obligation bonds, the gross receipts tax, and the property tax. Each of these funding mechanisms requires approval by the electorate. These funding mechanisms have enjoyed widespread support in communities throughout the state.

General obligation bonds are the most commonly used finance mechanism in New Mexico to fund county and municipal parks and open space programs. For the most part, however, bond funds may

be spent only for capital facilities and improvements and may not be expended for regular maintenance. Municipalities may issue general obligation bonds for the purpose of building, beautifying, and improving public parks within or without the municipal boundary, but not beyond the planning and platting jurisdiction of the municipality, as well as for acquiring land and equipment for recreational purposes.³ On the other hand, counties may only issue general obligation bonds for acquiring necessary real estate for open space, open space trails, and related areas and facilities.⁴ Thus this feasibility report also explores other potential financing mechanisms, as well as the development of an industrial development zone.

Since 1996, voters across New Mexico have voiced their strong support for parks and land conservation by approving more than \$283 million for these purposes. The rate of approval for local ballot measures voted upon in New Mexico is 100 percent (17 out of 17 measures approved), compared to the nation-wide approval rate of 76 percent. See Appendix A for a list and map of New Mexico measures.

U.S. Local Conservation Finance Ballot Measures (1996-2016)					
Finance Mechanism	Number of Measures	Pass	% Pass	Total Funds Approved	Conservation Funds Approved
Bond	846	698	83%	\$18,021,541,888	\$10,160,761,965
Income tax	85	60	71%	\$596,259,012	\$397,359,012
Property tax	1032	729	71%	\$12,073,760,701	\$7,299,572,641
Real estate trans. tax	43	37	86%	\$1,118,225,154	\$1,112,573,686
Sales tax	176	132	75%	\$48,082,948,920	\$7,933,520,615
Other	81	54	67%	\$2,451,849,210	\$829,236,949
Total	2263	1710	76%	\$82,344,584,885	\$27,733,024,868
New Mexico Local Conservation Finance Ballot Measures (1996-2016)					
Finance Mechanism	Number of Measures	Pass	% Pass	Total Funds Approved	Conservation Funds Approved
Sales tax	3	3	100%	\$70,700,000	\$50,300,000
Property tax	3	3	100%	\$73,804,640	\$60,845,202
Bond	11	11	100%	\$139,077,000	\$45,176,000
Total	17	17	100%	\$283,581,640	\$156,321,202
<i>Source: The Trust for Public Land, LandVote database.</i>					

³ NMSA 3-30-5

⁴ NM Constitution, Article IX, Sec. 10

LOCAL CONSERVATION FINANCING OPTIONS

This section of the report presents a range of funding mechanisms for local support of park acquisition in the Town of Taos and Taos County. Specifically, the following pages provide information related to the use of general obligation bonds, property taxes, gross receipts/sales taxes, and the development of an industrial development zone.

General Obligation Bonds

To raise funds for capital improvements such as land acquisition, municipalities and counties in New Mexico may issue general obligation bonds. General obligation bonds are secured by the full faith and credit of the local property taxing authority. The governing body of any municipality or county may issue bonds to acquire lands for open space and recreational purposes.⁵ General obligation bonds that are to be paid from property taxes require voter approval at an election. Generally, bond proceeds are limited to capital projects and may not be used for operations and maintenance purposes. However, municipalities may use general obligation bonds to build, beautify, and improve public parks within or without the municipal boundary, but not beyond the planning and platting jurisdiction of the municipality.⁶ All municipal and county bonds are limited to 20 years maturity.⁷ New Mexico limits general obligation bonding capacity to 4 percent of assessed value.

There is no limit on the rate or amount of property tax that can be levied or collected to pay the interest on and the principal of general obligation bonds, as the interest and principal become due.⁸ New Mexico does limit property taxes imposed by cities and counties based on a percentage of market value. The state also caps the maximum allowable mill levy for general purposes and imposes a yield control. However, taxes assessed for voter approved bonded debt are not subject to these restrictions.

General Obligation Bonds in the Town of Taos

As of June 30, 2016, Town of Taos had total long-term obligations outstanding of \$15,181,197. The Town of Taos does not have any outstanding general obligation bonds. The table below demonstrates the town's general obligation bonding capacity under the statutory limits. As of June 30, 2016, the Town's investment in the New Mexico Local Government Investment Pool was rated as AAAM by Standard & Poor's. Additionally, the Town has investments held in U.S. Treasury Money Market Mutual Funds, which were rated Aaa by Moody's.⁹ The town does not have a rating for general obligation debt.

Town of Taos GO Bonding Capacity	
Assessed Value	\$322,798,330
4% of Assessed Value	\$12,911,933
Less Outstanding GO Bonds	\$0
Remaining Capacity	\$12,911,933

⁵ NMSA 3-30-5, NM Constitution, Article IX Sec. 10

⁶ NMSA 3-30-5

⁷ NMSA 6-15-3

⁸ NMSA 3-30-9

⁹ Town of Taos 2016 CAFR

The Town of Taos could issue a general obligation bond payable by property taxes for open space and recreational purposes. The current operating property tax rate, which includes debt service, is 2.573 mills for residential property, and 4.225 mills for non-residential property.¹⁰ The table below demonstrates what various bond amounts for parks and open space would cost the average household in the Town of Taos. For example, a \$2 million bond would cost the average household about \$34 each year. Voter approval is required.

Town of Taos Bond Financing Costs			
Bond Issue	Annual Debt Service	Mill Increase	Annual cost per household*
\$1,000,000	\$73,582	0.2279	\$17
\$1,500,000	\$110,373	0.3419	\$25
\$2,000,000	\$147,164	0.4559	\$34
\$2,500,000	\$183,954	0.5699	\$42
\$3,000,000	\$220,745	0.6838	\$50
<i>Assumes a 20-year bond issue at 4.0% Interest Rate</i>			
<i>Total Taxable Value= \$322,798,330</i>			
<i>*Average taxable value = \$73,581</i>			

The Trust for Public Land’s bond cost calculations provide an estimate of debt service, tax increase, and cost to the average homeowner in the community of potential bond issuances for parks and conservation. Assumptions include the following: the entire debt amount is issued in the first year and payments are equal until maturity; 20-year maturity; and 4 percent interest rate. Property tax estimates assume that the county would raise property taxes to pay the debt service on bonds; however, other revenue streams may be used. The cost per household represents the average annual impact of increased property taxes levied to pay the debt service. The estimates do not take into account growth in the tax base due to new construction and annexation over the life of the bonds. The jurisdiction’s officials, financial advisors, bond counsel and underwriters would establish the actual terms.

General Obligation Bonds in Taos County

As of June 30, 2016, Taos County had total long-term obligations outstanding of \$61,729,241 consisting of \$31,152,350 in bonds payable and \$30,023,899 is notes payable. The remaining liabilities totaling \$552,992 consist of capital leases of \$28,800 and compensated absences \$524,192. Taos County does not have any outstanding general obligation bonds. The table below demonstrates the county’s general obligation bonding capacity under the statutory limits. The county’s investment in the U.S. Treasury Money Market Mutual Funds was rated AAAM.¹¹ The county does not have a rating for general obligation debt.

Taos County GO Bonding Capacity	
Assessed Value	\$1,432,976,050
4% of Assessed Value	\$57,319,042
Less Outstanding GO Bonds	\$0
Remaining Capacity	\$57,319,042

Taos County could issue a general obligation bond payable by property taxes for open space acquisition. The current operating property tax rate, which includes debt service, is 5.778 mills for

¹⁰ Town of Taos 2017-2018 Budget

¹¹ Taos County 2016 CAFR

residential property, and 11.283 mills for non-residential property.¹² The table below demonstrates what various bond amounts for open space would cost the average household in Taos County. For example, a \$9 million bond would cost the average household about \$33 each year. Voter approval is required.

Taos County Bond Financing Costs			
Bond Issue	Annual Debt Service	Mill Increase	Annual cost per household*
\$3,000,000	\$220,745	0.1540	\$11
\$6,000,000	\$441,491	0.3081	\$22
\$9,000,000	\$662,236	0.4621	\$33
\$12,000,000	\$882,981	0.6162	\$44
\$15,000,000	\$1,103,726	0.7702	\$55
<i>Assumes a 20-year bond issue at 4.0% Interest Rate</i>			
<i>Total Taxable Value= \$1,432,976,050</i>			
<i>*Average taxable value = \$71,899</i>			

Property Tax

New Mexico statutorily limits the imposition of property taxes upon residential and non-residential properties. State statutes limit the percentage of values against which tax rates are assessed to thirty-three and one third percent (33.3 percent) of market value.¹³ In 2001, the state capped the annual increase in taxable value of residential property to 3 percent.¹⁴ State statutes also provide for exemptions for head-of-family, veterans, and disabled veterans.

In addition, New Mexico caps the maximum allowable mill levy for general municipal purposes. The maximum rate for county general purposes is \$11.85 per \$1,000 of taxable value, and the maximum rate for municipal general purposes is \$7.65 per \$1,000 of taxable value.¹⁵ Property tax revenues are also subject to a yield control which limits the allowable increase in revenues over the previous year based on a growth control factor. See Appendix B for more details about property tax limitations.

Revenue Raising Capacity in the Town of Taos

In the Town of Taos, the calculated levy for residential property is 2.573 mills for residential property, and 4.225 mills for non-residential property. Thus the Town of Taos has ample capacity to increase the property tax under the statutory limit of 7.65 mills, subject to any tax or yield constraints. The table on the following page demonstrates the annual revenue and per household cost of various levy increments that could potentially be levied for parks and open space in the Town of Taos. For example, a mill increase of 0.5 per \$1,000 assessed value would generate more than \$161,000 per year at a cost of \$37 to the average homeowner.¹⁶ A majority vote of the

¹² New Mexico Department of Finance & Administration, 2016 Taos County Tax Certificate

¹³ NM Constitution, Article VIII, Sec. 1; Taxation and Revenue 7-37-3

¹⁴ This cap is "lifted" when a property changes hands. At that time the property is re-valued at current market rates and as such the new owners pay higher property taxes than the previous owners.

¹⁵ NMSA 7-37-7

¹⁶ These tables calculate property tax burden by assuming houses are assessed at market value. The assessed value may be lower because of the 3% cap. To partially compensate for that possibility, the figures do not include the head of household exemption (\$2,000).

governing body is required to approve the resolution and the measure for ballot.¹⁷ Voters must then approve the property tax increase in an election.

Town of Taos Estimated Revenue & Cost of Property Tax Increase			
Mill Increase	Taxable valuation*	Annual revenue	Annual cost per household**
0.30	\$322,798,330	\$96,839	\$22
0.40	\$322,798,330	\$129,119	\$29
0.50	\$322,798,330	\$161,399	\$37
0.60	\$322,798,330	\$193,679	\$44
0.70	\$322,798,330	\$225,959	\$52
<i>*New Mexico Department of Finance & Administration, Net Taxable Value 2016 Final Valuations</i>			
<i>**Average taxable value = \$73,581</i>			

Revenue Raising Capacity in Taos County

In Taos County, the calculated levy for residential property is 5.778 mills for residential property, and 11.283 mills for non-residential property. Thus Taos County has some capacity to increase the property tax under the statutory limit of 11.85 mills, subject to any tax or yield constraints. The table below demonstrates the annual revenue and per household cost of various levy increments that could potentially be levied for parks and open space in Taos County. For instance, a mill increase of 0.5 per \$1,000 assessed value would generate more than \$716,000 per year at a cost of \$36 to the average homeowner. A majority vote of the County Commission is required to approve the resolution and the measure for ballot.¹⁸ Voters must then approve the property tax increase in an election.

Taos County Estimated Revenue & Cost of Property Tax Increase			
Mill Increase	Taxable valuation*	Annual revenue	Annual cost per household**
0.30	\$1,432,976,050	\$429,893	\$22
0.40	\$1,432,976,050	\$573,190	\$29
0.50	\$1,432,976,050	\$716,488	\$36
0.60	\$1,432,976,050	\$859,786	\$43
0.70	\$1,432,976,050	\$1,003,083	\$50
<i>*New Mexico Department of Finance & Administration, Net Taxable Value 2016 Final Valuations</i>			
<i>**Average taxable value = \$71,899</i>			

History of Using the Property Tax for Open Space

Local property taxes in New Mexico are typically used for general government operating purposes. Bernalillo County is the only jurisdiction to create a dedicated property tax for open space. Beginning in 1998, Bernalillo County has imposed a property tax for open space purposes, and continuing in 2000 with a 0.25 mill levy that was approved by county voters with 68 percent support. Two procedural errors between the Clerk’s office and the County Manager’s office prevented a renewal in 2006 and 2012. However, since 2006 a 0.10 mill levy has been administratively extended by the County Commission every May when they approve the following year’s budget.¹⁹ In November 2015, Bernalillo County voters approved a 15-year, 0.20 mill levy

¹⁷ NMSA 3-17-4

¹⁸ NMSA 4-37-6

¹⁹ <http://www.abqjournal.com/134462/news/open-space-not-on-ballot.html>

for open space and the acquisition and maintenance of other natural areas. The measure was approved with 72 percent support. The ballot language for this measure is included in Appendix C.

Gross Receipts/Sales Tax

The gross receipts tax (GRT) is a tax placed on businesses in the state for the privilege of doing business. It is based on the total (gross) receipts of the business. Businesses are not required by law to pass this tax on to their customers; however, by common practice, businesses do pass this tax on to the consumer. The “Compensating tax” is a companion tax. It is an excise tax imposed on persons using property or services in New Mexico and is designed to protect New Mexico businesses from unfair competition from out-of-state businesses not subject to New Mexico’s gross receipts tax.²⁰

The State of New Mexico has a statewide GRT and Compensating tax rate of 5.125 percent.²¹ New Mexico’s municipalities and counties are authorized to impose local option gross receipts taxes for select purposes. The gross receipts tax rate varies throughout the state from 5.125 percent to more than 9 percent depending on location. It varies because the total rate combines rates imposed by the state, counties, and, if applicable, municipalities. Changes to the tax rates may occur twice a year in January or July.

GRT in the Town of Taos

General Municipal

The combined gross receipts tax rate in the Town of Taos is currently 8.5 percent. This rate is effective through December 31, 2017.²² The current municipal gross receipts tax is 1.375 percent.²³ Municipalities can impose a maximum municipal gross receipts tax of up to 1.5 percent. The tax can be implemented by adoption of one or more ordinances in tax rate increments of 0.125 or 0.25 percent. Although no election is required, municipalities may provide for voter approval of the ordinance imposing the tax. Voters also may petition for an election. Proceeds from the tax may be dedicated to a specific area of government of the municipality.²⁴

The Town of Taos has capacity to levy an additional 0.125 percent of municipal gross receipts tax, and this tax can be dedicated to parks and open space. Based on budgeted revenue of \$4.3 million from the 1.375 percent municipal gross receipts tax for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, an additional 0.125 percent could be expected to generate about \$394,000 annually.²⁵ The table on the following page summarizes these estimates.

Capital Outlay

Municipalities can also impose a maximum municipal capital outlay gross receipts tax of up to 0.25 percent.²⁶ The tax can be implemented by adoption of one or more ordinances in tax rate increments of 0.0625 percent. Proceeds from the tax may be dedicated to any municipal

²⁰ These taxes are akin to sales and use taxes commonly imposed in many states.

²¹ NMSA 7-9-4 and 7-9-7

²² Municipal councils determine the municipalities' portion of gross receipts tax. Changes can go into effect in January and July of every year.

²³ New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, Enactment Dates of Local Option Taxes – as of July 1, 2017

²⁴ New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, FYI-M121: Municipal Gross Receipts Tax Local Options

²⁵ Town of Taos 2017-2018 Budget

²⁶ New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, FYI-M121: Municipal Gross Receipts Tax Local Options

infrastructure purpose, including acquisition of land for open space, public parks or public recreational facilities and the design, acquisition, construction, improvement or equipping of parks and recreational facilities.²⁷ All ordinances, regardless of the tax rate increment, require an election. The Town of Taos currently does not impose this tax.

The Town of Taos may levy a capital outlay gross receipts tax in increments of 0.0625 percent, up to 0.25 percent. Based on budgeted revenue of \$4.3 million from the 1.375 percent municipal gross receipts tax for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, a capital outlay gross receipts tax of 0.25 percent could be expected to generate about \$788,000 annually. The town could also start with smaller increments. The table below summarizes these estimates.

Town of Taos Gross Receipts Tax				
	Current GRT	Maximum GRT	Remaining Capacity	Maximum Potential Revenue
General Municipal	1.375%	1.5%	0.125%	\$394,020
Capital Outlay	0%	0.25%	0.25%	\$788,041

GRT in Taos County

General County

The combined gross receipts tax rate in the unincorporated areas of Taos County is currently 7.3125 percent. This rate is effective through December 31, 2017.²⁸ Incorporated areas have higher tax rates. The highest is 9.25 percent in Taos Ski Valley. Counties can impose a maximum county gross receipts tax of 0.5208 percent; Taos County currently imposes a tax of 0.4375 percent.²⁹ However, revenues from this tax cannot be dedicated to parks and open space. Proceeds must go to the general fund, road fund, or for the payment of revenue bonds.³⁰

Capital Outlay

Counties can also impose a maximum county capital outlay gross receipts tax of 0.25 percent. The tax can be implemented by adoption of one or more ordinances in four tax rate increments of 0.0625 percent. Proceeds from the tax may be dedicated to any county infrastructure purpose, including acquisition of land for open space, public parks or public recreational facilities and the design, acquisition, construction, improvement or equipping of parks and recreational facilities.³¹ All ordinances, regardless of the tax rate increment, imposing the capital outlay gross receipts tax require an election.³² The county currently imposes the maximum capital outlay gross receipts tax, 0.25 percent, so there is no capacity to increase this tax.

The only section of a County Gross Receipts Tax Ordinance that can be amended is the dedication section. The procedures for enacting the ordinance to amend an ordinance and any election requirements are the same as those for enacting the original ordinance. Taos County could amend the capital outlay gross receipts tax ordinance to dedicate a portion to parks and open space, such as 0.0625 percent. Revenue from the 0.25 percent capital outlay gross receipts tax for the 2016-

²⁷ NMSA 7-19D-12

²⁸ The counties' portion of gross receipts tax is determined by the county commissions. These increments can go into effect in January and July of every year.

²⁹ New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, Enactment Dates of Local Option Taxes – as of July 1, 2017

³⁰ New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, FYI-C120: County Gross Receipts Tax Local Options

³¹ NMSA 7-20E-21

³² New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, FYI-C120: County Gross Receipts Tax Local Options

2017 fiscal year was just over \$131,000.³³ Thus dedicating one-quarter, or 0.0625 percent, to parks and open space could be estimated to generate nearly \$33,000 each year.

History of Using the GRT for Open Space

Bernalillo, Santa Fe County, and Albuquerque have used the gross receipts tax for parks and open space. Most recently, in 2006, Bernalillo enacted a 1/8-cent gross receipts tax increase for open space and water rights acquisition. This measure was approved with 78 percent support. In 2002, voters in Santa Fe County approved a 1/4-cent capital outlay gross receipts tax for open space, trails, waste, and wastewater programs. This measure was approved with 77 percent support.

Lodging Tax

A municipality may impose by ordinance an occupancy tax for revenues on lodging within the municipality, and the board of county commissioners of a county may impose by ordinance an occupancy tax for revenues on lodging within the unincorporated parts of the county. The occupancy tax may not exceed 5 percent of the gross taxable rent.³⁴

A portion of the proceeds must be used for advertising, publicizing, and promoting tourist-related attractions, facilities, and events. The remaining amount must be used to defray the costs of:

- collecting and otherwise administering the tax, including the performance of audits;
- establishing, operating, purchasing, constructing, otherwise acquiring, reconstructing, extending, improving, equipping, furnishing or acquiring real property or any interest in real property for the site or grounds for tourist-related facilities, attractions or transportation systems of the municipality, the county in which the municipality is located, or the county;
- the principal of and interest on any prior redemption premiums due in connection with and any other charges pertaining to revenue bonds;
- advertising, publicizing and promoting tourist-related attractions, facilities and events of the municipality or county and tourist facilities or attractions within the area;
- providing police and fire protection and sanitation service for tourist-related events, facilities and attractions located in the respective municipality or county; or
- any combination of the foregoing purposes or transactions stated in this section, but for no other municipal or county purpose.³⁵

Tourist-related events are defined as events that are planned for, promoted to, and attended by tourists. Tourist-related facilities and attractions are defined as facilities and attractions that are intended to be used by or visited by tourists. Tourist-related transportation systems are defined as transportation systems that provide transportation for tourists to and from tourist-related facilities and attractions and tourist-related events.³⁶

³³ Taos County Gross Receipts Tax 2016/2017 FY Final Budget

³⁴ NMSA 3-38-15

³⁵ NMSA 3-38-21

³⁶ NMSA 3-38-14

Lodging Tax in the Town of Taos

The Town of Taos currently imposes the maximum 5 percent lodging tax. Proceeds may only be used for the purposes described above. Estimated revenue for the 2017-2018 fiscal year is \$1,037,922.³⁷ Taos could use a portion of this revenue to acquire land for parks, so long as the parks are intended to be used or visited by tourists.

Lodging Tax in Taos County

Taos County also imposes the maximum 5 percent lodging tax in the unincorporated areas of the county.³⁸ Proceeds may only be used for the purposes described above. Estimated revenue for the 2017-2018 fiscal year was \$285,350.³⁹ The county could use a portion of this revenue for park land acquisition, provided that the parks are intended to be used or visited by tourists.

Special Districts

Public Improvement District (PID)⁴⁰

Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) are authorized to finance various infrastructure and improvements, including streets, trails, parks, public buildings, libraries, cultural facilities, and equipment and related costs of operation and administration. Financing is based on levying property taxes on land within a PID; imposing special levies based on benefit to property, front footage, acreage, cost of improvements (or other factors apart from assessed valuation); or by providing for use charges for improvements or revenue-producing projects or facilities. An election is required to form a PID, and the measure must pass by at least a three-fourths majority of the votes cast at the election.

PID taxes, levies, and charges may be pledged to pay debt service on bonds issued by a PID. PID bonds are not obligations of the State of New Mexico or the local government jurisdiction in which the PID is located, but are obligations solely of the PID issuing the bonds. An election for bond issuance of the PID must contain an authorization for a property tax or special levy to pay debt service on the bonds as well as a limitation on the amount of that levy in the case of a special levy. The total aggregate outstanding amount of bonds and any other indebtedness for which the full faith and credit of the district are pledged may not exceed 60 percent of the market value of the real property and improvements in the district after the public infrastructure improvements of the district are completed, plus the value of the public infrastructure owned or to be acquired by the district with the proceeds of the bonds, and shall not affect the general obligation bonding capacity of the municipality or county in which the district is located.

Tax Increment Development District (TIDD)

The Metropolitan Redevelopment (MRD) Act has historically been the tool used to offer tax increment financing and authorize the issuance of property tax increment bonds to finance metropolitan redevelopment projects.⁴¹ Only areas that have been determined by resolution to be a

³⁷ Town of Taos 2017-2018 Budget

³⁸ http://www.taosnews.com/news/article_d5de58f6-fa61-11e4-88a8-6b32b0ab0378.html

³⁹ Taos County 2017-2018 Budget

⁴⁰ Section 5-11-1 through 5-11-27, NMSA 1978 governs the creation of PIDs through a petition and hearing process, followed by a unanimous consent procedure or approval through an election of property owners and qualified resident electors.

⁴¹ NMSA 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48

slum area or blighted area, or a combination thereof, are eligible to be a metropolitan redevelopment project. Improvements that can be financed include non-vehicular trails, recreational facilities, pedestrian malls, and library/educational/cultural facilities.

The tax increment method, for the purpose of financing metropolitan redevelopment projects, is the dedication for further use in metropolitan redevelopment projects of that increase in property tax revenue directly resulting from the increased net taxable value of a parcel of property attributable to its rehabilitation, redevelopment or other improvement because of its inclusion within an urban renewal, community development or metropolitan redevelopment project. Tax increment financing allows local officials to designate a Tax Increment Development District (TIDD) for improvement and then earmark and future growth in property tax revenues in that district to pay for the predetermined development expenditures in the district. The tax increment method may be approved by the local governing body.

The MRD Act authorizes a municipality to issue tax increment bonds or tax increment anticipation notes that are payable from and secured by real property taxes and gross receipts. Bonds and notes issued shall not constitute an indebtedness within the meaning of any constitutional or statutory debt limitation or restriction, shall not be general obligations of the municipality, shall be collectible only from the proper pledged revenues, and shall not be subject to the provisions of any other law or charter relating to the authorization, issuance or sale of tax increment bonds or tax increment bond anticipation notes. Bonds or notes may be authorized by ordinance.

Infrastructure Development Zone (IDZ)⁴²

Similar to tax increment financing or a Public Improvement District (PID), in an Infrastructure Development Zone (IDZ), projects are financed by property taxes, the sale of bonds, and fees or charges imposed by the development zone. An IDZ must adopt a service plan which governs the scope of its activities. IDZs may provide a variety of services, including trails and areas for pedestrian, equestrian, bicycle or other non-motor vehicle use for travel, ingress, egress and parking; and pedestrian malls, parks, recreational facilities and open space areas for the use of members of the public for entertainment, assembly and recreation, including programming events for the community and public.

IDZs may cover property within one or more municipalities or counties, however, IDZs may not overlap with other IDZs or special districts providing the same services.

In order to create an IDZ, there must be a petition signed by the lesser of 30 percent or 400 of the taxpaying electors in the area, followed by hearings to approve or disapprove the formation of the IDZ. A maximum mill levy must be established in the service plan. Once the service plan is approved by the local governing authority, a majority of voters must approve the organization of the proposed IDZ. Voter approval is also required in order for the IDZ to issue bonds.

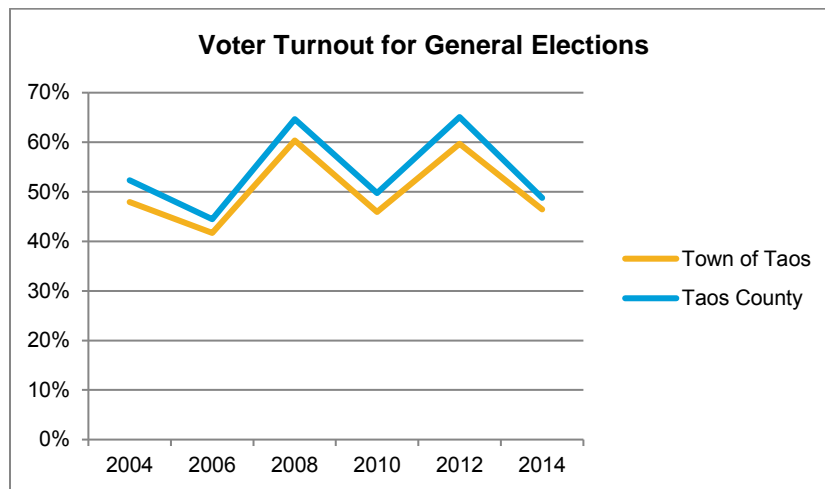
⁴² NMSA 5-17-1 to 5-17-36: Infrastructure Development Zone Act

ELECTION ANALYSIS

In March 2016, Taos County voters approved a mill levy of \$1 per \$1,000 taxable value to benefit Holy Cross Hospital. The measure passed with 76 percent support. The property tax is expected to raise about \$5 million over four years, at which point it will sunset.^{43,44}

In November 2014, Taos County voted on three separate state-wide bond propositions, which all passed. The first, Bond A, would fund construction, renovations, and the purchase of essential equipment at senior citizen centers. This \$17 million bond received 78 percent support from Taos County. Bond B would fund public libraries. This \$11 million bond received 77 percent support from Taos County. Bond C would fund institutions of higher learning. This \$141 million bond also received 77 percent support from Taos County.^{45,46}

The chart below shows voter turnout for the past several general elections. As of May 2016, Taos County had 22,289 registered voters, with 15,385 Democrats (69 percent), 4,037 Independents (18 percent), and 2,867 Republicans (13 percent). The Town of Taos had 2,275 registered voters, with 1,590 Democrats (70 percent), 459 Independents (20 percent), and 226 Republicans (10 percent).⁴⁷



⁴³ http://www.taosnews.com/news/article_ad630254-9adf-11e5-ad40-133176267b80.html

⁴⁴ http://www.taosnews.com/news/article_45547aee-e5ad-11e5-912a-27006551b6e1.html

⁴⁵ http://www.taosnews.com/news/article_aafb3d86-5bbd-11e4-bde0-e3344fab3709.html

⁴⁶ <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/uploads/files/Statewide%20by%20County%20Canvass.pdf>

⁴⁷ http://app.l2political.com/reports/PDF/NM/NMCNTY_TAOS-PCP.PDF

STATE CONSERVATION FUNDING PROGRAMS

New Mexico Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP), administered by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), provides federal funding to eligible entities within New Mexico to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized uses. These Federal transportation funds benefit recreationists who enjoy hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrianism, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, and off-road four-wheel driving.⁴⁸ The RTP funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund, and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use: fuel used for off-highway recreation by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks. In New Mexico, the estimated set aside of RTP funds on an annual basis is \$1,429,831. RTP requires a local match of 14.56 percent of the total project cost.⁴⁹

New Mexico Transportation Alternatives Program

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a Federal program authorized under Section 1122 of the Federal transportation act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). In New Mexico, TAP is administered by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). TAP provides funding for programs and projects such as: pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safe routes to school projects, infrastructure improvements that provide non-drivers better access to transit, environmental mitigation, and other infrastructure improvements to the transportation system. Because New Mexico elected to continue the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), also administered by NMDOT, these funds are deducted from New Mexico's TAP allocation. The estimated total reserve for New Mexico TAP for FY2016 and FY2017 is \$7,319,573. Thus, after deducting \$1,429,831 for the RTP, the estimated annual balance available for TAP is \$5,889,742. TAP requires a local match of 14.56 percent of the total project cost.⁵⁰

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

The primary state agency that acquires land is the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. The Department receives general fund appropriations from the state legislature and proceeds from nongame tax check offs on income tax forms. Previously, it also drew upon funds from a 1988 state bond to acquire and lease lands for wildlife management areas. The only grant program offered by the Department of Game and Fish is the Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program, which provides for off-highway motor vehicle recreation.

New Mexico State Parks

New Mexico State Parks acquires land through capital outlay requests and through donations. There are no grant programs for local governments.

⁴⁸ <http://www.dot.state.nm.us/en/Planning.html#RTP>

⁴⁹ http://www.dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/planning/NM_RTP_FFY1617_Guide_FINAL.pdf

⁵⁰ http://www.dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/planning/NMDOT_TAP_Guide%20FINAL_FFY16&17.pdf

New Mexico Natural Heritage Conservation Act

Made effective March 19, 2010, the Natural Heritage Conservation Act created a fund, with a one-time allocation of \$4.8 million, which was administered by the Department of Energy, Mineral and Natural Resources. The stated purpose of the law is "to protect the state's natural heritage, customs and culture by funding conservation and agricultural easements and by funding land restoration to protect the land and water available for forests and watersheds, natural areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, agricultural production on working farms and ranches, outdoor recreation and trails and land and habitat restoration and management". The funds have all been appropriated.

FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The U.S. federal government is an important partner for state and local governments, parks and conservation organizations, and community advocates. This report provides a summary of numerous relevant federal conservation funds for open space and urban areas. The programs discussed are administered by federal agencies, but vary in how funds are delivered for conservation projects. For example, some of these program funds are directed to the states, which in turn decide what projects to fund, while other program funds are granted by a federal agency through a competitive process.

Each program has different requirements and offers various partnership opportunities (for example, applying through the state, or working with private landowners) that should be further evaluated to determine the most likely funding outcomes. The descriptions are meant to provide a broad overview of funding sources. The Trust for Public Land can provide additional information on program rules and accessibility.

State Directed Federal Grants

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

An offspring of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), CREP is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners. Through CREP, state and federal partnerships allow landowners to receive incentive payments in exchange for removing environmentally sensitive land from production and introducing conservation practices that help to clean the air, filter water, and prevent soil erosion. Farmers can receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource-conserving covers on eligible land.⁵¹

State Revolving Fund Programs (Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs)

Under the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funds three water quality programs, with the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) being the largest by far.^{52:53:54}

- Clean Water State Revolving Fund (Section 212): The CWSRF provides loans for water quality improvements and has traditionally been used for wastewater treatment upgrades, although some states have used funding for land conservation. The annual capitalization grants totaled \$1.39 billion in FY2016.

Under the CWSRF, the EPA provides annual grants to states that match the capitalization grants with 20 percent of their own funds. States use these capitalization grants to provide loans to public and private borrowers, with a maximum term of 30 years. Under certain conditions, CWSRF programs may provide up to a fixed percentage of their capitalization grants as additional subsidization in the form of principal forgiveness, negative interest rate loans, or grants. Since the CWSRF Program began in 1987, the federal government has provided more than \$37.5 billion in capitalization grants. Building on the federal

⁵¹ <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-enhancement/index>

⁵² <http://www2.epa.gov/cwsrf>

⁵³ http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/dwsrf/index.cfm

⁵⁴ <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/cwact.cfm>

investment of over \$37 billion, the state CWSRFs have provided more than \$105.4 billion to communities through 2014. States have provided more than 34,900 low-interest loans to protect valuable water resources.

States file an intended use plan with the EPA that clearly spells out how they will allocate their CWSRF funds. Since the program's inception, most states have used their CWSRF primarily for wastewater treatment plants. However, since 1995, more funding has been shifted into nonpoint source pollution control and estuary management, with roughly 6 percent of annual funds going for non-point source pollution, up from 1 percent in prior years. In particular, several states have used their CWSRF to help local governments and nonprofits purchase watershed land, restore watersheds, and reduce flooding.

- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund: Under the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, the EPA is authorized to provide grants to states to capitalize DWSRFs. The State Revolving Funds provide loans and other assistance to eligible public water systems to finance the cost of infrastructure projects, including land acquisition. States must file an intended use plan describing how they will use the proceeds and must match 20 percent of the grant. Up to 15 percent of the funds can be set aside to fund source water protection activities, including land acquisition. However, no more than 10 percent of the set-asides can be used for a single type of activity. Grants are allotted to each state based on needs identified in the most recent Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey, which is conducted every four years. The funds awarded to states totaled over \$863 million in FY2016.
- Nonpoint Source Program (Section 319). Provides grants for projects that address nonpoint source pollution, such as best management practices (BMP) implementation, restoration and public education. On a very limited basis, Section 319 has been used for land conservation. Funding for FY2016 totaled \$165 million.

In 1987 Congress recognized that state and local water authorities needed assistance with developing and implementing measures to control nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The enactment of Section 319 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) established a national program to control nonpoint sources of water pollution, as well as a means to help fund state and local implementation of nonpoint source management programs.

Under the provisions of Section 319, land acquisition can be used as a nonpoint source management tool. Across the country, fifteen land acquisition projects were approved between FY1994 and FY2010.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)⁵⁵

Established by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps Indian tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of

⁵⁵ <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/>

the land. Land protected by agricultural land easements provides many public benefits, including environmental quality, historic preservation, wildlife habitat and protection of open space.

Under the Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) component, NRCS may contribute up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement. Land eligible for agricultural easements includes cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland and nonindustrial private forest land. NRCS will prioritize applications that protect agricultural uses and related conservation values of the land and those that maximize the protection of contiguous acres devoted to agricultural use. To enroll land through agricultural land easements, eligible partners may submit proposals to the NRCS state office to acquire conservation easements on eligible land. In FY2015, \$228 million was allocated to states through the ACEP program. New Mexico received \$770,000.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)⁵⁶

Since 1990, the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP) has provided states and U.S. Territories with federal funding to help protect threatened forestland. The program uses conservation easements or fee transactions to prevent land from being converted to non-forest use. A state enters the voluntary program by submitting an Assessment of Need (AON) to the Secretary of Agriculture for approval. These plans establish the lead state agency, the state's Forest Legacy project criteria, and areas within which proposed Legacy projects must be located. Each enrolled state has a Forest Legacy Program coordinator, housed within the agency designated in the AON to administer the program.

The program requires a minimum non-federal match of at least 25 percent of total project cost. Match can consist of state, local, or private funds, donated land value, and in some cases, project costs. This program has protected 2,470,000 acres in its 25 year history by leveraging \$669 million to secure land valued at more than \$15 billion. Currently, there are 53 states and territories participating. Nearly 17,000 acres in New Mexico have been enrolled in the program as of May 2016.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)⁵⁷

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act was passed in 1989 to provide matching grants for the acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of wetland ecosystems for the benefit of waterfowl and other wetland-associated migratory species. Administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, grants are available to nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and private individuals in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Two types of grants are awarded: small grants for up to \$75,000 and standard grants for over \$75,000. There is a one-to-one non-federal match requirement for each grant.

The NAWCA matching grant program grew steadily from \$15 million in FY2000 to \$66.1 million in FY2006, but has seen decline in recent years. The FY2013 appropriations level for NAWCA was \$33.6 million. These funds are supplemented by funds from other sources and matched by significant levels of non-federal funding.

Since 1995, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act has funded 2,553 projects totaling \$1.4 billion in grants. More than 5,000 partners have contributed another \$2.9 billion in matching

⁵⁶ <http://blogs.usda.gov/2015/04/17/the-forest-legacy-program-25-years-of-keeping-working-forests-working/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/north-american-wetland-conservation-act.php>

funds to affect 30.7 million acres of habitat. In FY2014, New Mexico received a NAWCA grant of \$75,000.

State Wildlife Grants (SWG)⁵⁸

Created by Congress in 2001, the State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program is a matching grant program available to every state to support cost-effective, on-the-ground conservation efforts aimed at restoring or maintaining populations of native species before listing under the Endangered Species Act is required. In order to maximize the effectiveness of this program, Congress required each state to develop a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy for the conservation of the state's full array of wildlife and the habitats they depend upon. These plans identify species and habitats of greatest conservation need and outline the steps necessary to keep them from becoming endangered.

The SWG program provides matching funds that are to be used to implement the conservation recommendations outlined in these plans. Grant funds are disbursed to states for approved grants at a maximum federal share of 75 percent for Planning grants and 65 percent for Implementation grants. Funds appropriated under the SWG program are allocated to every state according to a formula based on a state's size and population. Since its inception in 2001, the SWG program has played a critical role in the conservation of wildlife in all states. The FY2016 appropriation for the SWG program was \$60.5 million. New Mexico's apportionment was \$837,785.⁵⁹

In 2014, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish implemented a project to monitor narrowheaded gartersnake populations at four locations within the Gila/San Francisco River drainage using a State Wildlife Grant and matching funds. The surveys were planned in areas affected by the Whitewater-Baldy Complex Fire and post-fire ash flows. A species of greatest conservation need in New Mexico, the narrow-headed gartersnake was listed as Threatened under the ESA during the course of this project. The surveys allowed researchers to describe the status of post-fire gartersnake populations and determine the effectiveness of translocations as a method of conserving this species.⁶⁰

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of New Mexico's most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. New Mexico has received more than \$300 million in LWCF funding over the past 50 years, protecting places such as Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge, Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, and Organ Mountains Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests – supporting timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. The Forest Legacy Program assists states and private forest owners in maintaining working forest lands through matching grants for permanent conservation easements and fee acquisitions while protecting air and water quality, wildlife habitat, access to recreation,

⁵⁸ <http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SWG/SWG.htm>

⁵⁹ <http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SWG/SWG2016Apportionment.pdf>

⁶⁰ https://www.fws.gov/southwest/federal_assistance/PDFs/R2WSFRStateWildlifeGrantsSWGSUCCESSSTORIES22April2015.pdf

and other public benefits provided by forests. As noted above, nearly 17,000 acres in New Mexico have been enrolled in the program.

LWCF state assistance grants have further supported hundreds of projects across New Mexico's state and local parks. The state has received approximately \$42 million in stateside grants from LWCF.

Direct Federal Acquisition

Federal land holdings are a significant component of the state's system of protected natural areas, including parks, forests, and wildlife refuges. However, federal programs should not be expected to make significant contributions towards the state's conservation goals as the number and size of current and ongoing federal acquisitions is relatively small. As of May 2015, the federal government owned roughly 640 million acres. Four agencies – the National Park Service (NPS), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in the Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) in the Department of Agriculture – manage approximately 95 percent of the federal acres. The principal financing mechanism for federal land acquisition is annual appropriations under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF is credited with \$900 million annually from designated sources, and Congress determines the level of appropriations each year.⁶¹

There are other, less significant sources of funding for these federal agencies. The FWS receives some funding from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. The BLM has the authority to retain the revenues of some land sales, primarily in Nevada, to use for subsequent acquisitions and other purposes. All four agencies may, in general, accept land as gifts and bequests.

National Park Service (NPS)

The NPS is not authorized to acquire lands for new or existing units of the National Park System, except in special circumstances. Congress has created most units, and typically includes specific authority for the NPS to acquire nonfederal inholdings within the identified boundaries of a park in the law creating that park unit. In FY2016, Congress appropriated \$386,000 from the LWCF for the NPS to acquire property at Pecos National Historical Park. Substantial LWCF funds have also gone to Petroglyphs National Monument.

Under the Antiquities Act of 1906, the President is authorized to create national monuments on federal lands. Presidential proclamations have created 142 national monuments. These monuments are managed mostly by the NPS, some by the BLM, and some by other agencies. Two recent monument designations occurred in New Mexico: Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains.

The Río Grande del Norte National Monument was established on March 25, 2013 and covers 242,500 acres. It is comprised of rugged, wide open plains at an average elevation of 7,000 feet, dotted by volcanic cones, and cut by steep canyons. The Río Grande carves an 800 foot deep gorge through layers of volcanic basalt flows and ash. Among the volcanic cones in the Monument, Ute Mountain is the highest, reaching to 10,093 feet. The Monument is an important area for wintering animals, and provides a corridor by which wildlife move between the two mountain ranges. The unique setting of the Monument also provides a wealth of recreational opportunities. Whitewater

⁶¹ <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34273.pdf>

rafting, hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, and camping are some of the more outstanding activities that can be enjoyed in the Monument.⁶²

U.S. Forest Service (FS)

The Secretary of Agriculture has various authorities to acquire lands for the National Forest System (NFS). The NFS is comprised of 282 units of federal land, containing 232.1 million acres, which consists of national forests, national grasslands, purchase units, land utilization projects, and other areas. New NFS units may only be created by an act of Congress; however, the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands within or adjoining the stated exterior boundaries of an NFS unit. There are five national forests in New Mexico; Carson National Forest is the closest to Taos.

From FY2011 to FY2014, Congress appropriated over \$10 million for the acquisition of the Miranda Canyon property by the Carson National Forest, just south of Taos. Other recent funding for land acquisition has protected important lands for outdoor recreation and water protection in the Gila National Forest.

Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1929 gives the FWS authority to acquire land. After consulting with the relevant governor or state agency and appropriate local government officials, the Secretary of the Interior may provide recommendations of lands which are crucial to the conservation of migratory birds to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission. The state in which the land acquisition will take place must consent to the acquisition by law. The Secretary is then authorized to purchase or rent lands approved by the Commission and to acquire any land or interest within. In 2011 the US Fish and Wildlife Service established the Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge in Bernalillo County, just south of Albuquerque, and over \$8 million was allocated from the LWCF from FY2011 to FY2014 to purchase land for the refuge.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM has comprehensive, universal authority to acquire lands, mainly under Section 205 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). Specifically, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire lands or partial interests in land, by purchase, exchange, donation, or eminent domain. An interest in land is less than full ownership. Examples include conservation easements, access easements, mineral rights, and water rights. The BLM acquires land or interests in land for a variety of reasons, including the protection of natural and cultural resources, increasing opportunities for the public to access land and use it for recreation, and improving the way land is managed. In FY2016, Congress appropriated \$2.9 million from the LWCF for the BLM to acquire property at the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, as well as \$2.3 million for the agency to secure a stretch of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail in New Mexico.

⁶² http://www.blm.gov/publish/content/nm/en/prog/NLCS/RGDN_NM.html

Urban Park and Trail Federal Grants

National Park Service, LWCF Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLPP)

Congress created the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership program (ORLPP), administered by the National Park Service, to complement the agency's existing Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State and Local Assistance Program. The new program seeks to identify and highlight new ways of providing opportunities for expanding outdoor play in areas with great need, as well as promoting the development of new or enhanced partnerships for outdoor recreation in urban communities across the nation.

The NPS will prioritize projects that seek to:

- directly connect people to outdoor places in their communities;
- engage and empower underserved communities and youth;
- provide opportunities for youth employment or job training;
- involve and expand public-private partnerships, particularly to provide for the leveraging of resources; and
- rely on a high degree of coordination among all levels of government in order to improve recreation opportunities for all.

Program Specifics:

- Proposals must first go to each state's lead LWCF agency. Each state agency will be allowed to nominate a maximum of two proposals to NPS for national consideration.
- Funds can be used to provide for acquisition, design, or capital costs. LWCF grants may be used for the acquisition or development (or a combination) of lands and facilities that will provide outdoor recreation opportunities to the public.
- Congress appropriated \$12 million for FY2016, but \$3 million of unspent funding from FY2015 will be rolled into the FY2016 cycle, bringing the total funds available to \$15 million.

U.S. Department of Transportation

On December 4, 2015 President Obama signed into law the "Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act," or FAST Act. The authorization provides five years of funding – starting in FY2016 – for federal highways and transit programs at slightly increased funding levels and uses essentially the same funding programs as are available today (including the core funding programs for bicycling and pedestrian projects). Over the five-year life of the bill, highway funding will increase by 15 percent and transit funding by 18 percent.

Since 1991, the most significant sources of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects have been the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program, Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. In 2012, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) combined the TE, SRTS and RTP programs into one Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

The biggest changes to these programs in the 2015 FAST Act are that the STP was renamed the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program, and the TAP became a set-aside program of this block grant. Walking and bicycling projects remain an eligible activity for the larger STBG as well as CMAQ and the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). So, what used to be the TAP is now the “Surface Transportation Block Grant Set-aside Program.” Just as with the TAP, funding in the STBG Set-aside Program is available for more than just bike and pedestrian projects.

TAP funding was set at 2 percent of all the core highway programs and yielded approximately \$820 million in FY2015. Funding levels in the new STBGSP are set at \$835 million for FY2016 and FY2017, rising to \$850 million in FY2018 to FY2020. Within that, funding for the Recreational Trails Program is preserved and is effectively a set-aside of the STBGSP.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program (CMAQ) was created by Congress to help states and metropolitan areas meet ambient air quality standards. The CMAQ program provides funding to areas that face the challenge of attaining or maintaining the air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, or particulate matter. Funds are used on transportation projects that improve air quality, lower auto emissions, and reduce congestion. Eligible activities of potential interest for projects include bike and pedestrian trail construction, parking, and public right-of-ways for transit connections.

Regional transportation authorities are responsible for allocating discretionary federal, state, and local transportation funds to improve all modes of surface transportation. Generally, a competitive process through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) distributes discretionary capital transportation funds to regionally significant projects. While the MPO generally administers the CMAQ program, localities propose various projects to the MPO for consideration and prioritization. Local jurisdictions, transit operators, and other public agencies are encouraged to submit applications proposing projects for funding.

Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)

In 2015, there was hope that Congress would include the TIGER program in the new transportation authorization law, however the FAST Act neither authorized it nor provided any funding. Still, for FY2016, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) was authorized to award \$500 million in TIGER Discretionary Grants pursuant to the FY2016 Appropriations Act. Funds for the TIGER program are awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. The TIGER Discretionary Grant program provides a unique opportunity for the DOT to invest in road, rail, transit, and port projects that promise to achieve critical national objectives.

Eligible applicants for TIGER Discretionary Grants include: state, local, and tribal governments, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), other political subdivisions of state or local governments, and multi-state or multi-jurisdictional groups applying through a single lead applicant. Projects in urban areas must meet a baseline of \$5 million and have at least a 20 percent non-federal match. Successful applications would include cost-benefit analysis for economic and environmental impacts, projections for job creation, and should generally have multiple stakeholders and political support. While funding cannot be used for land acquisition, activities of note include hard and soft costs for bike and pedestrian trails and environmental plans that include greenhouse gas reduction.

To date, New Mexico has been awarded four TIGER Grants, totaling over \$7.87 million in combined investments. In FY2015, Pueblo of Laguna received a \$1 million TIGER award, providing funding to construct a multi-use trail and reduce motorized vehicle lanes. The project will help complete a bicycle and pedestrian route network along NM Highway 124 that was planned with a 2010 TIGER planning grant.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Brownfields Grants

If a property identified for acquisition or redevelopment is or might be a “brownfields” site, many programs and other benefits at the local, state and federal levels encourage its redevelopment. The EPA’s Brownfields Program provides direct funding to eligible entities for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. In addition, legislation signed into law in 2001 limits the liability of certain contiguous property owners and prospective purchasers of brownfields properties, and innocent landowners are also afforded liability benefits to encourage revitalization and reuse of brownfield sites. EPA’s brownfields program provides several types of grants:

- Assessment Grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct cleanup and redevelopment planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites. Eligible entities are states, local governments, regional planning and redevelopment agencies, and Indian tribes. An eligible entity may apply for up to \$200,000 to assess a site contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, petroleum, or contaminants co-mingled with petroleum, with a waiver up to \$350,000 for site-specific proposals. Such waivers must be based on the anticipated level of hazardous substances, pollutants, petroleum or contaminants (including hazardous substances co-mingled with petroleum) at a single site. Total grant fund requests must not exceed a total of \$400,000 per applicant unless the applicant requests a waiver. Due to budget limitations, no entity may apply for more than \$700,000 in assessment funding.
- Remediation Grants are available for remediation of brownfield sites. These grants are limited to \$200,000 per site, with no more than three applications per entity. There is a 20 percent cost share. Eligible entities are the same as listed above, with the addition of NGOs, who are eligible to apply, but must have site control of the property. One site may qualify for two grants if pollutants include petroleum and non-petroleum contaminants.
- Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Grants provide funding for a grant recipient to capitalize a revolving loan fund to provide sub grants to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. Grants may be awarded up to \$1 million per eligible entity, or a group of eligible entities, with a 20 percent cost share and a five year time frame for completion. Eligible entities are the same as those listed under assessment grants.
- Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grants may be used by communities to facilitate community involvement in developing an area-wide plan for brownfields assessment, cleanup, and subsequent reuse on a catalyst site and other high-priority brownfield sites. Each grant is funded up to \$200,000 for two years.
- Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities (TAB) Grants help communities tackle the challenge of assessing, cleaning up, and preparing brownfields sites for redevelopment, especially underserved/rural/small and otherwise distressed communities. Technical assistance being provided through this grant should also be geared toward results and help

to move brownfields sites forward in the process toward cleanup and reuse. The maximum value of each grant will be based on the technical assistance being provided.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

Our Town Grants

Through the Our Town program the NEA provides a limited number of grants, ranging from \$25,000 to \$200,000, for creative placemaking projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. The grants are invested in creative and innovative projects in which communities improve their quality of life, encourage greater creative activity, foster stronger community identity and a sense of place, and revitalize economic development.

Arts Engagement

Arts engagement projects support artistically excellent artistic production or practice as the focus of creative placemaking work.

- Innovative programming that fosters interaction among community members, arts organizations, and artists, or activates existing cultural and community assets.
- Festivals and performances in spaces not normally used for such purposes.
- Public art that improves public spaces and strategically reflects or shapes the physical and social character of a community.

Cultural Planning

Cultural planning projects support the development of artistically excellent local support systems necessary for creative placemaking to succeed.

- Creative asset mapping.
- Cultural district planning.
- The development of master plans or community-wide strategies for public art.
- Support for creative entrepreneurship.
- Creative industry cluster/hub development.

Design

Design projects that demonstrate artistic excellence while supporting the development of environments where creative placemaking takes place, or where the identity of place is created or reinforced.

- Design of rehearsal, studio, or live/work spaces for artists.
- Design of cultural spaces – new or adaptive reuse.
- Design of public spaces, such as parks, plazas, landscapes, neighborhoods, districts, infrastructure, bridges, and artist-produced elements of streetscapes.
- Community engagement activities including design charrettes, design competitions, and community design workshops.

All applications must have partnerships that involve two primary partners: a nonprofit organization and a local governmental entity. One of the two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. Additional partners are encouraged.

Art Works Grants

NEA recognizes that arts and design organizations are often in the forefront of innovation in their work and strongly encourage innovative projects which are characterized as those that:

- are likely to prove transformative with the potential for meaningful change, whether in the development or enhancement of new or existing art forms, new approaches to the creation or presentation of art, or new ways of engaging the public with art;
- are distinctive, offering fresh insights and new value for their fields and/or the public through unconventional solutions; and
- have the potential to be shared and/or emulated, or are likely to lead to other advances in the field.

Partnerships can be valuable to the success of projects. While not required, applicants are encouraged to consider partnerships among organizations, both in and outside of the arts, as appropriate to their project.

American arts and design organizations must be inclusive of the full range of demographics of their communities, as well as individuals of all physical and cognitive abilities. Toward that end, projects are encouraged to strive for the highest level of inclusiveness in their audiences, programming, artists, governance, and staffing. NEA also welcomes projects that will explicitly address the issue of inclusion.

NEA is interested in projects that extend the arts to underserved populations – those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. This is achieved in part through the use of Challenge America funds.

Art Works Grants generally will range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. Grants of \$100,000 or more will be made only in rare instances and only for projects that the NEA determines demonstrate exceptional national or regional significance and impact. In recent years, well over half of the agency's grants have been for amounts less than \$25,000. All grants require a nonfederal match of at least 50 percent. For example, if an organization receives a \$10,000 grant, the total eligible project costs must be at least \$20,000 and the organization must provide at least \$10,000 toward the project from nonfederal sources.

Below are some examples of possible uses of grant funds within the grant categories:

Creation

- Design or planning for designer live/work spaces, new arts/cultural spaces, districts, neighborhoods, public spaces, or landscapes.
- Design research or collaboration projects that examine current practice and propose design solutions for pressing problems.

Engagement

- Historic and community preservation projects that promote awareness of cultural and historic assets.

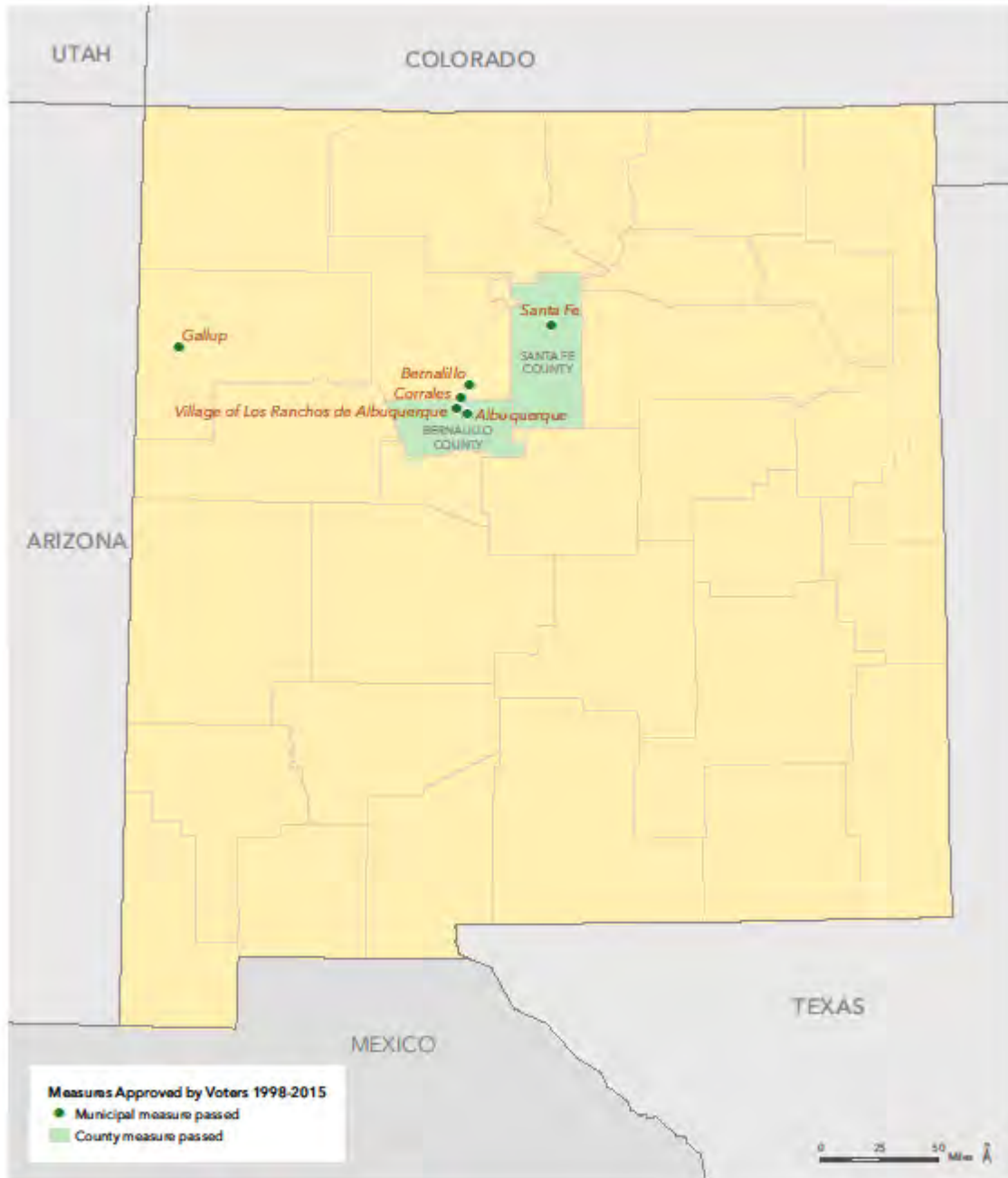
Livability

- Community-wide or neighborhood planning and design activities that promote economic and cultural vitality.
- Design exhibitions, residencies, and other activities in public spaces that are intended to foster community interaction and/or enhance the unique characteristics of a community.
- Design projects that promote livability, including those which involve community-based partnerships and assist underserved communities or neighborhoods.
- Design projects that promote the unique assets and characteristics of a community.
- Design projects that promote the use of universal design to improve community livability.
- Projects that support emerging fields of design, including social impact/public interest design; universal design; and the application of design thinking to health, education, and economic development.
- Social impact/public interest design projects that benefit underserved communities or address social issues.
- The adaptive reuse of historic properties for cultural and arts uses.
- The development of plans for growth of the design sector in the local community.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: New Mexico Conservation Finance Ballot Measures

New Mexico Conservation Finance Ballot Measures 1996-present						
Jurisdiction Name	Date	Finance Mechanism	Description	Conservation Funds Approved	Status	% Yes
Bernalillo County	11/4/2014	Property tax	15-year, .20 mill property tax levy for open space and other natural areas acquisition and maintenance	\$28,845,202	Pass	72.41%
Santa Fe	3/4/2008	Bond	Bond for the improvement and acquisition of parks, trails and open space	\$2,900,000	Pass	70.51%
Santa Fe County	11/4/2008	Bond	Bond for parks, open space, and trail acquisitions and improvements	\$3,500,000	Pass	66.97%
Albuquerque	10/2/2007	Bond	Bond for parks and recreation capital improvements including land acquisition	\$6,000,000	Pass	65.50%
Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque	3/13/2007	Bond	Bond for the purchase of open space and trails	\$3,600,000	Pass	65.24%
Bernalillo	3/7/2006	Sales tax	1/8 of 1% gross receipts tax increase for open space and water rights acquisition	\$1,700,000	Pass	78.16%
Corrales	8/31/2004	Bond	Bond for the purchase of conservation easements for farmland	\$2,500,000	Pass	83.23%
Albuquerque	10/28/2003	Bond	Parks and Recreation Bonds, Bonds for acquisition and improvement of park, recreational facilities	\$3,440,000	Pass	59.90%
Gallup	8/12/2003	Bond	Public Parks and Recreation Bond Question, Bond for parks, trails, playgrounds, public recreational facilities	\$1,000,000	Pass	76.06%
Santa Fe County	4/9/2002	Sales tax	Capital Outlay Tax; .25% gross receipts tax for open space, trails, waste and wastewater programs	\$3,600,000	Pass	76.88%
Bernalillo County	11/7/2000	Property tax	6-year, .25 mill property tax extension to acquire and maintain land for open space	\$25,000,000	Pass	67.76%
Bernalillo County	11/7/2000	Bond	Bond issue to acquire land and expand parks and recreational facilities	\$1,576,000	Pass	69.78%
Santa Fe County	11/7/2000	Bond	Bond issue to acquire real estate and easements for open space	\$8,000,000	Pass	69.52%
Bernalillo County	11/3/1998	Property tax	Mill Levy Question, 2-year, 0.5 mill property tax increase for open space	\$7,000,000	Pass	56.80%
Bernalillo County	11/3/1998	Bond	Parks and Recreational Facilities Bond, Bond for Parks, Recreation	\$660,000	Pass	68.17%
New Mexico	11/3/1998	Bond	Bond for ecologically significant land, wildlife, open space		Fail	48.10%
Santa Fe County	11/3/1998	Bond	Bond for Open Space, Trails, Recreation, Parks, Wildlife	\$12,000,000	Pass	70.15%
Albuquerque	1/14/1997	Sales tax	2-year, quarter of a percent municipal gross tax	\$45,000,000	Pass	60.17%
New Mexico	11/5/1996	Other	Constitutional Amendment 7, authorizes counties to issue bonds to acquire open space lands		Pass	50.13%



New Mexico

LOCAL CONSERVATION MEASURES APPROVED BY VOTERS 1998 - 2016

June 15, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org



Appendix B: Further Information About Property Taxes

New Mexico provides a head-of-family exemption of \$2,000 of the taxable value of residential property.⁶³ For example, a single residence assessed at \$150,000 has a net taxable value of \$47,950 with the head of household exemption. Although property tax revenues are typically used for operational purposes, the statutes authorize property tax imposition for payment of bond debt service and voter-approved purposes, which are not subject to the rate limitation.

Property tax revenues are subject to a yield control, which limits the allowable increase in revenues over the previous year based on a growth control factor.⁶⁴ Section 7-37-7.1 NMSA 1978 (“Additional limitations on property tax rates”) is commonly referred to as the “yield control statute” because it limits revenue yields that result when property values are increased due to reassessment. Yield control reduces certain property tax rates from the tax rate as originally imposed (“imposed rates”) to the rates actually applied against reassessed property (“yield controlled rates”). It is applied separately to residential and non-residential properties. Since the rate of increase of property value on reassessment is typically different for residential and non-residential property, the separate application of yield control to each gives rise to different yield controlled rates on residential and nonresidential properties in the same jurisdiction. Yield control applies only to taxes imposed for certain purposes. In general, yield control does not apply to debt service levies. In order to limit the revenue yielded by the new property values, the statute mandates that tax rates be adjusted. The result in a district in which reappraisals have increased values is that property tax rates are reduced so that, when applied to the new property values including the reappraised values, they yield only the limited revenue growth allowed. In short, rates are adjusted downward in the same proportion that reappraisals have increased total values.⁶⁵

⁶³ NMSA 7-37-4. State statutes also provide for exemptions for veterans and disabled veterans (NMSA 7-37-5 to 7-37-5.1).

⁶⁴ NMSA 7-37-7.1

⁶⁵ Excerpted from http://nmdfa.state.nm.us/Yield_Control_Formula.aspx

Appendix C: Bernalillo County Property Tax Ballot Language

Shall the County of Bernalillo, New Mexico establish a 0.20 mill levy for 15 years for the purposes of acquiring, improving, operating, and maintaining natural areas, open spaces, and cultural, historic and nature education sites within the county to protect drinking water sources, wildlife habitat, and agricultural land, including along the Rio Grande, and to allow children and families to get outdoors in nature, with all expenditures subject to independent annual audit and citizen review?

With any questions or for more information please contact:

Wendy Muzzy

Conservation Finance Feasibility Research Director
The Trust for Public Land
(206) 274-2914
wendy.muzzy@tpl.org

or

Jessica Welch

Conservation Finance Senior Research Associate
The Trust for Public Land
(206) 274-2907
jessica.welch@tpl.org

www.tpl.org

Appendix 3: Criteria Matrix



Taos Community Conservation Plan

Model Criteria
April 12, 2016

1	2	3	400.0%	5		6	7		
Goal	Goal Weights	Criteria	Criteria Weights	Data Interpretation to Scale 0 - 5	Methodology	Data (Description, Date, Resolution)	Data Source	Model Details (for complex models, include strategy description, rationale, ppt link, advisors)	Notes
Protect water quality and quantity	40%								
		WQ01: Protect riparian areas	17.0%		<p>Functioning riparian systems are critical for protection of water quality and quantity. Wetland areas provide critical filtration and storm management functions and areas of high canopy forest/shrubs for small streams provide important temperature regulation. This model prioritizes areas with native vegetation key in protection of well functioning riparian areas.</p> <p>Perennial streams buffered by 165ft . Areas within this buffer zone were combined with land cover, tree canopy and stream width and were prioritized as follows:</p> <p>Very High Priority (5) = wetland land cover or small streams (stream order <=3) with forest and shrub land cover >60% canopy cover.</p> <p>High Priority (4) = small streams (stream order <=3) with forest and shrub land cover <60% canopy cover and large streams with forest or shrub cover.</p> <p>Moderate Priority (3) = small streams (stream order <=3) with herbaceous land cover and large streams (stream order >=4) with native vegetation</p>	NHDPlus - Perennial Streams NLCD 2011 Land cover NLCD Tree Canopy	ESRI Green Infrastructure Data National Land cover Dataset (2011)	Riparian buffer size based on recommendation from a study completed by Mayer et al, 2005 . The study found that riparian buffers between ft. 85 and 165 ft. were optimal for removing 70% to 85% of pollution. MAYER, P. M., S. REYNOLDS, T. CANFIELD, AND M. MCCUTCHEN. RIPARIAN BUFFER WIDTH, VEGETATIVE COVER, AND NITROGEN REMOVAL EFFECTIVENESS: A REVIEW OF CURRENT SCIENCE AND REGULATIONS. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC, EPA/600/R-05/118, 2005.	
		WQ02: Protect and sustain soils	17.0%		<p>Soil types can erode and be transported at significantly different rates. Soils with high rates of erodibility are more likely to impact water quality, and preservation and appropriate management of riparian areas with erodible soils can improve water quality of a stream. This model modifies a Department of Natural Resources in Minnesota (DNRMN) soil erodibility index to identify areas with potential for high erodibility that are important for protection. The DNRMN index combines the inherent erodibility of a soil type</p>	SSURGO - kfactor Percent Slope	SSURGO ESRI Image Service - 10m Terrain	The slope scale erodibility methodology is described more fully here (http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/whaf/about/scores/geomorphology/soil_erosibility.html)	

WQ03: Reduce catastrophic wildfire risk	17.0%		<p>Frequent fires are a key process in a properly functioning forested systems of the southwest. Past management and changes in climate have increased the frequency and intensity of fires and have catastrophic impacts on the functioning of forest ecosystems. Catastrophic fires are typically categorized as those fires that burn with an intensity and size that can cause damage to soil destroying the water storage and filtration abilities of forested areas. This causes soil and debris along with associated pollutants to runoff and impact water quality of an area.</p> <p>This model prioritizes areas at risk of catastrophic fires. The model includes Wildfire Hazard Potential (WHP) data, Probability of Debris Flow data, and Estimated Volume of Debris Flow data. The WHP data is an indicator of how likely an area is to burn; the two debris flow layers depict areas with the likelihood of burning severely and estimates the potential debris flow impacts. The three data layers were combined using an equal weighted sum and sliced using a natural breaks classification into 0 to 5 priority classes.</p>	<p>The wildfire hazard potential (WHP) map is a raster geospatial product produced by the USDA Forest Service, Fire Modeling Institute that can help to inform evaluations of wildfire risk or prioritization of fuels management needs across very large landscapes (millions of acres). With these datasets as inputs, we produced an index of WHP for all of the conterminous United States at a 270-meter resolution. We present the WHP map in two forms: 1) continuous integer values, and 2) five WHP classes of very low, low, moderate, high, and very high. Areas mapped with higher WHP values represent fuels with a higher probability of experiencing torching, crowning, and other forms of extreme fire behavior under conducive weather conditions, based primarily on 2010 landscape conditions.</p> <p>Hydrologic Processing Units (HPU) derived from a 30-meter DEM, Debris Flow and</p>	<p>Wildland Hazard Potential: Dillon, G.K.; J. Menakis; and F. Fay. 2015. Wildland Fire Potential: A Tool for Assessing Wildfire Risk and Fuels Management Needs. (link is external) pp 60-76 In Keane, R. E.; Jolly, M.; Parsons, R.; and Riley, K. Proceedings of the large wildland fires conference; May 19-23, 2014; Missoula, MT. Proc. RMRS-P-73. Fort Collins, CO: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. 345 p. - 2015</p> <p>Debris Flow Probability and Volume: The Nature conservancy in New Mexico 2012</p>	<p>The WHP map depict "the relative potential for wildfire that would be difficult for suppression resources to contain. To create the 2014 version we built upon spatial estimates of wildfire likelihood and intensity generated in 2014 with the Large Fire Simulator (FSim) for the Fire Program Analysis system (FPA), as well as spatial fuels and vegetation data from LANDFIRE 2010 and point locations of fire occurrence from FPA (ca. 1992 - 2012)." The Nature Conservancy completed a rapid assessment of wildfire and debris flow probability and volume. The rapid assessment is based on methodology developed by Cannon et al (2003) and used data key predictors of debris flow including percent slope, modeled burn severity, soil type and percent rainfall expected.</p>	
WQ04: Protect Acequias	17.0%		<p>Recent studies have found that "the seepage associated with acequias increases recharge to shallow aquifers, enhances riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat along ditches, and improves water quality." (Fernald and Guldán, 2004). This model buffers acequias by 100ft and prioritizes conservation of all buffered acequias areas. All buffered acequias areas were assigned high priority.</p>	<p>Acequia data provided by the Taos Soil and Water Conservation District for the Rio Grande del Rancho , Rio Pueblo de Taos, and Rio Hondo. The data provided was collected as a part of their Phase I acequia data compilation project. Errors are known to exist, however the data for these streams are much more reliable than the NHD Plus data. NHD plus data filtered by FCODE (33600) were used for the other portions of the study area.</p>	<p>Taos Soil and Water District Acequia data NHDPlus</p>	<p>River, Acequia and Shallow Groundwater Interactions: Water Task Force Report. Alexander Fernald and Steven Guldán. New Mexico State University. November 2004.</p>	
WQ05: Protect wetlands important for groundwater recharge	17.0%		<p>Drinking water for Town of Taos and the surrounding communities primarily comes from groundwater. Wetlands key source of recharge, and recharge depends on a number of qualities including vegetation, soils, perimeter to volume ratio and aquifer gradient. This model focuses identifying wetlands with a high perimeter to volume ratio. A high perimeter to volume ratio is indicative of high infiltration since the surface area available for infiltration is high.</p> <p>This model prioritizes wetlands using a proxy for perimeter to volume ratio. The perimeter to volume ratio was calculated using perimeter of wetland (riverine wetland excluded) to area of wetland ratio. The ratio was transformed to 0to 5 scale using natural breaks classification where 0 indicates no wetlands and no priority; 3 indicates low ratio and moderate priority; and 5 indicates the highest ratio and very high priority.</p>	<p>Drinking water locations - surface diversions and groundwater wells</p>	<p>New Mexico Office of State Engineers</p>		

		WQ06: Protect headwater streams	17.0%		Headwater stream have large impact on both the water quality and flow conditions of downstream waters. "Hydrological processes in headwater catchments control the recharge of subsurface water stores, flow paths, and residence times of water throughout landscapes" (Alexander et al, 2007). Conservation and management of functioning headwater streams is critical for protection of water quality and quantity. The models uses the Strahler classification to identify headwater streams. All first order streams were considered headwater streams and buffered by 50 ft. These areas were assigned very high priority.	NHD Plus - Strahler classification	NHD Plus	Alexander, R. B., Boyer, E. W., Smith, R. A., Schwarz, G. E. and Moore, R. B. (2007). The Role of Headwater Streams in Downstream Water Quality1. JAWRA Journal of the American Water Resources Association, 43: 41-59. doi:10.1111/j.1752-1688.2007.00005.x	
	14%								
Protect wildlife habitat									
		WF01: Protect riparian habitat	17.0%		Wetland and riparian areas are of especially high value for wildlife. They are extremely productive ecosystems and provide diverse habitat for wildlife, especially in the Southwest where riparian and wetland habitat totals less than 1% of the available habitat area yet supports majority of wildlife in some phase of their development. This model uses the freshwater integrity and wetland and riparian areas data from the New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool and the ESRI Green Infrastructure core habitat data to identify and prioritize key riparian habitat. The freshwater integrity layer is a measure of watershed stress from human impacts and the risk of potential degradation to habitat. The wetland and riparian areas represents areas of high value for wildlife habitat and ecosystem services. ESRI core habitat data was filtered using the wetlands per acre attribute. Cores with more wetlands have better habitat potential than those with less. Both the NMCHAT data layers were reclassified from six-level prioritization scheme, where 1 represents areas "most crucial" and 6 representing areas "least crucial" to the TPL prioritization scheme where most crucial areas represent very high priority (5) and lest crucial areas represent little to no priority (0). This was combined with ESRI habitat cores with >10% wetland habitat. The maximum cell value from NMCHAT data and ESRI core habitat was selected and represents priority riparian habitat.	New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set ESRI Habitat Cores	New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set. New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool: Mapping Fish and Wildlife Habitat in New Mexico. New Mexico Game & Fish Department and Natural Heritage New Mexico. Published 12/10/2013. Accessed 3/31/2016. http://nmchat.org/ Seri habitat cores are natural intact areas, or cores, larger than 100 acres in size and at least 200 meters wide, which are largely undisturbed. (http://www.esri.com/~/media/Files/Pdfs/green_infrastructure/Green_Infrastructure_Booklet)		
		WF02: Protect T&E and sensitive species habitat	17.0%		Conserving biological diversity - intact assemblage of plants and animals of an area that includes T&E species as well as all species of concern - is an important part of maintaining functioning ecosystems and contributes to the aesthetic, ecological, educational, historical, recreational, and scientific value of an area. This model uses the species of concern data from the New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (NMCHAT) to identify and prioritize key habitat for Threatened and Endangered species as well as all Species of Concern. Species of Concern (SOC) are defined as species of state and/or national conservation importance. A list of SOC can be found on the NMCHAT website (http://nmchat.org/data-metadata.html). The SOC layer was reclassified from six-level prioritization scheme, where 1 represents areas "most crucial" and 6 representing areas "least crucial" to the TPL prioritization scheme where most crucial areas represent very high priority (5) and lest crucial areas represent little to no priority (0).	New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set	New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set. New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool: Mapping Fish and Wildlife Habitat in New Mexico. New Mexico Game & Fish Department and Natural Heritage New Mexico. Published 12/10/2013. Accessed 3/31/2016. http://nmchat.org/		

WF03: Protect Migration Corridors	17.0%		<p>Wildlife corridors connect habitats and are important for sustaining wildlife populations.</p> <p>This model uses the wildlife corridor data from the New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (NMCHAT) and the New Mexico Natural Resource Assessment Green Infrastructure data layer(2008) to identify and prioritize important wildlife corridors. The NMCHAT corridor data is based on a corridor model for cougars that was developed by K. Menke (2008) for New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and was used as a surrogate model for multiple species pending development of additional species-specific models. the Green Infrastructure layer identifies landscapes with the potential to form an interconnected green space network. Areas with cougar corridor habitat identified in the NMCHAT tool were assigned very high priority value (5), all other habitat assigned low priority value (0). Green Infrastructure corridor data considerate areas of moderate priority not identified in NMCHAT model were added as moderate and moderate to High priorities.</p>	<p>New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set New Mexico Natural Resource Assessment - Green Infrastructure (2008)</p>	<p>New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set. New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool: Mapping Fish and Wildlife Habitat in New Mexico. New Mexico Game & Fish Department and Natural Heritage New Mexico. Published 12/10/2013. Accessed 3/31/2016. http://nmchat.org/</p> <p>ENMRD Forestry Division. 2010. New Mexico Statewide Natural Resource Assessment & Strategy and Response Plans. Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, Forestry Division 1220 So. St. Francis Dr., Santa Fe, NM 87105. 147 pp. Accessed 6/21/2016 http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/documents/New_MexicoNatural_ResourceAssessment.pdf</p>	<p>Kurt Menke. 2008. Locating Potential Cougar (Puma concolor) Corridors in New Mexico Using a Least-Cost Path Corridor GIS Analysis. Share With Wildlife Final Project Report Professional Services Contract# 08-516-0000-00005</p>	
WF04: Protect unique habitat cores	17.0%		<p>Habitat cores are areas of high ecological value that provide best habitat for wildlife. They are also the most likely to contain best functioning habitat. This model prioritizes habitat cores based on thickness of the cores (depth of interior habitat) as a measure of habitat quality and the number of endemic species as a measure of habitat uniqueness. The thickness and endemic species number for the habitat core were each transformed to TPL's priority 0 to 5 scale and then combined using a weighted sum to give overall habitat core priorities.</p>	<p>Habitat cores are intact habitat areas. They are "undisturbed land areas at least 100 acres in size and at least 200 meters wide. They were derived using a combination of the National Land Cover Database (2011) and the US Census Bureau's TIGER files roads and railroads."</p>	<p>ESRI</p>		
WF05: Protect fish habitat	17.0%		<p>Conserving aquatic habitat is important for viability fish and other aquatic species populations. Quality aquatic habitat is also an indicator of areas that provide important ecosystems services such as stabilized streambanks that retards erosion.</p> <p>This model uses the aquatic species of economic and recreation importance data from the New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (NMCHAT) to identify and prioritize key habitat for fish and other aquatic species. Aquatic species of economic and recreational importance were defined by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and include designated sportfish waters (both streams and lakes). Areas with Aquatic species of economic and recreational importance identified habitat were assigned very high priority value (5), all other habitat assigned low priority value (0). Perennial streams buffered by 165 feet were then added to the layer to add priority for fish and other aquatic species habitat not identified in the NMCHAT tool.</p>	<p>New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set NHDPlus</p>	<p>New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set. New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool: Mapping Fish and Wildlife Habitat in New Mexico. New Mexico Game & Fish Department and Natural Heritage New Mexico. Published 12/10/2013. Accessed 3/31/2016. http://nmchat.org/ NHDPlus - ESRI compiled 2016</p>		
WF06: Protect habitat for game and fish species	17.0%		<p>Conserving habitat for game and fish species is an important part of maintaining functioning ecosystems and contributes to the aesthetic, ecological, educational, historical, recreational, and scientific value of an area.</p> <p>This model uses the terrestrial species of economic and recreation importance data from the New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (NMCHAT) to identify and prioritize key habitat for fish and other aquatic species. Terrestrial species of economic and recreational importance "are based on models developed by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish for 'General' and 'Priority' occupied habitat for bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, pronghorn, cougar, and black bear. General habitat includes the general distribution, as well as year-round and winter ranges. All bighorn sheep habitat is considered 'Priority.' Elk and mule deer had both priority and general habitat designated. Pronghorn, cougar, and black bear had only general habitat designated."</p> <p>The terrestrial species of economic and recreation importance layer was reclassified from six-level prioritization scheme, where 1 represents areas "most crucial" and 6 representing areas "least crucial" to the TPL prioritization scheme where most crucial areas represent very high priority (5) and least crucial areas represent little to no priority (0).</p>	<p>New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set</p>	<p>New Mexico Crucial Habitat Data Set. New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool: Mapping Fish and Wildlife Habitat in New Mexico. New Mexico Game & Fish Department and Natural Heritage New Mexico. Published 12/10/2013. Accessed 3/31/2016. http://nmchat.org/</p>		

Provide access to recreational opportunities	14%								
		RO01: Protect prominent peaks and ridges	8.5%		In the Town of Taos (Re)vision 2020 Plan: "The open spaces, rural landscapes, acequias, recreation areas, historic districts, and urban design traditions" were identified as essential "for the health and sustainability of the economy". For this community conservation plan, preservation of prominent peaks and ridges were identified as a critical element of open space important to locals and tourists in the county. This model uses the landform	ESRI LANDFORM 2016	ESRI		
		RO02: Create network of connected open space	8.5%		In 2004, Taos County developed a Comprehensive Plan that identified county-wide community vision goals and objectives. One of those objectives was to: Protect multiple-use open space areas and create a network of open space. This model prioritizes private parcels in proximity to already conserved lands as priorities for conservation. Additional priority was given to areas based on road density and size. Proximity to existing open space was derived using the near tool, which calculated distance of each private parcel from existing conserved land. High priority assigned to parcels closest to existing conserved land. The mean road density value for each parcels was derived and parcels with lowest road density were prioritized on 0 to 5 scale using a natural breaks classification, where 5 represents large parcels with low road density and 0 represents large parcels with high road density. This was combined with measure of proximity to already conserved land to add priority to smaller large parcel that are close to conserved open space. Overall priority based on proximity, overall size, and road density.	Taos Parcels Existing Roads New Mexico Stewardship and Protected Lands	Taos County 2015 NAVTEQ 2015 Quarter 3 The Trust for Public Land		
		RO03: Encourage a variety of types of recreation with a focus on access to streams and lakes	8.5%		For tourists and locals alike, the streams and lakes of Taos are some of most popular recreation destinations. Maintaining access and associated trails to these spots is important part of the community vision. This model prioritizes trails that provide access to perennial streams and lakes in the County. All perennial streams and lakes identified in NHDPlus layer were buffered by 1/4 mile. Any trail intersecting this buffer considered as having potential to provide access to stream our lake and was assigned very high priority (5). All other areas assigned low priority value (0).	NHDPlus Existing Trails	NHDPlus TPL Enchanted Circle Trail Database		
		RO04: Conserve priority recreation opportunities identified in enchanted circle trail plan	8.5%		Along with this Community Conservation Plan, Taos Land Trust and Trust for Public Land are developing an Enchanted Circle Trail Plan. As part of this effort, community is identifying a number of trails that will help develop and enhance the trail system that will improve community vitality, recreation, and alternative transportation and will build resilient economic benefits. This model assigns very high priority (5) to all proposed trails and road improvement identified in the Enchanted Circle Planning Effort.	Proposed Enchanted Circle Trail and Road Improvements	The Trust for Public Land and Taos Land Trust		
		RO05: Identify gaps in local park access	28.5%		Local park gaps is based on two factors: Park gaps are based on a service areas(walking distance) of a half-mile radius for all parks. Those areas with within a block group with a population greater than 0 and with a housing density in rural areas of >= 25 housing units per sq km not within a 10min walk are defined as a park gap. Demographic profiles are based on ESRI 2015 block group forecasts are then used to determine park need based on the percentage of population under the age of 19, low income households, housing density, and population density (people per acre). The combined level of park need results takes the four demographic profile results and assigns the following weights: 1% = percentage of population under the age of 19 49% = population density (people per acre) 1% = low income households (<35k / year) 49% = housing density	2016 ESRI Demographic Data Parks (2016) Housing Density	ESRI Taos County Theobald 2016 Housing Density		

		R06: Identify gaps in access to trailheads on public land	28.5%		Gaps in Access to trailhead on public land is based on two factors: Trailhead gaps are based on a service areas(Biking distance) of a two and a half mile radius* for all trailheads on public lands. Those areas with within a block group with a population greater than 0 and with a housing density in rural areas of >= 25 housing units per sq km not within a two and a half mile are defined as a trailhead gap. Demographic profiles are based on ESRI 2015 block group forecasts are then used to determine park need based on the percentage of population under the age of 19, low income households, housing density, and population density (people per acre)). The combined level of park need results takes the four demographic profile results and assigns the following weights: 1% = percentage of population under the age of 19 49% = population density (people per acre) 1% = low income households (<35k / year) 49% = housing density	2017 ESRI Demographic Data Parks (2016) Housing Density Trailhead	ESRI Taos County Theobald 2016 Housing Density USFS Recreation Access Points - Carson National Forest BLM Recreation Access Points	* distance based on the following study - Iacono M, Krizek K, El-Geneidy A. Estimating Accurate Distance Decay Functions for Multiple Modes and Different Purposes. Twin Cities: Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota; 2008. Access to Destinations: How Close is Close Enough?	
	33%								
Protect cultural resources including traditional agriculture									
		CR01: Preserve agriculture	13.0%		In 2004, Taos County developed a Comprehensive Plan that identified county-wide community vision goals and objectives. One of those objectives was to: "Support, maintain and preserve the County's rural, cultural and agricultural land uses and natural	USA Cropland	ESRI Image Service (NLCD 2016 improvement)		
		CR02: Preserve timber lands	13.0%		Timber harvesting has been part of land use in Taos county for many years. Industry, however, has declined in recent years. This model prioritizes areas with sustainable supply timber that could help sustain declining industry. The model summarizes woody biomass using mean zonal stats function for each forest type with 30m x 30m pixel. Priority value assigned by using a natural breaks classification where highest priority are forest with high biomass and low priority are forest types with low biomass.	USFS Woody Biomass USFS Forest Type	USDA USFS - hosted by ESRI Image Service		
		CR03: Maintain viable agricultural sector and acequia use	13.0%		Acequias, communal irrigation systems, were developed to help provide equitable water use and governance in arid communities of southwest are important piece of sustaining the traditional	Acequia data provided by the Taos Soil and Water Conservation District for the	Taos Soil and Water District Acequia data NHDPlus		
		CR04: Protect important viewsheds	13.0%		Scenic vistas and viewsheds increase desirability of an area for residents and visitors alike, enhancing quality of life while providing economic benefits to the community. Preserving scenic vistas and viewsheds allows a community to protect this unique characteristic and is an important element of smart growth planning for a community. This model identifies viewsheds for 26 community identified observation points including: Couse Pasture, the Mitchell property, Taos Pueblo, Taos Mountain, El Prado Pastures, Gorge Bridge, Horseshoe Bend, Pilar, Overlook of Rio Pueblo next to 518, Wheeler Peak, Angel Fire, El Salto, Wild and Scenic River Overlook, Red River, Moreno Valley, Taos Valley Overlook, Overland Pasture, Rio Hondo Canyon, West Mesa, Cerro de Olla, Valdez Rim, Taos Ski Valley, Pueblo Peak, and Taos Plaza. The identified viewsheds were combined using a weighted sum overlay and then reclassified using a natural breaks classification. The weights were determined by the percentage votes received for each observation point from the community survey results For example, 41.43% respondents replied that the Rio Grande Gorge was an important viewshed point; 30.16% for Taos Pueblo; 12.45 for Taos Plaza.	Digital elevation Model (10 to 30 m)	ESRI Image Service		

Appendix 4: Community Survey



Taos County Community Conservation Plan and Enchanted Circle Trail Plan

COMMUNITY SURVEY 2016



Taos County Community Conservation Plan

Enchanted Circle Trails Plan

Community Survey 2016

1. Executive Summary

A summary of key results is provided below.

Overall highlights/themes

- Water, wildlife, recreation, and historical/cultural resources (including agriculture) are the highest priorities for conservation.
- Over 86% of survey participants support expanding the trail system in the Enchanted Circle.
- Residents are most dissatisfied with paved options for road biking.
- There is no consensus about the relationship between increasing tourism and protecting local culture.
- The top priority for trail investments is creating new walking and biking options to increase safety.

Who responded to the survey?

There were 655 responses to the community survey. Nearly all the responses were online, but a handful were submitted through hardcopy forms that had been circulated at several community events.

- Over 70% of respondents have lived in the Taos area for more than six years, and over 57% have been in the area for more than ten years.
- 56% of responses were from men.
- Over 40% of participants were 61 years old or older. Less than 10% of responses were from people 35 years old or younger.
- Over 40% of participants have household incomes of over \$75,000 per year, and 18% had household incomes under \$25,000 annually.
- The largest percentage of survey respondents reside in the town of Taos, followed by Angel Fire.
- Slightly over 8% of survey participants said that at least one member of their household needs ADA-accessible trails.
- Only 14% of respondents identified themselves as Hispano/Hispanic, but key results were weighted to accurately reflect local demographics.

Conservation priorities

Participants were asked to choose their top three priorities among seven possible conservation goals. The goal options were based on input at the first stakeholder meeting in July 2015. Once Hispano/Hispanic responses were weighted to reflect local demographics, the overall priorities were: **(1) Protect water quality and quantity; (2) Protect wildlife habitat; (3) Provide access to recreational opportunities; and (4) Protect cultural and historical resources, including agriculture.**

Support for expanding the trail system

There is very strong support for expanding the trail system. Over 86% of survey participants support or strongly support expanding the trail and pathway system in Enchanted Circle. Over 60% strongly support expansion, and less than 5% do not support expansion. There was not widespread support for expanded access to water-based recreation.

Current trail activities. Many residents use trails and pathways daily or almost daily. The most common trail activities are wildlife viewing, dog walking, and hiking/walking/running on dirt paths. The activities that respondents participate in the least are were snowmobiling, hunting, road biking for transportation, off-road ATVs and motorcycles, and horseback riding.

Trail satisfaction. Only two categories of trails have higher dissatisfaction than satisfaction: road biking for recreation and road biking to commute. This is likely a result of safety concerns on local roads. Walking/running on paved paths has equal satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Highest satisfaction is with wildlife viewing and with hiking/walking on unpaved paths.

Investing in trails. The first priority for trail investments by large margin (for both participants overall and for Hispano/Hispanic respondents in particular) was to create new pathways for safety. The second priority for both was creating long, continuous road cycling paths. The third priority overall was maintaining/improving existing back country trails, and for Hispano participants it was new non-motorized backcountry trails.

2. Methods

The community survey was available online from September 2015 through January 2016. Outreach for the survey included posting survey information on the Town of Taos and Taos Land Trust websites and in a weeklong wallpaper ad in the online version of the *Taos News*. The Taos Land Trust and others in the core team also reached out to the Questa Economic Development Fund, Taos Entrepreneurial Network, Taos Chamber of Commerce, University of New Mexico faculty, Taos Charter School, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Taos Health Council, Agricultural Resolution Committee (now Alianza Agri-Cultura), and community leaders in Angel Fire. Postcards advertising the community survey were distributed at the speak out events listed below. Survey information was also posted on community bulletin boards in Questa. Paper surveys (and postage paid return envelopes) were distributed at Ancianos and at Super Save Market (in addition to postcards with the survey website information). The survey URL was also included in utility bills for the Kit Carson Electric Co-op. In addition to survey responses, nearly 300 people participated in speak out poster activities in fall 2015. The poster activities captured community priorities for conservation values and trail types. A total of 736 people were contacted at speak outs and other outreach events (breakdown below).

- September: Farmers' Market (205) and San Geronimo Day (117)
- October: Farmers' Market (63)
- November: Cid's Market (170), Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (24), Ancianos Lunch (55), Elevation
- Coffee (31), Super Save Market (71)

Survey Weighting

Despite targeted outreach, the Hispano/Hispanic community was underrepresented in survey responses. Two-thirds of respondents answered our ethnicity question, and, of those, only 14% indicated that they were Hispanic/Hispano. According to census data, 56% of Taos County residents identify as

Hispanic/Latino. To compensate for the underrepresentation of the Hispano/Hispano community, key responses were weighted so that they represented 56% of responses in determining the goals of the Community Conservation Plan.

3. Detailed Survey Results

The survey results are listed here in the categories “Demographics,” “Open Space Conservation,” and “Trails and Recreation.” The question numbers that appeared in the original survey are indicated by “Q1,” etc. at the beginning of the question as listed. The demographic questions were at the end of the original survey, which is why they begin with “Q16” below.

Demographics

Demographic questions were optional and appeared at the end of the survey. They are included at the beginning here for context. Approximately 200 participants did not answer the demographic questions.

Q16. How long have you lived in Taos County or the Enchanted Circle region?

By far the most common answer to our question about length of residency in the region was “more than 10 years.” Nearly 48% of respondents have been in the area for more than 10 years, followed by nearly 18% who have lived in the area for 1 to 5 years.

Length of Residency

How long have you lived in Taos County or the Enchanted Circle region?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I do not live in the region.	8.8%	36
Less than 1 year	2.9%	12
1 to 5 years	17.9%	73
6 to 10 years	13.0%	53
More than 10 years	47.7%	194
I was born in the region.	9.6%	39
answered question		407
skipped question		208

Q23. In what zip code is your primary residence located?

The five most common zip codes among survey respondents were 87571, 87710, 87529, 87557, and 87514.

Most Common Zip Codes

Zip Code	Number of Respondents
87571	93
87710	49
87529	41
87557	37

Most Common Zip Codes

Zip Code	Number of Respondents
87514	26

Q24. Name of the city or community where you live?

Survey participants were also asked to identify the community where they reside. Although many of the communities listed below are part of the town of Taos, only those who specified the town of Taos in general are counted in that category below. The two most common communities listed were the town of Taos (73) and Angel Fire (52). These were followed by Ranchos de Taos and El Prado.

City/Community of Residence

Community	Number	Community	Number
Town of Taos	73	Llano Querando	4
Angel Fire	56	Talpa	4
Ranchos de Taos	32	Colorado	3
El Prado	31	Penasco	3
New Mexico - Other	23	Rio Rancho	3
Arroyo Seco	22	San Cristobal	3
Texas	19	Taos Canyon	3
Red River	16	Taos Pueblo	3
Arroyo Hondo	11	Taos Ski Valley	3
Las Colonias	11	Outside NM - Other	3
Questa	11	Idlewilld	2
Albuquerque	9	Ojo Sarco	2
Valdez	9	Oklahoma	2
Eagle Nest	7	Pilar	2
Cañon	6	Pot Creek	2
Des Montes	6	Valle Escondido	2
Hondo	5		

Q17. What is your gender?

Nearly 56% of the survey responses were from men; just over 44% of responses were from women.

Gender Breakdown of Survey Responses

What is your gender?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
Answer Options		
Female	44.2%	178
Male	55.8%	225
answered question		403

skipped question	212
------------------	-----

Q18. What is your ethnicity?

White/Anglo participants were over-represented and Hispano/Hispanic/Latino participants were underrepresented in survey responses. Only 14% of survey responses were from Hispano participants even though the population of Taos County is 56% percent Hispano.

Ethnicity Breakdown of Survey Responses

What is your ethnicity? Please select as many as apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
White/Anglo	81.1%	321
Hispano/Hispanic/Latino	13.9%	55
Other	6.8%	27
American Indian/Native American	3.5%	14
Asian	0.8%	3
answered question		396
skipped question		219

Q19. What is your age?

Approximately 90% of survey responses were from participants over 35 years old. Younger community members were underrepresented.

Age Breakdown of Survey Responses

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18	0.2%	1
18 to 35	9.6%	39
36 to 60	48.9%	198
61 or older	41.2%	167
answered question		405
skipped question		210

Q20. What is your gross household income?

Approximately 64% of survey responses came from participants with household above \$50,000 per year, and over 40% had household incomes over \$75,000. Lower-income community members were underrepresented.

Household Income Breakdown of Survey Responses

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
What is your gross household income?		

Under \$25,000 per year	18.6%	67
Above \$25,000 but less than \$50,000 per year	17.2%	62
Above \$50,000 but less than \$75,000 per year	23.9%	86
\$75,000 or more per year	40.3%	145
answered question		360
skipped question		255

Q21. Number of children (under age 18) in household?

Most survey participants either did not have children living at home or did not answer this question. The average number of children among responses was 0.5 (both mode and median were zero). Of the 105 survey respondents who did have children at home, the average number of children was 1.9. Parents with children at home were underrepresented.

Q22. Do any members of your household have a need for ADA-accessible trails?

Slightly over 8% of survey participants said that at least one member of their household needs ADA-accessible trails.

Household Members that Need ADA-accessible Trails

Do any members of your household have a need for ADA-accessible trails?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	8.3%	32
No	91.7%	353
Please specify if you would like:		20
answered question		385
skipped question		230

Open Space Conservation

Q1. Please rank the top three regional values you think are the most important for current and future generations in Taos County.

This question was used to establish which community goals to map through the Community Conservation Plan process. Survey participants were asked to choose their top three priorities among seven possible conservation goals: water quality/quantity, access to recreational opportunities, views, acequias, agricultural land/ranch land, cultural and historic resources, and wildlife. The selection of these suggested goals was based on input at the first community meeting in July 2015.

Results below are shown with Hispano/Hispanic weighting already calculated. Totals are show for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices separately and totaled together. For “choice ranked total” first choice responses were weighted most heavily (given full weight); second choice responses were weighted 0.8; and third choice responses were weighted 0.6.

Top Three Regional Priorities

Goal	1st	2nd	3rd	Unranked Total	Choice Ranked Total
Water Quality and Quantity	1044	160	47	1251	1200
Cultural and Historic Resources, Including Traditional Agriculture	174	600	614	1388	1022
Wildlife	57	365	268	690	510
Access to Recreational Opportunities	84	190	269	543	397
Cultural and Historic Resources	44	211	320	575	1022
Acequias	57	269	110	436	338
Agricultural Land/Ranch Land	73	120	184	377	279
Views	47	67	137	251	183
Other	24	7	50	81	60
TOTAL	1,604	1,989	1,999	5,592	5,011

Because of input from the wider community engagement process, protection of agricultural land and acequias was folded into the “Protect cultural resources, including traditional agriculture” goal. As a result this goal became the second-highest priority below protecting water. Once Hispano responses were weighted to reflect local demographics, the overall priorities were:

1. Protect water quality and quantity;
2. Protect cultural resources, including traditional agriculture;
3. Protect wildlife habitat; and
4. Provide access to recreational opportunities.

Although not shown here, more Hispano/Hispanic participants (88 percent) ranked water as their most important regional value than did Anglo participants (75 percent). In addition, Hispano/Hispanic respondents were more concerned about agriculture and acequias and slightly less concerned about recreational access.

Q3. What places, landscape features, cultural sites, or natural resources do you think are most threatened in Taos County?

When asked about the area’s most threatened places and resources, participants were most concerned about impacts from development and impacts on water. Below is the word cloud for the most threatened places and resources among all survey responses. The overall and Hispano/Hispanic word clouds are similar, but development, forest, Pueblo, and rio/river are more prominent in the overall result, while Hispano/Hispanic responses placed more emphasis on acequias and family farms.



- To some extent most communities have short term vision and consider the money brought in by tourists more important than the preservation of the natural environment.
- Tourism is our number one source of revenue. We need to clean up our forest, improve and maintain our trail system and allow more and better access to our natural forest for our guests and the residents.
- Yes, but we do have to keep our taxes to a minimum, that's an ongoing task. If we can increase police security in the Penasco area I believe it will help. Our reputation in this area is not good because of the drugs and alcohol [which] hurts tourism tremendously.
- I don't think they value tourism, but it is the only thing that brings new money into Taos and surrounding area. People are concerned with retaining local culture at the expense of the town. Change and progress must occur to keep Taos viable. This is not understood, nor is there anyone (i.e., gov't) working to find balance in these areas. Again, water use plays a huge role in both of these.
- Tourism is certainly a lifeblood of the region. BUT we must retain our uniqueness, landscapes, community, culture and funkiness, in order to be the draw that we are.
- Some value it and others do not. Tourism threatens local culture. Change is inevitable and I believe that we need some kind of training for cultural sensitivity land conflict resolution. The agenda of local government representatives is often times questionable
- No, I think increasing tourism (or any other industry for that matter) is mostly given lip service while maintaining local culture and resisting change continues to be the top priority.
- I don't believe increasing tourism and retaining local culture is a high priority in the Taos community. I think the Pueblo residents value their culture & want it preserved, as do most Taos county residents. However, most of us are so consumed with keeping body & soul together, that it is hard to give priority & thought to these other issues
- Local culture is a lot of what drives tourism in Taos County. It all has to work together to work at all. I think our local culture is well protected, isn't going to change much, and is what makes us who we are.
- Here is what needs to be done. Encourage people to visit, and strongly discourage them from staying.
- I think that the Anglo would like to see increased tourism and growth in Taos, but the Hispanic and Native American would like to see Taos with less tourism and keeping local culture as it was in the past. The problem with that is the without change there is no growth. Without growth there is no revenue.
- Yes, retaining local culture for history/roots, increased tourism for business. Right now, Taos is too congested, need an alternate north/south route, also need tourism to increase in outskirts, not within Taos proper, already too congested. In-town Chile Line is a good idea to reduce traffic, but to be attractive to tourists, needs to run every 10 minutes, not every 35 to 40 minutes.
- Yes. Maintain trails. Build additional trails. Allow mountain bikes and hikers to use these trails.
- I don't think there's a community-wide cohesive opinion on these. There are those who value increasing tourism, and it's often very much at odds with the opinions of those who want to retain local culture.
- Yes. Keep Taos pristine. Retain and protect traditional buildings and architecture. Prohibit big box expansion. Make Taos different from every other town in America that is or has already been totally homogenized.

Trails and Recreation

Q8. Do you support expanding the trail/pathway system in the Enchanted Circle region?

Overall, 86% of survey participants support or strongly support expanding the trail and pathway system in the Enchanted Circle region. Over 60% strongly support expansion, and less than 5% do not support expansion. Among Hispanic/Hispano respondents and those born in the region approximately 70% support or strongly support expanding the trail system.

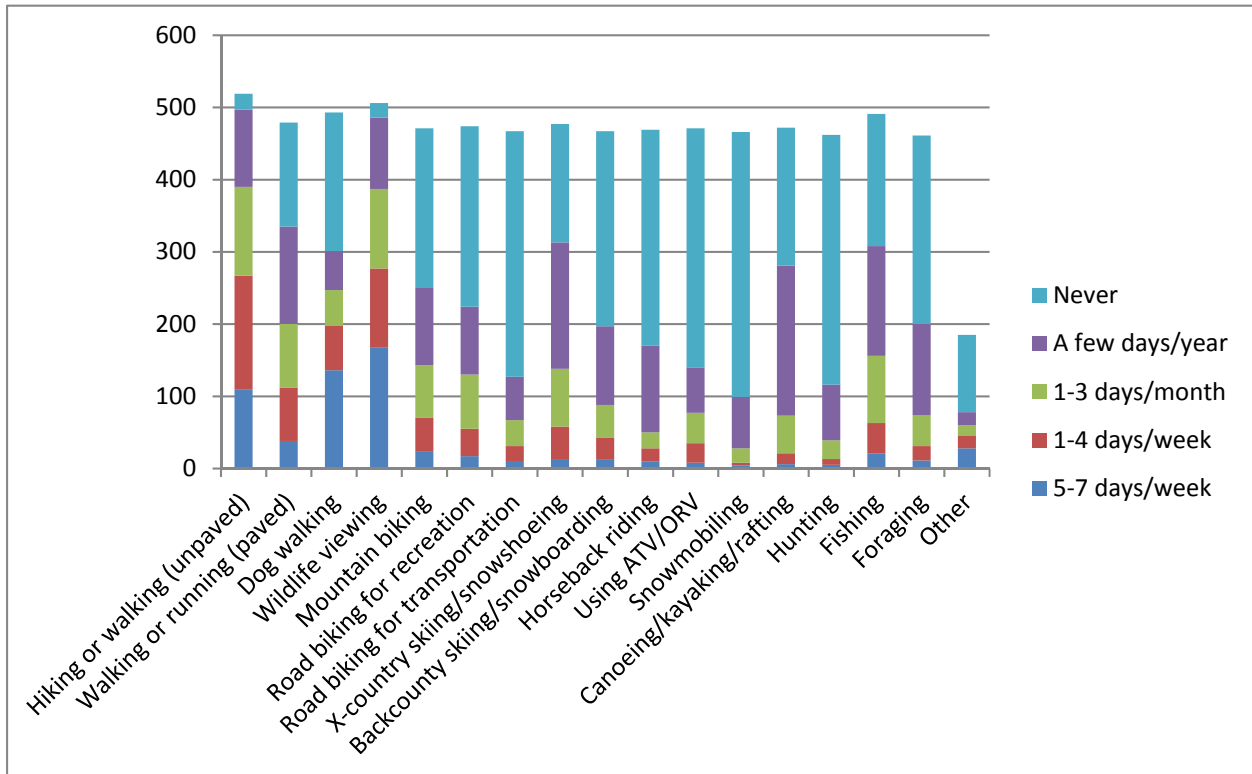
Support for Expanding the Trail/Pathway System in the Enchanted Circle

Do you support expanding the trail/pathway system in the Enchanted Circle Region?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly support	60.8%	301
Support	25.7%	127
No opinion	8.9%	44
Do not support	3.2%	16
Strongly object	1.4%	7
	<i>answered question</i>	495
	<i>skipped question</i>	120

Q6. How often do you or other members of your household typically participate in the following activities?

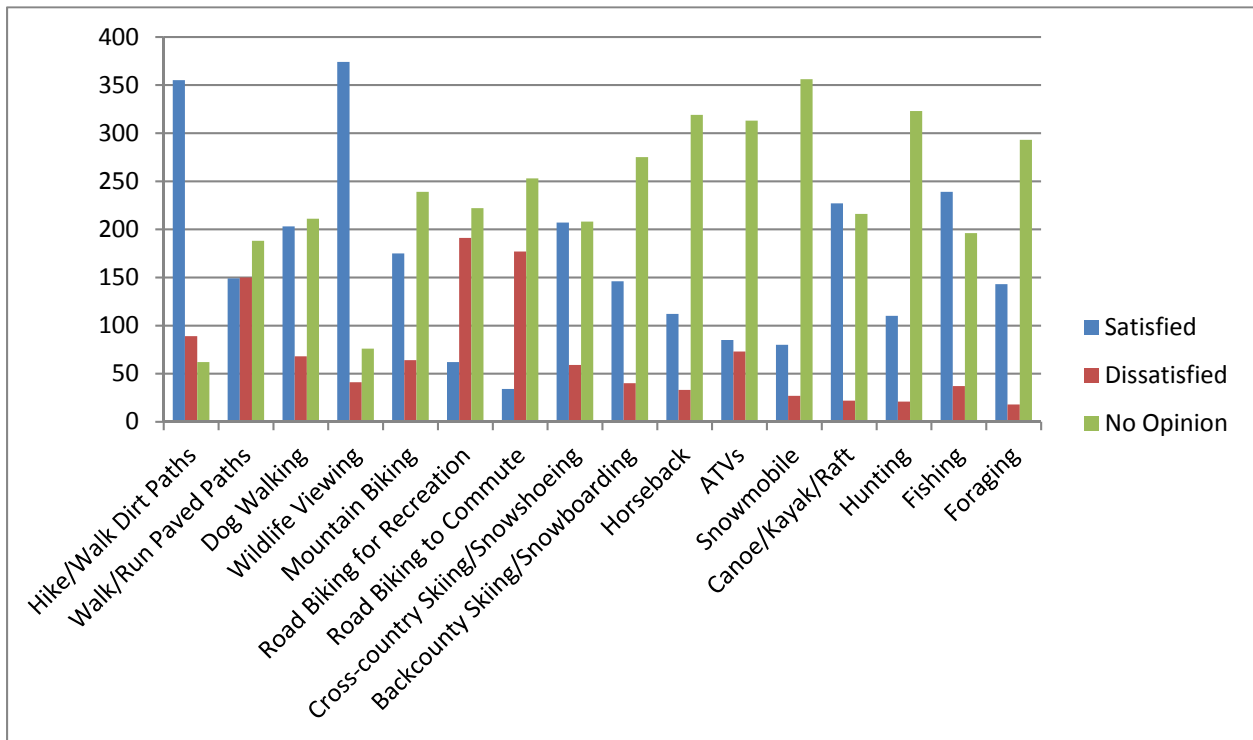
Overall, the top three activities by a large margin are wildlife viewing (155), dog walking (131), and hiking/walking/running on dirt paths (107). Hiking/walking/running on dirt paths (146) and wildlife viewing (104) also rank highest for activities that respondents participate in 1-4 days per week. The activities that respondents participate in the least are were snowmobiling (345), hunting (319), road biking for transportation (312), off-road ATVs and motorcycles (307), and horseback riding (281).

Anglo participants were more likely to hike and run on dirt paths, walk their dogs, view wildlife, and cross-country ski/snowshoe. Hispano/Hispanic respondents were more likely to ride horses, snowmobile, canoe/kayak/raft, and hunt, fish, and forage.



Q7. How satisfied are you with the quality and quantity of trails in the Enchanted Circle region for the following activities?

In the figure below blue represents that respondents are satisfied, and red represents that they are unsatisfied. Only two categories of trails have higher dissatisfaction than satisfaction: road biking for recreation and road biking to commute. Walking/running on paved paths has equal satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Highest satisfaction is with wildlife viewing and with hiking/walking on unpaved paths.



Q9. Please rank up to five connections in the Enchanted Circle region that you would prioritize for bike lanes and/or multiuse paths.

The tables below show the highest priorities for bike lanes or multi-use paths among 17 options provided in the survey. Overall and Hispano only responses showed the same three top priorities (1) Town of Taos to Ranchos de Taos; (2) Town of Taos to Old Blinking Light intersection; and (3) Old Blinking Light to Arroyo Seco.

Highest Priorities for Bike Lanes and Paths (all survey responses)

Trail Connection	Weighted Score
Town of Taos to Ranchos de Taos	140
Town of Taos to the Old Blinking Light intersection	139
The Old Blinking Light intersection to Arroyo Seco	110
Angel Fire to Taos	100
Eagle Nest to Angel Fire	62
Ranchos de Taos to the Old Blinking Light intersection via Route 240/Blueberry Hill Road	58
The Old Blinking Light to the Gorge Bridge	56
Arroyo Seco to Taos Ski Valley	56
Questa to Red River	43
Red River to Eagle Nest	38
Questa to the Wild Rivers Visitor Center in the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument	36
Arroyo Hondo to Arroyo Seco	33
Ranchitos to the Old Blinking Light intersection	31
Ranchos de Taos to Pilar/Orilla Verda Recreation Area	26
Ranchos de Taos to Sipapu Ski Area	23
Valdez to Taos Ski Valley	20
Arroyo Hondo to Questa	18

Highest Priorities for Bike Lanes and Paths (Hispanic/Hispano responses only)

Trail Connection	Weighted Score
Town of Taos to Ranchos de Taos	24
Town of Taos to the Old Blinking Light intersection	12
The Old Blinking Light intersection to Arroyo Seco	9
Arroyo Seco to Taos Ski Valley	8
Eagle Nest to Angel Fire	7
Valdez to Taos Ski Valley	6
Red River to Eagle Nest	6
Arroyo Hondo to Questa	6
Questa to Red River	5
Ranchos de Taos to Pilar/Orilla Verda Recreation Area	4
Arroyo Hondo to Arroyo Seco	4
The Old Blinking Light to the Gorge Bridge	4

Priority Roads and Road Segments for Improved Walking and Biking Paths

ROADS/ROAD SEGMENTS	COUNT
NM 68 – Paseo del Pueblo Sur y Norte	59
NM 240 – Ranchitos Rd.	58
US Hwy 64 - Angel Fire to Taos / Taos to Angel Fire	48
NM 150 - OBL to arroyo seco / arroyo seco to OBL	30
Salazar Rd.	17
NM 434 – 64 – Mora to Angel Fire to Eagle Nest / Eagle Nest to Angel Fire to Mora	16
Gusdorf Rd.	11
Valdez, Rim West	11
NM 230	10
NM 38 - Questa to Red River	9
NM 518	8
NM 522	8
Camino del Medio (from Upper Ranchito Road all the way to State Road 240 in La Cordillera)	5
Camino de la Placita	4
La Posta Rd.	4
NM 518 - Taos to Sipapu (76)	3
Valdez to Taos Ski Valley	2
NM 522, Questa to Costilla	2

Q11. In the area near your place of residence, is there a need for new recreational opportunities or new trails in nearby open spaces, wilderness, or recreational areas?

Sixty percent of survey participants said that there is a need for new recreational opportunities or trails in nearby open spaces, wilderness, or recreational areas. Word clouds for where participants would like new recreational opportunities and what kind of trails they would like are shown below.

Where do you want more trails?



What kind of trails?



Q12. Are there any other open spaces, wilderness, or recreational areas that need more trails?

Fifty-five percent of respondents said that there is a need for more trails in other open spaces, wilderness, or recreational areas.

Where are more trails needed?



Q13. Are there locations where new or improved water or water trail access points/launch sites are needed?

Sixty-six percent of survey participants do not think there is a need for new or improved water or water trail access.

Need for New or Improved Water or Water Trail Access Points/Launch Sites

Are there locations where new or improved water or water trail access points/launch sites are needed?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	34.2%	118
No	65.8%	227
	<i>answered question</i>	345
	<i>skipped question</i>	270

Q14. Please rank up to three priorities for trails and path related investments in the Enchanted Circle region.

The tables below show the top priorities for trail related investments among all survey participants and among Hispano participants only. Priority responses were weighted so that a first choice answer received full weight, a second place selection one-half weight, a third choice was given one-third, and fourth choice one-fourth. The first priority by a large margin for both participants overall and for Hispano respondents in particular was to create new pathways for safety. The second priority for both was long road cycling paths. Third priority overall was maintaining/improving existing back country trails, and for Hispano participants it was new non-motorized backcountry trails. Participants overall and Hispano participants in particular ranked access to water activities as a very low priority. For Hispano participants, motorized trails were a higher priority than new mountain biking trails, while for respondents overall new mountain biking trails were a higher priority than motorized trails (but still a relatively low priority.)

Top Priorities for Trail Related Investments (All Survey Responses)

Investment	Weighted Score
Create new pathways for safety	266
Long road cycling paths	147
Maintain/improve existing back country trails	116
New non-motorized backcountry trails	96
Access to recreation	71
New accessible trails	61
Maintain/improve existing paved paths	55
New mountain biking trails	44
Motorized trails	36
Access to water activities	26

Top Priorities for Trail Related Investments (Hispanic/Hispano Responses Only)

Investment	Weighted Score
Create new pathways for safety	24
Long road cycling paths	15
New non-motorized backcountry trails	10
New accessible trails	9
Motorized trails	8
Access to recreation	8
Maintain/improve existing paved paths	8
Maintain/improve existing back country trails	7
Access to water activities	3
New mountain biking trails	2

Q15. Any additional questions, comments, or suggestions?

A sample of answers:

- We can look to Colorado as a great example of how improving and maintaining accessibility to land for recreation attracts users and boosts economic development. We already have the terrain, beauty, views and passionate people here in the enchanted circle, but we are behind in creating the level of accessibility needed for all users.
- It's important to keep our trails safe especially for those whom enjoy them for walking, biking and/or strolling with their families and/or children.
- Safety for our Children!
- Survey is very biased in favor of expensive developed city/town trails it seems
- Please please please create more biking, hiking, walking trails! It is very difficult to raise kids here and go for family walks...We live in this incredibly beautiful area and have done so little to truly honor it and integrate with it. It's the future!
- Widen Hwy 64 between Angle Fire and Taos
- Trail linkages for better through travel. Either hiking, biking or both.
- The 1st priority is trail signage throughout the Enchanted Circle
- Commuting via bike is a way of the future and the youth. I currently do not ride my bike on the road because there is a lack of infrastructure. If Taos wants to keep up with the ways of the world, we need bike paths so that citizens can easily commute around the area!
- This is for not just tourists (whose money Taos relies on for its existence) but for the Taos County Residents who have been here for generations. WE deserve something well-planned, well-built and SAFE so that we may also enjoy our communities.



**THE
TRUST
FOR
PUBLIC
LAND**

The Trust for Public Land
101 Montgomery St., Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94104
415.495.4014

PHOTOS: NINA ANTHONY

tpl.org

Appendix 5: Community Meeting Summaries

Community Conservation Plan (Greenprint) and Trail Plan Kick Off Meeting Summary

July 29, 5 to 8 pm, KTAO Solar Center
9 NM-150, Taos

Participants

Nina Anthony, Taos Land Trust
Karina Armijo, Xynergy
Ernie Attencio, The Nature Conservancy
Dan Barrone, Taos Mayor
Rose Bauhs
Rick Bellis, Taos Town Manager
Darren Bond, Gearing UP Bike Shop
Cindy Brown
Elisabeth Brownell, Brownell Chalet
Jake Caldwell, LOR Foundation
Joseph Chupek, Cyclist
Sheara Cohen, The Trust for Public Land
Carl Colonius, Taos Land Trust, Del Norte Trails
Tim Corner, Taos County Planning Department
Alex Cserhat
Madison Davisinger, Crossfit Taos
Leilani Dean
Davie Dittmar, Foot Not Bombs
Taylor Etchemendy
Linda Fair
Louis Fineberg, Taos Town Planner
Trey Finnell, Cyclist
Susie Fiore, Team FIT/NICA
Matt Foster, Village of Taos Ski Valley
Mark Fratrack, Village of Taos Ski Valley
Pete French, Taos Sports Alliance
Hank Friedman, Taos Sports Alliance
Chris Furr, Carson National Forest
Eric Garner, Carson National Forest
Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land
Fritz Hahn, Taos Town Council
Lafe Harrower, Lucas Construction
Jessica Harrower
Mark Henderson, Old Spanish Trail Association
Sandi Hill
Megan Hosterman, Taos Land Trust
Gary James, Not Forgotten Outreach
Bill Knief, University of New Mexico-Taos
Jack Lewis, Forest Service
David Lewis, ART
Lindsay Mapes, Zia Rides
Toby Martinez, ART
Annette McClure
Robyn McCulloch, The Confluence
Molly McMullin, Appleseed
Lara Miller, The Trust for Public Land
Rich Montoya
Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land
David Mount, Cyclist
Ken Murrell
Peggy Nelson, ART
Charlie O'Leary, Santa Fe Conservation Trust
Kristina Ortez de Jones, Taos Land Trust
Lore Pease, El Centro Family Health
Rudy Perea, Taos County
Sanjay Poovadan, Taos Land Trust
Peter Rich
Tim Rogers, Santa Fe Conservation Trust
Priscilla Rokohl
Shannon Romeling, Amigos Bravos
Nathan Sanchez, Taos County
Paul Schilke, Forest Service
Joel Serra, Aqualia
Rachel Singer, Crossfit Taos
Chris Smith, Taos Land Trust
Susie Soderquist
Jean Stevens, Environmental Film Festival
Nick Still, 10,000 Wags
John Ubelaker, SMU
Matthew van Buren, Taos Land Trust
Karlis Viceps
Edward Vigil, Taos County
Patrick Vigil, Ojo Caliente
Linda Yardley, Taos Pueblo, Taos Land Trust

1. Welcome

Kristina Ortez de Jones, Executive Director of the Taos Land Trust, welcomed participants.

2. Meeting Goals and Agenda

Amy Morris from The Trust for Public Land (TPL) reviewed meeting goals: (1) Provide information about conservation and trail planning efforts; (2) Recruit stakeholders to help with community-based planning; and (3) Begin to gather information about priority trails and trail destinations and priority conservation values.

3. Taos Land Trust Community Conservation Plan

Kristina described Taos Land Trust's efforts to gather input for their Community Conservation Plan, which will cover all of the areas where the land trust works, including areas outside of Taos County. The Taos County Community Conservation Plan/Greenprint will be part of the land trust's larger Community Conservation Plan. Taos Land Trust's Community Conservation Plan will tell the story of local conservation values based on local voices. Taos Land Trust will rely on individual interviews with people in the community who have special perspectives, deep ties to the land and the water, and local knowledge.

4. Trails and Parks Master Plan

Carl Colonius is working with Taos Land Trust to develop a Trails and Parks Master Plan for the Enchanted Circle area. Previously, Carl organized the Del Norte Trails Coalition, and that group began efforts to set trail planning priorities. Those efforts included a survey in fall 2014 that was focused on a potential trail from Arroyo Seco to the Town of Taos. A summary from a November 2014 meeting of the Del Norte Trails Coalition is attached to this meeting summary. The Conceptual Trail Plan that TPL is helping to develop will be a component of the larger Trails and Parks Master Plan.

5. Greenprinting (Community Conservation Plan) and Conceptual Trail Planning

Amy Morris and Fred Gifford (also from TPL) provided overviews of the Community Conservation Plan/Greenprint and Conceptual Trail Plan process. Study area maps for the Taos County Community Conservation Plan/Greenprint and the Enchanted Circle Conceptual Trail Plan are attached.

Community Conservation Plan. The Community Conservation Plan will be based on community goals and will be a set of tools (including interactive maps) to help the community prioritize areas for voluntary conservation. The general goals of the Community Conservation Plan are to: (1) Steer growth away from key resources; (2) Preserve unique local cultural heritage; and (3) Protect natural and recreational assets that are important for local quality of life and the local economy. The specific goals of the plan will be determined through community input. TPL and the Taos Land Trust will be holding speak outs, open houses, polling, and additional stakeholder meetings to gather feedback. Data from the community will be translated into a GIS model that blends the best available scientific data with community preferences. In addition to the general stakeholder group, a sub-set of participants will assist by providing input through a mapping/technical advisory team.

Conceptual Trail Plan. The objectives of the Conceptual Trail Plan are to: (1) Identify existing trails; (2) Identify potential trails based on community priorities; (3) Build community support for trails; and (4) Set priorities for trail development and funding that contribute to local quality of life and the local economy. Like the Community Conservation Plan, the Trail Plan will involve speak outs, open houses, polling, additional stakeholder meetings, and reliance on a mapping/technical advisory team. Some trail volunteers will also assist with groundtruthing/field verification of proposed trail segments. TPL will incorporate community input and prioritization and GIS modeling of trails into final conceptual maps.

6. Small Group Discussions of Trail Destinations and Conservation Values

After being introduced to the Community Conservation Plan and Trail Plan, meeting participants answered conservation and trails questions in small groups (based on the tables where they were already sitting). Small groups were facilitated by Kristina, Carl, Matthew Van Buren, Megan Hosterman, Nina Anthony, Sanjay Poovadan, and Chris Smith from Taos Land Trust; Amy, Fred, Lara Miller, and Sheara Cohen from TPL; and Matthew Foster from Taos Ski Valley.

Small groups discussed the following questions:

- **Community Conservation Plan/Greenprint:** What conservation values (for example: working lands, viewsheds, wildlife habitat) are your highest priorities?
- **Trail Plan:** What types of trails (in town, commuting, back country, hiking, ATV, dirt bike, mountain bike) are your highest priorities? What trail destinations are your highest priorities? What areas do you think could be connected by a trail system? What are your favorite parks or open spaces?

Groups discussed each topic for approximately 20 minutes. After 15 minutes, participants were asked to use three dot stickers to vote for their highest priorities from their group's brainstorming. The full summary of small group discussion results is attached.

Responses to the conservation value question included the following: Improve recreational access (37 priority votes); Protect water quality and quantity/wetlands and riparian habitat (26 priority votes); Protect acequias (21); Preserve agricultural land, particularly irrigated farmland (18); Protect viewsheds (15); Protect cultural and historical resources (12); and Conserve wildlife habitat (11).

The highest ranked trail types based on priority votes were protected bike lanes (12 priority votes); paved multi-use trails (8); connector trails (6); and interpretive/educational trails (4). Top trail destinations were Rio Grande/Gorge (6 priority votes) and the Town of Taos (5). Highest priority trail connections were Town of Taos to Arroyo Seco (12 priority votes); Town of Taos to existing trailheads (6); between communities (5); Taos Ski Valley to Red River (5); and Old Blinking Light to Arroyo Seco (4). The top parks and open spaces mentioned were Kit Carson (3 priority votes) and acequias, Eco Park, Fred Baca, Gorge Rim, Overlook Trail Area, and Rift Valley (each with 2 priority votes).

Key issues brought up by small group participants included the safety of bike lanes and urban trails (7 priority votes); need for better trail maintenance (4); and the need for more public/private partnerships (2).

7. Next Steps and Closing

Finally, Amy reviewed next steps and Kristina thanked participants for coming to the meeting and sharing their time and feedback.

Next Steps

- **Mapping Team Volunteers.** Volunteers are needed for mapping/technical advisory teams for both the Community Conservation Plan and the Trail Plan (contact Fred: fred.gifford@tpl.org). Mapping teams will meet between stakeholder meetings.
- **Outreach to Diverse Stakeholders.** Taos Land Trust will work on expanding the stakeholder group. They will reach out to farmers/ranchers, people of color, the Pueblo, churches, youth/teachers, and neighborhood associations. Any and all feedback related to reaching a more diverse stakeholder group is welcome. Please contact Kristina (kristina@taoslandtrust.org).
- **Speak Outs and Community Survey.** Taos Land Trust and TPL will conduct speak outs and a community survey in fall 2015. (Please note that Headwaters Economics will also be conducting a poll related to trails this fall. Results from this poll will also be used in the Community Conservation Plan and Trail Plan.)
- **Stakeholder Meetings.** The next stakeholder meetings will be in fall 2015:
 - A mapping-focused trail meeting will be held on Saturday, September 26.
 - The next joint meeting for Community Conservation Plan and Trail Plan will be in mid-November. The meeting will address the results of fall speak out events and polling and the refinement of Conservation Plan and Trail Plan goals.

Meeting Summary Attachments

- Del Norte Trails Coalition, November 2015 Meeting Notes
- Greenprint Study Area Map
- Conceptual Trail Plan Study Area Map
- Kick Off Meeting Small Group Discussion Summary Tables

DEL NORTE TRAILS COALITION

TRAILS AND PARKS VISIONING NOTES – November 2014

The Del Norte Trails Coalition convened and facilitated a conversation in 2014 to develop a vision for the development of a trail system in the Enchanted Circle. These are notes from that conversation.

1. Why is this important?

- a. Economic development – sustainable tourism
- b. Community vitality – active lifestyles
- c. Honor cultural and historical legacy of region

2. Where are we now?

- a. Planning process resources (Taos Land Trust, Trust for Public Land)
- b. We have significant road infrastructure throughout the Enchanted Circle – north, south, east to west
- c. Great mtn biking rides
- d. We have the potential of alignment of interest of Enchanted Circle
- e. The acequia system can be an ally – TVAA/NMAA for enhancement of current trails/access to waterways?
- f. Tourists visit area with adventure/physical activity in mind (weekly requests at bike shops for urban trails)
- g. Significant percentage of public land in region
- h. Pueblo is engaged and talking about trails
- i. Relatively uncrowded public land (vs. Colorado, California, etc.)
- j. Thriving visitor infrastructure (hotels, restaurants, etc.)
- k. Fantastic weather for almost year-round activities
- l. Range of topography for interest groups (flats, hills, etc.)
- m. Active local population
- n. Interested local government (IGC, Town, County, NM Dept. of Tourism, etc.)

3. Our Priorities

- a. Conserve open space – viewscape
- b. Full high quality recreational trail system
 - i. Connect hubs for commute potential
 - ii. Standalone loops/ stacked loops with trail heads, signage and parking
 - iii. Longer safe, well-marked rides, both road and trail
- c. More users of all ages – better educated too
- d. Regional commitment to the enhancement of full range of recreational activities:
 - i. Hiking
 - ii. Hunting
 - iii. Dirt biking/ATV
 - iv. Road biking
 - v. Mountain biking
 - vi. Adventure biking (TSV, Angel Fire)
 - vii. Races and events

4. How do we get there?

- a. Inventory analysis – green hubs, links, gaps
 - i. Public lands
 - ii. Private lands - Current cons. easements and future easements
 - iii. Tribal lands – engage Tribe to invite their input
 - iv. Connectivity/linkages

- b. Pass or update Resolutions for local government to appreciate alternative transportation infrastructure
 - i. Improve infrastructure (better roads, shoulders, signs)
 - ii. Target certification from **League of American Bicyclists**
 - iii. Generate commitment from local government for ongoing funding for new development, maintenance, marketing

- c. Engage public land management agencies for alignment
 - i. Update Master Plans for increased recreational infrastructure
 - ii. Align GIS maps with other systems
 - iii. Increase signage, trail heads, parking

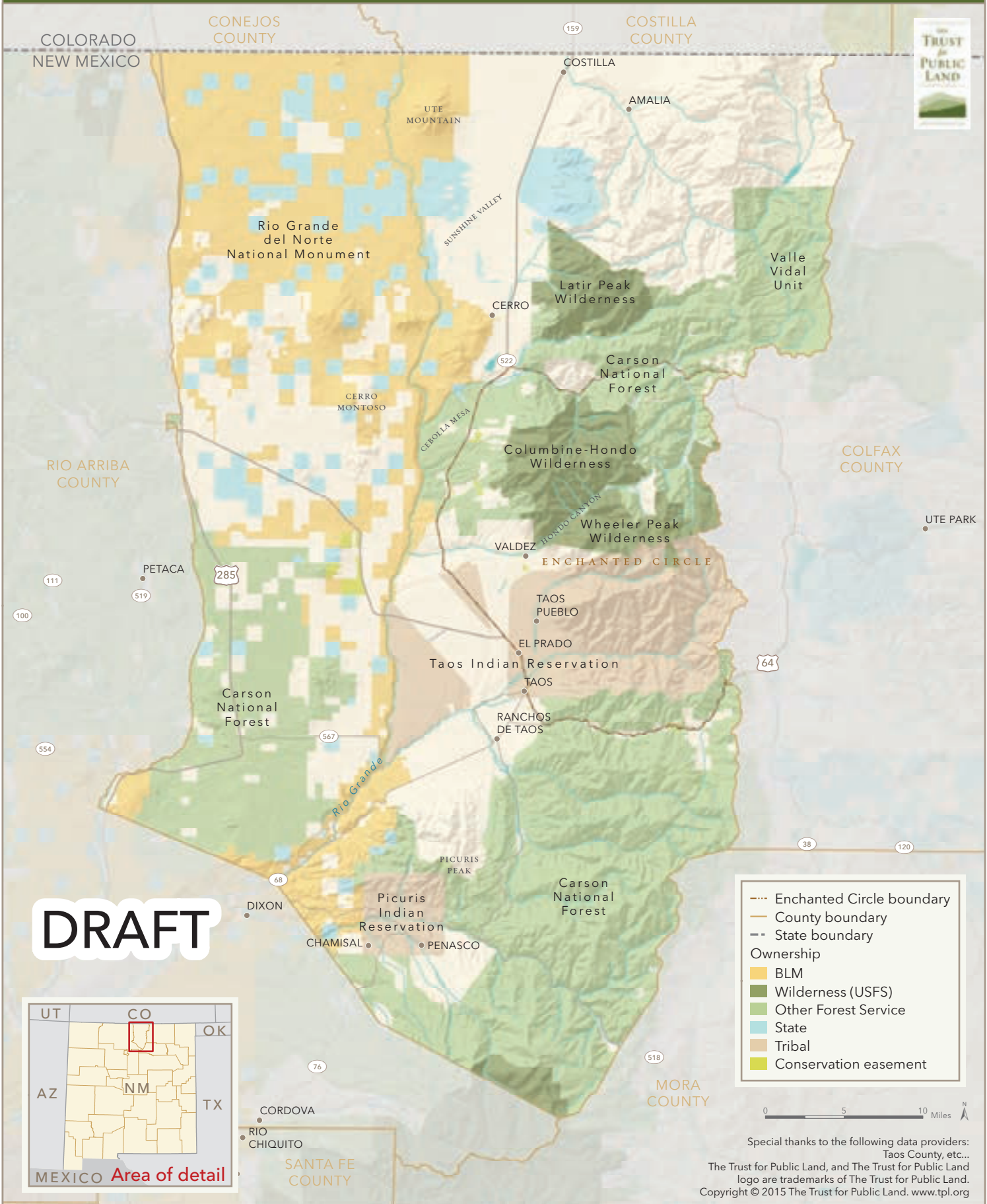
- d. Increase user base
 - i. Support youth engagement (FIT)
 - ii. Engage Trips for Kids (Marin County non-profit) maybe as partner with FIT
 - iii. User education program – drivers and bikers
 - iv. Develop interscholastic mountain bike team (NICA)
 - v. Create alignment with other events in the community (PASEO)

- e. Strategic Partnerships
 - i. IMBA – look for certification
 - ii. Bikes Belong
 - iii. Kids on Bikes
 - iv. Trips for Kids
 - v. National Interscholastic Cycling Association
 - vi. Headwaters Economics –system impact study
 - vii. SFCT – Tim Rogers
 - viii. TPL – GreenPrint
 - ix. Mapping relationships
 1. STRAVA
 2. MTB Project
 3. DOT
 4. Municipalities

- f. Resource development
 - i. Development strategy based upon agreed objectives
 1. Bond issue for trail development and maintenance
 2. Gain commitment from local government for annual recreational infrastructure investment and maintenance
 3. Private foundations
 4. DOT (Rec Trails Program, TIGER grants, Transportation Alternative Plan, Federal Land Access Grant Program)

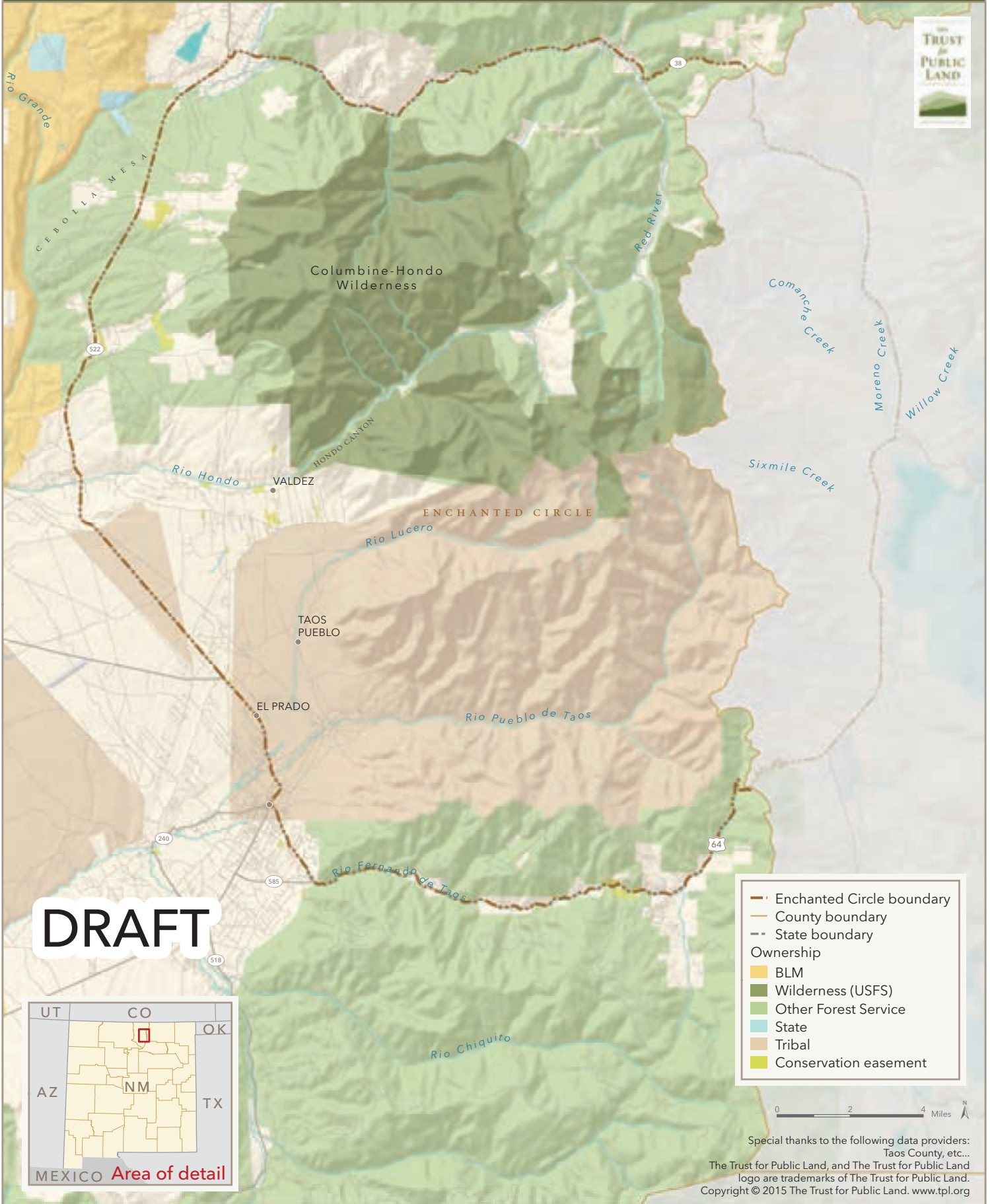
TAOS COUNTY GREENPRINT

STUDY AREA



TAOS - ENCHANTED CIRCLE

TRAILS STUDY AREA

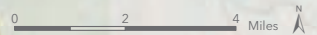


DRAFT



MEXICO Area of detail

- Enchanted Circle boundary
- County boundary
- - State boundary
- Ownership
- BLM
- Wilderness (USFS)
- Other Forest Service
- State
- Tribal
- Conservation easement



Special thanks to the following data providers:
 Taos County, etc...
 The Trust for Public Land, and The Trust for Public Land
 logo are trademarks of The Trust for Public Land.
 Copyright © 2015 The Trust for Public Land. www.tpl.org

Community Conservation Plan/Greenprint Goals (From 7/29/15 Stakeholder Meeting)

Goal	Priority Votes	Criteria	Areas to Map	Other Possible Future Actions
1. Improve recreational access	37	Enhance local access (not just tourists); increase public access to public lands, including wilderness; maintain river access; non-motorized use and access; trail access in town; access to acequias and water; bicycle lanes; promote diverse land uses and user groups	Open spaces/parks/trails - near hospitals, schools, senior centers, community centers (El Prado, Ranchitos and La Posta, Fred Baca park - expand, swampy land by Blueberry Hill); high density recreation areas (Kit Carson, TSV, Fred Baca); El Salto and Rio Hondo near Valdez	Lower fees for locals; preserve free river access; increase access for youth, ADA, seniors, low income; connect young people to the land; promote entrepreneurship; make trails sensitive to habitat and archaeological resources; more funding and attention to John Dunn Bridge, Hot Springs, Wild and Scenic, signage; promote educational opportunities
2. Protect water quality and quantity	26	Protect watersheds; surface water and groundwater; riparian and wetland habitat	Rio Fernando; El Prado; Seco; Ranchitos to Los Cordovas; hubs of villages	Keep water rights in Taos; prevent overgrazing in watersheds; ban fracking
3. Protect acequias	21		Acequia maps from Town, County and Taos Co Soil and Water; Acequia Del Madre; Camino del Medio; parcel across from Cid's; La Posta property; Rio Fernando; El Monte (historic orchard, open space, wildlife habitat)	Improve water delivery and sustainability; improve water storage of ponds, lakes, and reservoirs; promote farming cooperatives and farmers' markets; increase resilience of in-town acequias to flooding and erosion
4. Preserve agricultural Land	18	Protect irrigated farmlands and orchards, prevent pasture fragmentation;	Irrigated agricultural land; Mitchell pasture (and access from CIDs); El Prado pasture	Promote sustainability of agriculture; promote rural character
5. Protect viewsheds	15	Protect important views	Overlooks - Horseshoe from Rio Grande; view of Taos Mountain from town; important overlooks and panoramas as part of design; vistas (from El Prado to Taos Mountain - near Overland)	Prevent transmission lines and radio towers in Del Norte National Monument
6. Protect cultural and historical resources	12		Achaeological sites; native people's history; historical buildings; buffers around Pueblo lands; heritage sites; Blumenschein Map; site by Arroyo Seco; acequias; historic trails; rock art	Revive historical preservation organizations; interface with neighborhood associations; educational/mitigation
7. Conserve wildlife habitat	11		Bird habitat (riparian, ranches, ponds); migratory corridors; sensitive and unique ecosystems	
8. Promote smart growth	8		Threatened properties	Prevent subdivision; protect land while it is still in large parcels; improve guidelines/permitting for development
9. Protect dark skies	4			
10. Promote freedom	3			
11. Protect forests	2		Alpine forests	Partner with Forest Service

Priority Trail Types (From 7/29/15 Stakeholder Meeting)

Trail Type	Priority	Votes	Notes
Bike - protected bike lanes/paved shoulders/arteries through town	12		Improvements needed for TSV road; shoulders Hwys 64, 68, 150 and Enchanted Circle
Paved multi-use trails	8		
Connector trails	6		
Interpretive/educational trails	4		
Bike - park and ride	3		
Equestrian	2		
Safe Routes to School	2		
Town - neighborhood trails/park trails/walking trails	2		
Bike - mountain bike/downhill/skills trails/single track	1		Multi-level, stacked loops, multi-distance
Hiking	1		
ADA	0		
Back country trails	0		
Boardwalk	0		
Commuter trails	0		
Cross-country skiing	0		
Surface - crushed asphalt	0		
Surface - dirt for bike and hike	0		
Exercise trails (expand on Eco Park option)	0		
Sidewalks - in town	0		
Skateboarding	0		
Walking/strolling lanes	0		

Priority Trail Destinations (From 7/29/15 Stakeholder Meeting)

Trail/Destination	Priority Votes	Trail/Destination	Priority Votes
Rio Grande/Gorge (trail, gorge, water features)	6	Hot springs	0
Town of Taos	5	John Dunn	0
Acequias (trail access along)	2	Llano Quernado	0
Historical sites (St. Francis Church, Taos and Ranchos Plaza)	2	Neighborhoods	0
Parks (Fred Baca and Kit Carson)	2	Old Spanish Trail	0
Public lands	2	Pot Creek to Los Cordovas	0
Talpa Traverse - southside	2	Public transportation hubs	0
Gusdorf (needs bike lane)	1	Pueblo	0
Schools	1	Rancho Martinez	0
Orilla Verde Recreation Area	1	Southern Colorado, Fort Garland	0
Taos Ski Valley (including park and shuttle)	1	Stagecoach Hot Springs	0
Rio Grande del Norte National Monument	1	UNM Campus	0
Wild Rivers	1	Upper Rio Hondo	0
Airport loop	0	Valdez	0
Amole Canyon	0	Valle Vidal	0
Blueberry Hill	0	Weimer/Talpa Foothills	0
Cebolla Mesa (Wild and Scenic)	0	Work	0
Community Center/Youth and Family Center	0	West Rim Road	0
Grocery Stores	0	By-pass	0
Hospital	0		

Priority Trail Connections (From 7/29/15 Stakeholder Meeting)

Trail Connection	Priority Votes
Town of Taos to Arroyo Seco (and Gorge Bridge)	12
Town of Taos to existing trailheads	6
Between communities (Penasco to Taos; Town of Taos to Ranchos; Hondo to Seco plus Old Blinking Light)	5
Taos Ski Valley to Red River (wilderness trail)	5
Old Blinking Light to Arroyo Seco	4
Plaza to everything	3
Public transportation (trails from)	3
Town of Taos to mountain bike singletrack	3
Town of Taos to West Gorge (non-motorized)	3
UNM to Old Blinking Light - 522 + 64 + 150	3
Century ride bike lanes (Enchanted Circle north and south)	2
Hwy 64E to Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument	2
Taos Ski Valley to Arroyo Seco	2
hub)	2
OBL to Valdez/Taos Ski Valley	1
Connectivity corridors	1
Full trail system	1
Hondo to Arroyo Seco	1
North end of county to south	1
Old Blinking Light to Ranchos	1
Ranchitos to Blueberry Hill (including BH route)	1
Taos Ski Valley to Arroyo Seco	1
Taos Ski Valley to Plaza	1
Town of Taos to Devisadero (Kit Carson Road)	1
Town of Taos to Rift Valley Loop (Taos Valley Overlook)	1
Town of Taos to Taos Pueblo	1
Town of Taos to Taos Ski Valley	1
Walmart to Cid's Food Market	1
Work to play destinations	1
Angel Fire from Taos (shoulder or standalone)	0
Arroyo Seco to San Cristobal/Questa	0
Cebolla Mesa to Red River	0
Enchanted Circle	0
Gorge Bridge to Pilar	0
Historic District loop	0
Hospital to Weimer	0
Local parks - connections between	0
Miranda Canyon Ridge to Horseshoe Curve	0
Neighborhoods to schools	0
North boundary and ranchos to Taos Valley overlook	0
Old Blinking Light to Seco	0
Overland to Velarde	0
Pilar to John Dunn Bridge	0
Sangre Trail - Santa Fe to Taos	0
Stakeout to Picuris/Comales	0
Taos Ski Valley to Old Blinking Light	0
Town of Taos - Taos Plaza to Taos Canyon	0
Town of Taos to Angel Fire	0

Priority Trail Connections (From 7/29/15 Stakeholder Meeting)

Town of Taos to Caron Forest/Gorge	0
Town of Taos to Pilar	0
Town of Taos to public lands	0
Town of Taos to Slide Trail	0
Tuane Drive (along) to US64	0
UNM to Pilar	0
UNM to schools	0
Valencia to town bike lanes	0
Wheeler and Columbine Honda	0

Favorite Parks and Open Spaces (From 7/29/15 Stakeholder Meeting)

Park/Open Space	Priority Votes
Taos Valley Overlook Trail Area	4
Kit Carson	3
Acequias	2
Eco Park	2
Fred Baca	2
Gorge Rim	2
Overland Complex (area behind)	1
Blueberry Hill and Millicent Rogers	1
Cultural sites	1
Fort Burgwin (ADA)	1
Merced - vacant lots	1
Rio Grande crossing	1
Twining Canyon Trails	1
Upper Ranchitos	1
West Rim Trail	1
Wild Rivers	1
Williams Lake (maintenance and additional parkin	1
Amole Canyon	0
Apple seed	0
Brea Park	0
Cabrito Lake	0
East of county complex near men's shelter	0
El Salto	0
Garcia Park	0
Gold Hill	0
Horseshoe Gorge	0
La Junta biking	0
Los Pandos	0
Mariposa Area off Kit Carson	0
Mitchell Property	0
Orilla Verde Recreation Area (BLM)	0
Overland	0
Parks	0
Pilar	0
Pocket parks (including along Rio Lucero)	0
Rio Chaquito	0
Rio Grande del Norte National Monument	0
Ruin Trail	0
Salazar/Santistevan (five acres for sale)	0
Slide Road area	0
Sunset Park	0
Taos Mountain	0
Tulpa Traverse	0
Ute Mountain	0
Utility rights of way	0
Rio Grande and Red River confluence	0

Key Issues (From 7/29/15 Stakeholder Meeting)

Key Issues Identified	Priority Votes
Safety of bike lanes and urban trails	7
Need for better maintenance (pot holes)	4
Need partnerships (public and private)	2
Congested trails (horseshoe, Williams)	0
Need for education	0
Cost to implement	0
Environmental compliance	0
Need buy-in from Majordomo	0
Need to talk to FEMA/Army Corps about flood plain	0
Trails should be town and county responsibility	0
North side barriers include paperwork and fees	0
Need to look at examples from model cities	0
We don't need formal trails everywhere	0

Taos County Community Conservation Plan and Enchanted Circle Conceptual Trail Plan

November 18, 2015; 5:30-8:00 pm
Talpa Community Center
NM-518, Ranchos De Taos, NM 87557

Meeting Goals

- (1) Review planning efforts for any new participants.
- (2) Work on vision and guiding principles for the Community Conservation Plan.
- (3) Gather information on proposed new trails.

Participants

Lynn Aldrich, Taos Land Trust (Board Member)	Bill Petterson, Peterson Ventures
Nina Anthony, Taos Land Trust	Teresa Pisaño, Taos Land Trust (Board Member)
Attila Bality, NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program	Kip Price
Rose Bauhs	Shannon Romeling, Amigos Bravos
William Brown, Renewable Taos, Inc.	Beth Searcey
Carl Colonius, Taos Land Trust/Del Norte Trails	Nathan Sanchez, Taos County
Charles Doughtry, Renewable Taos, Inc.	Paul Schilke, US Forest Service
Eddie Dry, Red River	Christopher Smith, Taos Land Trust (Board Member)
Chris Ellis	Jean Stevens, Environmental Film Festival
Matt Foster	Ben Thomas, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
Hank Friedman, Taos Sports Alliance	Matthew Van Buren, Taos Land Trust
Gary Jones	Karlis Viceps
Peter Lamont	Linda Yardley, Taos Land Trust (Board), Taos Pueblo
Pam MacArthur, Taos Saddle Club	Parvati Young
John MacArthur, Taos Saddle Club	Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land
Jeff Muggleston, Del Norte National Monument, CNF	Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land
Ken Murrell	Chrissy Pepino, The Trust for Public Land
Melissa Naylor, mountain biker	Greg Hiner, The Trust for Public Land
Kristina Ortez de Jones, Taos Land Trust	Jason Corzine, The Trust for Public Land
Kerrie Pattison, Northside M&B Alliance of TSV	Shannon Parks, The Trust for Public Land
	Megan Lawson, Headwaters Economics

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions

Kristen Ortez de Jones from Taos Land Trust welcomed participants and thanked them for coming. She briefly explained the outreach process for the Community Conservation Plan and Trail Plan, and then she led the group in introductions. Participants stated their names and their favorite places to spend time outdoors. Favorite outdoor places included Rio Pueblo, Miranda Canyon, Chama River, Taos Ski Valley, Gold Hill, Divisadero Trail, Yerba Canyon, Redwood National Park, Windsor Trail (Santa Fe), San Cristobel Canyon, Rio Medio Trail (Santa Fe), Lost Lake Loop, Valle Vidal, Taos Eco Park, Camino Royale, and Pecos Wilderness.

Overview

Amy Morris from The Trust for Public Land reviewed the two planning efforts: the Taos County Community Conservation Plan and the Enchanted Circle Conceptual Trail Plan. Both the Community Conservation Plan and the Conceptual Trail Plan will combine community input with state-of-the-art mapping to set priorities. Both efforts focus on voluntary, incentive-based conservation and look for areas where there are opportunities to meet multiple goals. The Trail Plan and Community Conservation Plan both involve community input from a community survey, outreach events (including Speak Outs and focus groups), interviews, and stakeholder meetings.

Amy emphasized how important stakeholder meeting participation is to make sure we have the best data and best community input. We need stakeholder help to ensure that we hear from diverse voices throughout the process. If you have ideas about how to help with this, please contact Kristina (kristina@taoslandtrust.org). In response to participant questions, Amy noted that we hope that the Community Conservation Plan will be a central part of the work of the Taos Land Trust moving forward. We also hope it will be adopted by local governments and used by other conservation organizations. Implementation of the Community Conservation Plan (and the Trail Plan) will be a main focus of the final two stakeholder meetings, and we welcome community input about how to ensure that local groups are able to act on the plan. We will work closely with public agencies on issues related to any inholdings or potential trails on public lands. There was a short discussion of conservation in Miranda Canyon, which is now owned by the Forest Service. The Trail Plan process will help provide some public input for the Management Plan revision for Carson National Forest.

Community Conservation Plan

The Community Conservation Plan is intended to: (1) Set priorities for voluntary land conservation in Taos County; (2) Tell the story of local conservation values based on local voices, perspectives, and knowledge; and (3) To help protect unique local cultural heritage and natural and recreational resources. Seven potential goals for the Community Conservation Plan were identified at the kickoff meeting in July: Protect Water Quality, Maintain Views, Increase Opportunities for Recreational Access, Protect Acequias, Protect Agricultural/Ranch Land, Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources, and Conserve Wildlife. Of these, the top four goals (based on community feedback) will be incorporated into Community Conservation Plan mapping. At the first several Speak Out events, participants indicated that they valued Water Quality the most.

Conceptual Trail Plan

The Conceptual Trail Plan is intended to (1) Set community-based priorities for expanding and connecting in-town and backcountry trails in the Enchanted Circle area; and (2) Increase opportunities for commuting, exercise, recreation, and connecting to the outdoors. Under the Trail Plan trails may support hiking, biking, horseback riding, and other activities. In addition to the types of community input that go into the Community Conservation Plan, the Trail Plan will also use input from “ground-truthing” of proposed new trail segments. Through ground-truthing, participants help us identify potential obstacles for trail segments, but also information about what it is like to actually use a trail (for example – are there breath-taking views?). Thus far, participants in Speak Out events have expressed the most interest in using trails for hiking and wildlife viewing.

Fred Gifford from The Trust for Public Land then explained that as of November 17, we were off and running on the trail plan. The first step is to create a Technical Advisory Team (TAT), which is a group of volunteers who are interested in the more detailed mapping work and will meet 7-8 times over the next year. Right now the TAT is working on project study area and dividing up the study area into smaller trail planning areas (based on geography, jurisdiction, and user groups). The GIS team from The Trust for Public Land is currently collecting any available data on existing trails. Fred is also working on licensing Strava’s crowdsourced trail data. Strava is an

app-based activity tracker that allows bikers and others to record their activities and compare their data against people using the same routes (see www.strava.com/how-it-works).

Community Conservation Plan Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

Participants used worksheet prompts to come up with some initial ideas for vision statements and guiding principles for the Community Conservation Plan. After filling out worksheets, participants discussed in pairs for five minutes, and then later in small groups for an additional 10 minutes on each topic. Small groups were led by Kristina, Carl Colonius, and Matt Van Buren from Taos Land Trust and by Fred from The Trust for Public Land. Flip chart notes were taken by Teresa PISAÑO from Taos Land Trust and by Lara Miller and Chrissy Pepino from The Trust for Public Land. After small group discussions, participants were asked to use four dot stickers to indicate their top two ideas related to elements of vision statements and guiding principles. The vision statement and guiding principles will be revised by the core team and other volunteers before the next Community Conservation Plan meeting. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact Amy (amy.morris@tpl.org).

Vision Statements

A vision statement is an aspiration. It should illustrate what we hope Taos County will look like after the Community Conservation Plan has been implemented. The vision statement is meant to be a catalyst for this process, giving us purpose and common goals. The vision statement can be a stretch. For example, Oxfam's vision is "A just world without poverty." Participants came up with a huge range of suggestions for a Community Conservation Plan vision. In particular, they noted the importance of focusing on the unique culture and landscape of Taos County – including its cultural diversity.

Elements of proposed vision statements included:

- Fostering sustainable stewardship, connection with the outdoors, inclusiveness, inspiration, and trust;
- Protecting tri-cultural traditions and local values and history; and
- Providing opportunities for 100% of local residents to use trails and ensuring that people from all walks of life are tied to the land.

One possible vision statement based on participant input would be: "Our vision is a Taos County where cultural traditions are embraced and quality of life is outstanding because everyone is connected to the land and committed to sustainable stewardship of our unique natural and cultural landscapes by and for our community."

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles will steer the mission of the plan and create a cohesive set of goals to guide what we do and how we do it. Amy provided an example of guiding principles from Bonner County, Idaho (see attached slides). As with the vision statement discussions, there was a wide range of ideas about guiding principles. Participants put a great deal of emphasis on ensuring that the planning process is inclusive. The principles that received the highest number of votes were:

- Ensure respect, trust, and inclusiveness are built into the process. Foster participation from:
 - Longtime residents from the Pueblo and Hispano communities
 - All age groups from youth to senior citizens
 - Farmers, ranchers, hunting and fishing, and recreation groups
- Conserve natural resources while respecting cultural values and local traditions
- Protect water generally and acequias in particular
- Increase access to recreation
- Protect agricultural land (especially irrigated land)

Trail Map Workshop

Amy and Fred then led a trail exercise using the large maps of the Town of Taos, Red River, Angel Fire/Moreno Valley, and Arroyo Hondo, which were hung on the meeting room walls. Participants were asked to draw in potential new trail segments and trail connections (including existing unofficial trails and social trails). Each map station had two markers: blue for marking bike lanes on paved roads and red for all other trails (off paved roads). Participants spent approximately 30 minutes adding potential trails to the maps. Many potential trails were identified by the group and they will be used by the Trail TAT during their work. In addition, there may be additional meetings and workshops for users of specific trail planning areas to populate those maps.

Closing and Next Steps

In closing, Amy reviewed next steps for the stakeholders, encouraged everyone to fill out the community survey, and asked participants to pick up more postcards to give to family and friends. The goal is to have several hundred responses to the community survey to give us the best possible input for priority-setting. Speak Outs, focus groups, and community polling will continue until end of January 2016. The next stakeholder meeting(s) will be in March 2016. There will be three more meetings next year for the Community Conservation Plan and the Trail Plan. Amy thanked everyone very much for coming. Meeting adjourned a little before 8:00 PM.

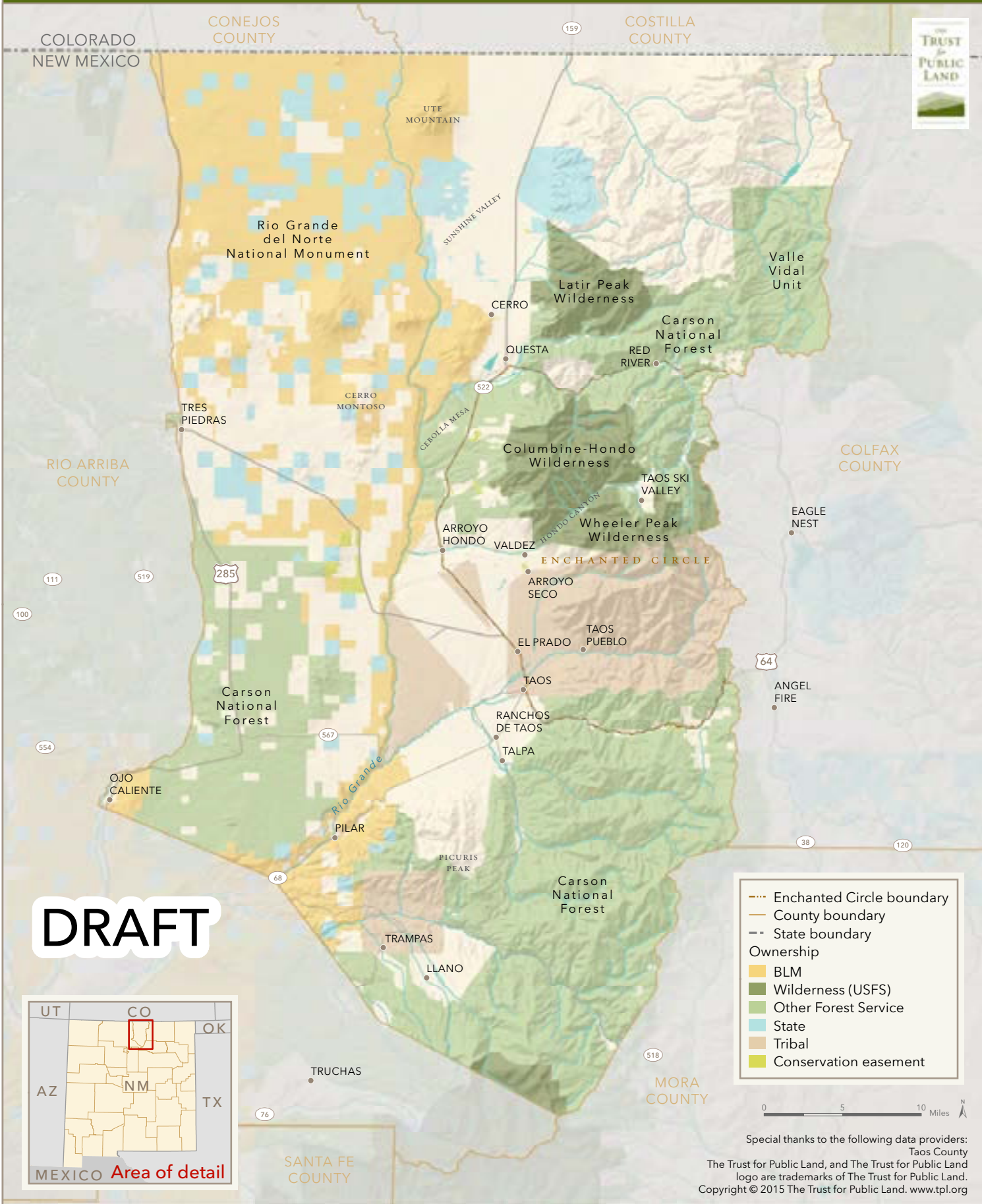
Next Steps

- Fill out the community survey and ask your friends and family to fill it out as well. The survey link is here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/taoscounty>.
- Volunteers needed for Technical Advisory Teams (mapping assistance), please contact Fred Gifford (fred.gifford@tpl.org).
- Help us ensure that our planning efforts are as inclusive as possible. If you have ideas or would like to help with this, contact Kristina Ortez de Jones (kristina@taoslandtrust.org).
- Speak outs, focus groups, and community polling will continue through January 2016. This community outreach will determine goals to be mapped for the Community Conservation Plan and will inform the Trail Plan as well.
- If you would like to help with developing the Community Conservation Plan vision statement and guiding principles before the next stakeholder meeting, please contact Amy Morris (amy.morris@tpl.org).
- Next stakeholder meetings in March 2016.

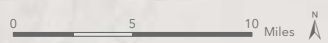
Attachments

- Taos County Community Conservation Plan Study Area Map
- Enchanted Circle Conceptual Trail Plan Study Area Map
- Slides from Stakeholder Meeting

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN STUDY AREA



--- Enchanted Circle boundary
--- County boundary
--- State boundary
Ownership
■ BLM
■ Wilderness (USFS)
■ Other Forest Service
■ State
■ Tribal
■ Conservation easement



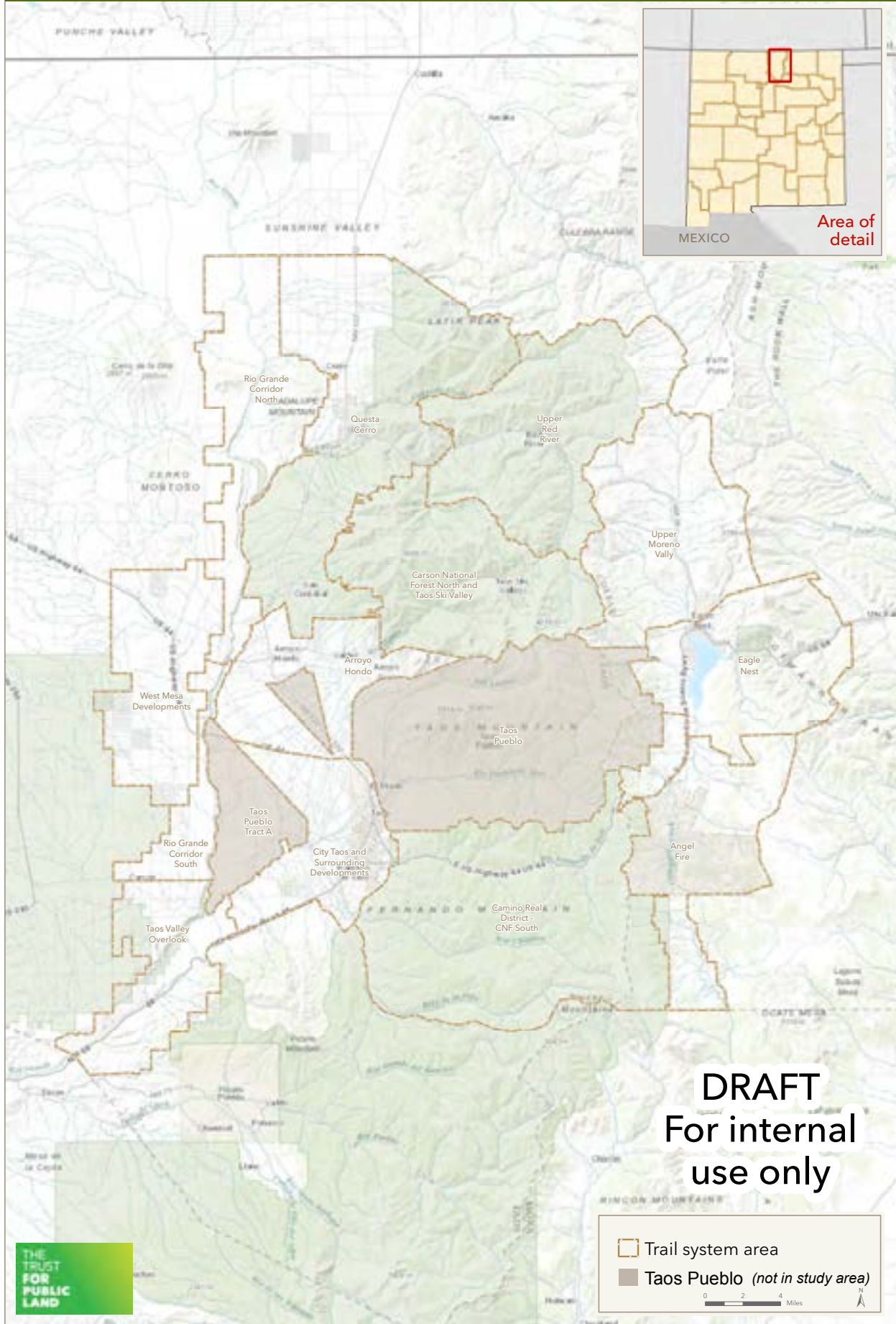
Special thanks to the following data providers:
 Taos County
 The Trust for Public Land, and The Trust for Public Land
 logo are trademarks of The Trust for Public Land.
 Copyright © 2015 The Trust for Public Land. www.tpl.org

DRAFT



ENCHANTED CIRCLE

TRAIL SYSTEM PLANNING:



Taos County Community Conservation Plan

April 12, 2016; 12-2 pm
 Juan I. Gonzales Agricultural Center
 202 Chamisa Road, Taos, NM 87571

Meeting Goals

- (1) Review preliminary survey and speak out results.
- (2) Review draft goal maps.
- (3) Brainstorm additional ways to add to and enhance draft maps for four goals.
- (4) Review draft vision statement and guiding principles.

Attendees

Ben Wright, Taos Tree Board	Mark Asmus
Bill Christmas	Mark Henderson, Old Spanish Trail Association
Carl Colonius, Taos Land Trust	Meg Peterson, Friends of OV Birders, NM Audubon
Colette Kubichan, Snow Sports, Taos Ski Valley	Molly McMullin, Appleseed Land Manager
Dan Jones	Nathan Sanchez, Chief Planner, Taos County
Darien Fernandez, Town Councilor, Town of Taos	Paul Bryan Jones, Taos Tree Board
David Patton	Polly Raye, Rio Fernando Neighborhood Association
Edward Vigil, Taos County Planning Director	Robbie Jackson, Taos Land Trust volunteer
Elizabeth Palacios, Taos Community Foundation	Robert Silver, Rio Fernando Neighborhood Association
Hannah Miller Taos Land Trust	Rudy Perea, Taos County
Jake Caldwell, LOR Foundation	Shannon Romeling, Amigos Bravos
Jean Stevens, Environmental Film Festival	Shelley Loveless, RF Neighborhood Association
Jeanne Green	Steve Kennebeck, Facilities Director, Town of Taos
Jim Dostal	Tim Corner, GIS Specialist, Town of Taos
Kimberly Jackson, Taos Land Trust volunteer	Will McMullan
Kristina Ortez de Jones, Taos Land Trust	Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land
Laura McCarthy, The Nature Conservancy	Lara Miller, The Trust for Public Land
Lawrence Baker	Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land
Linda Hodapp	

Meeting Summary

1. Welcome

Kristina Ortez de Jones from the Taos Land Trust welcomed participants and led introductions. Attendees were asked to share their name, organizational affiliation, and favorite place to spend time outdoors. Favorite places to spend time outdoors included Couse Pasture, Wheeler Peak Wilderness, fishing streams, backyards, the confluence of Rio Pueblo and Rio Grande, Old Spanish National Historic Trail, Baca Park, Blueberry Hill, Taos Canyon, and Pecos Wilderness.

2. Review of Meeting Goals, Agenda, Survey/Speak Out Results

Amy Morris from The Trust for Public Land reviewed the meeting goals and reminded the group that this process is focused on determining the community's priorities for voluntary conservation of private land. The

Trust for Public Land and Taos Land Trust want to use the Community Conservation Plan to tell the stories of Taos’s unique cultural heritage through local voices. The final plan will combine community input with the best possible scientific and geographic data in order to guide strategic planning.

Amy also reviewed the results of community outreach efforts from September 2015 to January 2016. There were 655 responses to the community survey for the Taos County Community Conservation Plan and the Enchanted Circle Trail Plan. Over 730 people were contacted at speak outs and other outreach events (ranging from the Taos farmers’ market to lunch at Ancianos). Nearly 300 people participated in speak out poster activities. Taos Land Trust also conducted focus groups with the Taos Health Council and UNM Early Childhood Development Center. Over the summer UNM Upward Bound students will be conducting interviews with family members about their conservation priorities.

Over 200 survey respondents skipped demographic questions. Of the remaining participants, only 13% were Hispano/Hispanic. Because Taos County is 56% Hispano/Hispanic, key survey results have been weighted so that the responses from Hispano/Hispanic participants are included four times. Nearly 60% of survey respondents have lived in Taos County for more than 10 years, and over 40% have incomes of over \$75,000 per year. See attached meeting slides for more demographic details.

The goals for the Community Conservation Plan were determined based on speak out and community survey results (including the weighted responses described above). The top goals are: (1) Protect water quality and quantity; (2) Protect wildlife habitat; (3) Provide access to recreational opportunities; and (4) Preserve cultural and historic resources (including agricultural lands). Hispano participant results showed higher prioritization of acequias and lower prioritization of recreation.

A word cloud of survey responses to a question asking about the most iconic and culturally significant places is shown below:



3. Review of Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

Amy reviewed the proposed vision statement and guiding principles developed based on input from our November meeting. Guiding principles are intended to reflect consensus about beliefs that will inform how the Community Conservation Plan is developed. The draft guiding principles are:

- The Community Conservation Plan should be inclusive and should demonstrate respect for our tri-cultural traditions.
- The planning process should foster participation from locals of all ages; from the Pueblo and Hispano communities; and from diverse interest groups.
- We need to identify ways to conserve natural and open space resources while also protecting cultural values and local traditions.
- Local residents value traditional working lands and particularly want to protect our irrigated agricultural lands and acequias.
- Conserved open space and access to recreation are important for connecting local residents to the outdoors and to attracting tourists and jobs to Taos County.
- We support voluntary conservation efforts.
- We need to build support for sustainable stewardship of our unique natural and cultural landscapes by and for our community.

A vision statement is intended to be an aspirational statement about what we want to see at the end of this process and a catalyst that communications purpose and values. The draft vision statement is:

Our vision is a Taos County where cultural traditions are embraced and quality of life is excellent because everyone is connected to the land and committed to sustainable stewardship of our unique natural and cultural landscapes by and for our community.

While there was general consensus on the guiding principles and vision statement, at least one participant felt that the phrase “tri-cultural traditions” did not adequately reflect the differences between people who have lived in Taos a long time and those who have moved here more recently.

4. Review of Community Conservation Goal Maps

Fred Gifford from The Trust for Public Land briefly reviewed the status of the four goal maps for Water, Wildlife, Recreation, and Cultural and Historical Resources (see attached). Participants were divided into four groups and were asked to provide feedback on each map for 10 minutes. Discussion of each map was facilitated by staff from The Trust for Public Land and Taos Land Trust. Participants were asked: What’s missing? What looks wrong? What additional criteria should we use? What additional datasets should we use? Feedback was collected on flip chart sheets. Attendees were asked to use dot stickers to vote for their two (2) top priority criteria for each goal map. Participants voted on both newly proposed criteria and those that were already incorporated into the draft map.

The priority criteria were:

Table 1. Water Quality and Quantity – Priority Criteria

Criteria	Existing Criteria?	Votes
Couse Property – protect important in-town open space	Proposed	11
Protect headwater streams	Existing	3
Protect riparian areas	Proposed	3
Baca Park – protect areas that connect to in-town parks	Proposed	3
Aquifer maps overlay – protect areas that contribute to aquifer recharge	Proposed	3
Protect acequias, especially in town	Proposed	3
Community wildlife protection - water source and population	Proposed	3
Maintain viable agricultural sector and acequia use	Existing	2

Table 2. Wildlife – Priority Criteria

Criteria	Existing Criteria?	Votes
Protect riparian areas [add "and wetlands"]	Existing	7
Prevent sprawl on private lands	Proposed	5
Protect bird habitat	Proposed	4
Map invasive species in riparian areas – protect in-tact riparian areas	Proposed	3
Protect flows/land on ag lands across Colorado border	Proposed	3
Identify biodiversity hotspots	Proposed	3
Protect threatened and endangered and sensitive species habitat	Existing	2
Protect lands against invasive species	Proposed	2

Table 3. Recreation – Priority Criteria

Criteria	Existing Criteria?	Votes
Create network of open space	Existing	11
Connect walking and biking trails within the Town of Taos	Proposed	10
Protect areas for non-motorized recreation	Proposed	6
Create accessible recreation areas - parks and parking lots	Proposed	5
Preserve space for recreational walking and dog walking	Proposed	4
Provide bird watching opportunities	Proposed	3
Protect areas being used as illegal dumps	Proposed	3
Protect historic trails	Proposed	3
Use utility ROWs and railroad corridors for recreation	Proposed	3
Connect trails to public lands	Proposed	2

Table 4. Cultural and Historical Resources – Priority Criteria

Criteria	Existing Criteria?	Votes
Preserve important pastures and views – Couse Pastures, Taos Meadows, Mitchell Pasture	Proposed	6
Preserve agriculture	Existing	5
Preserve historic cultural resources	Existing	4
Preserve ranchlands	Existing	3
Preserve timber lands	Existing	2
Protect water availability for irrigation	Existing	2
Protect viewsheds	Existing	2
Preserve historical agricultural lands	Existing	2
Preserve land adjacent to protected land – private land at the edge of BLM land at the end of Cnty Rd 110	Proposed	2

5. Closing

Amy reviewed next steps for the Community Conservation Plan. Kristina thanked participants for coming and requested help with finding additional participants, especially from underrepresented groups.

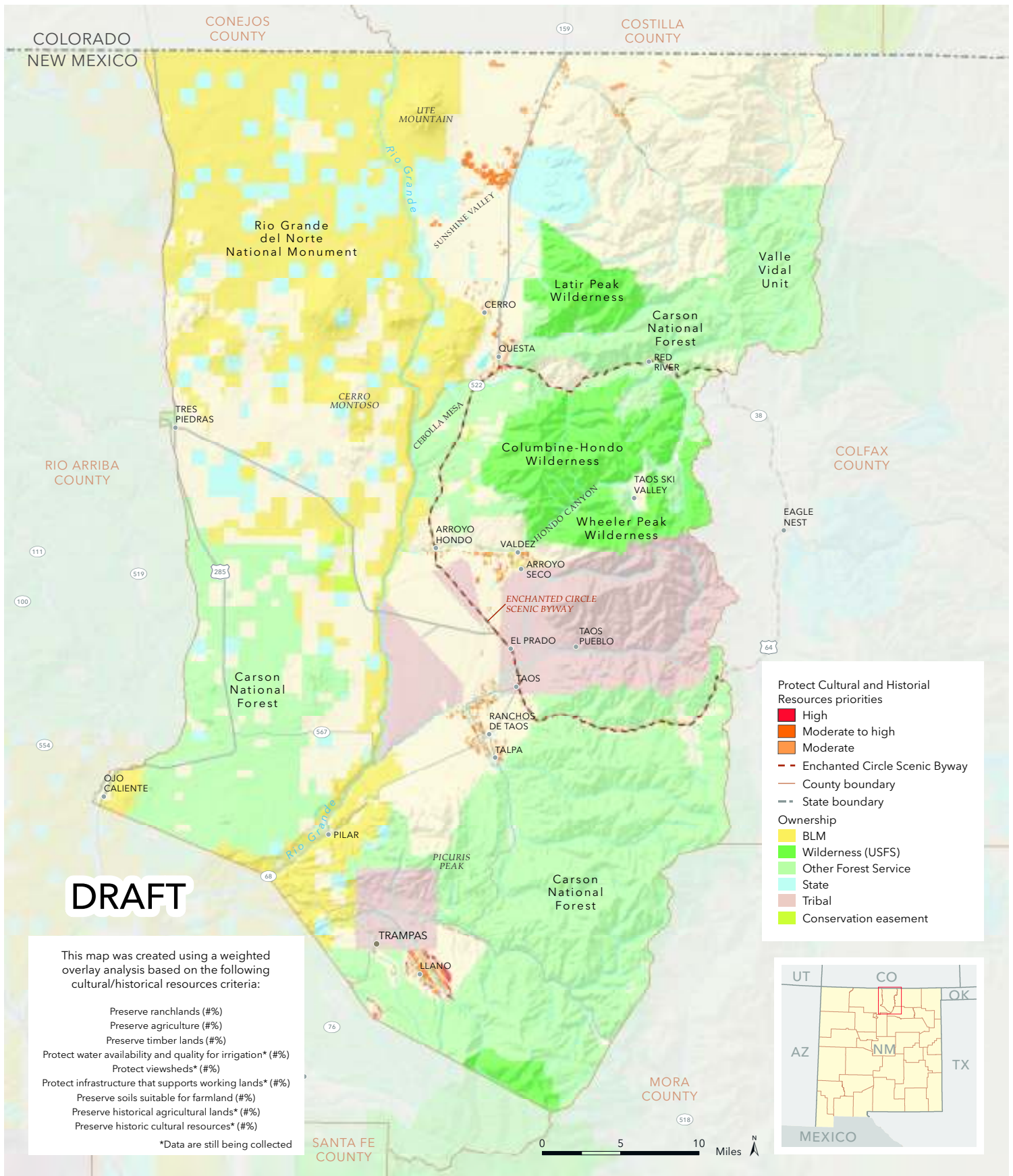
6. Next Steps/Schedule

- The Trust for Public Land and the technical advisory team (TAT) to work on adding to, revising, and weighting criteria for the goal maps and a draft overall map
- Amy and Taos Land Trust to work on revising the guiding principles and vision statement. Please email Amy (amy.morris@tpl.org) if you'd like to help with this.
- Amy to prepare a final report of the results from the community survey.
- Next stakeholder meeting in July or August.

<p><i>Spring and Summer 2016</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ TAT meeting(s)■ Revision of goal maps and preparation of draft overall map■ Stakeholder meeting in July or August (review overall maps, start on action plan)■ Finalize guiding principles and vision statement	<p><i>Fall 2016</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ TAT meeting(s)■ Creation and approval of final overall map■ Parcel prioritization and creation of web tool■ Stakeholder meeting in September <p><i>Winter 2016-2017</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Final report and action plan
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

7. Attachments

- Meeting slides
- Draft goal maps

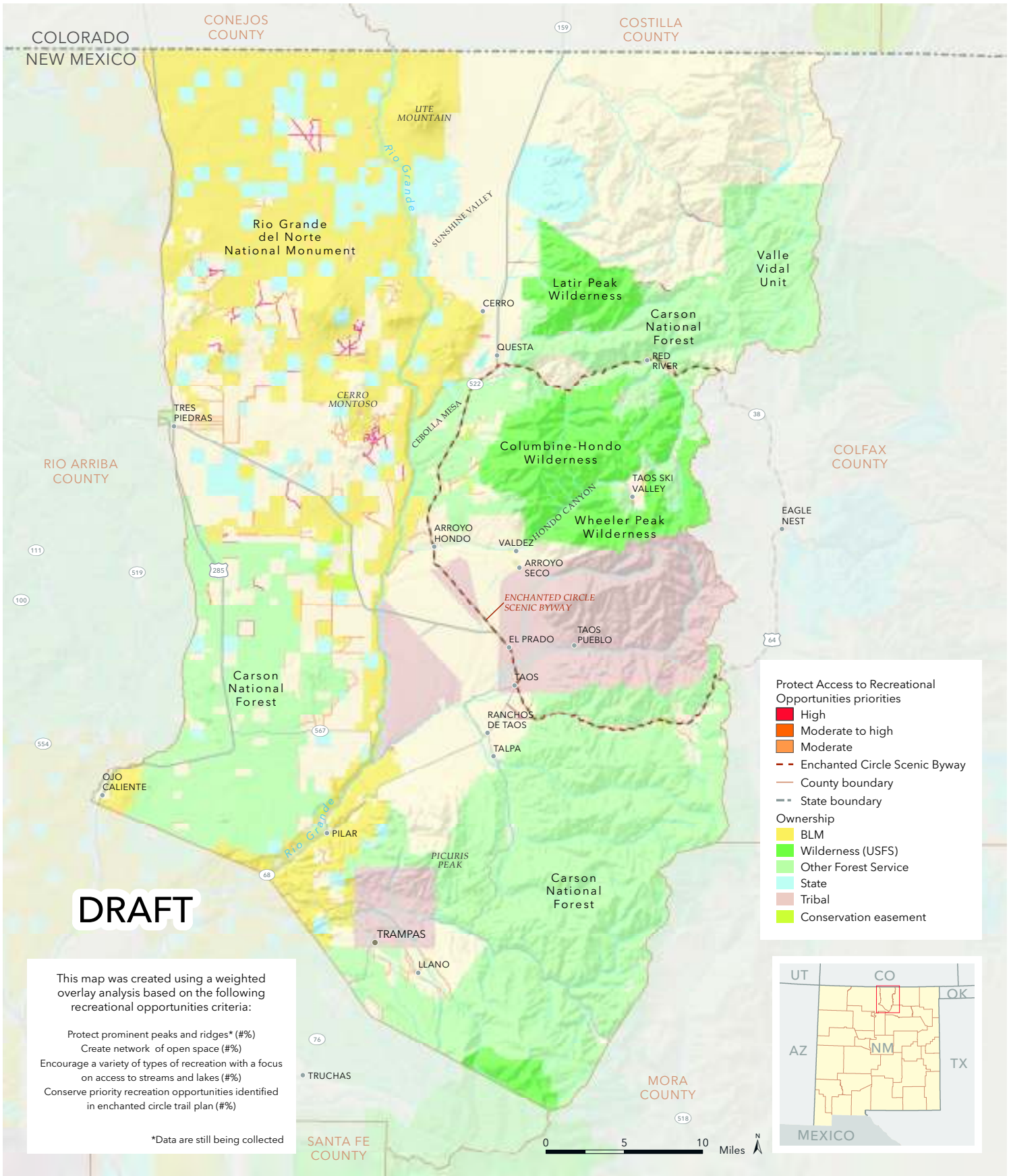


Protect Cultural and Historical Resources

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN

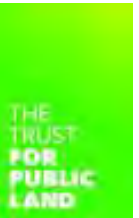
Special thanks to the following data providers: Taos County
 April 11, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org



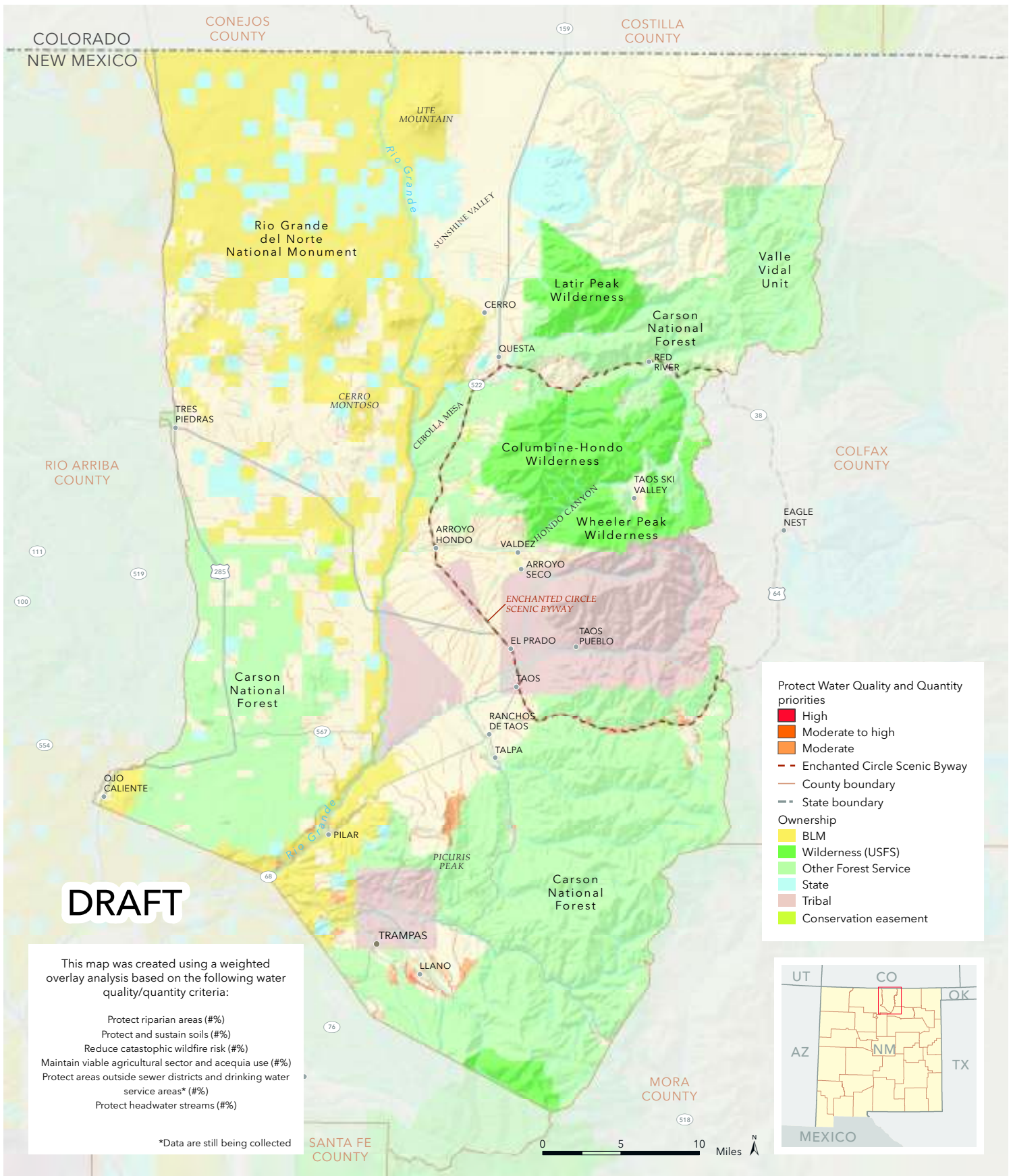


Protect Access to Recreational Opportunities

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN



Special thanks to the following data providers: Taos County
 April 11, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org

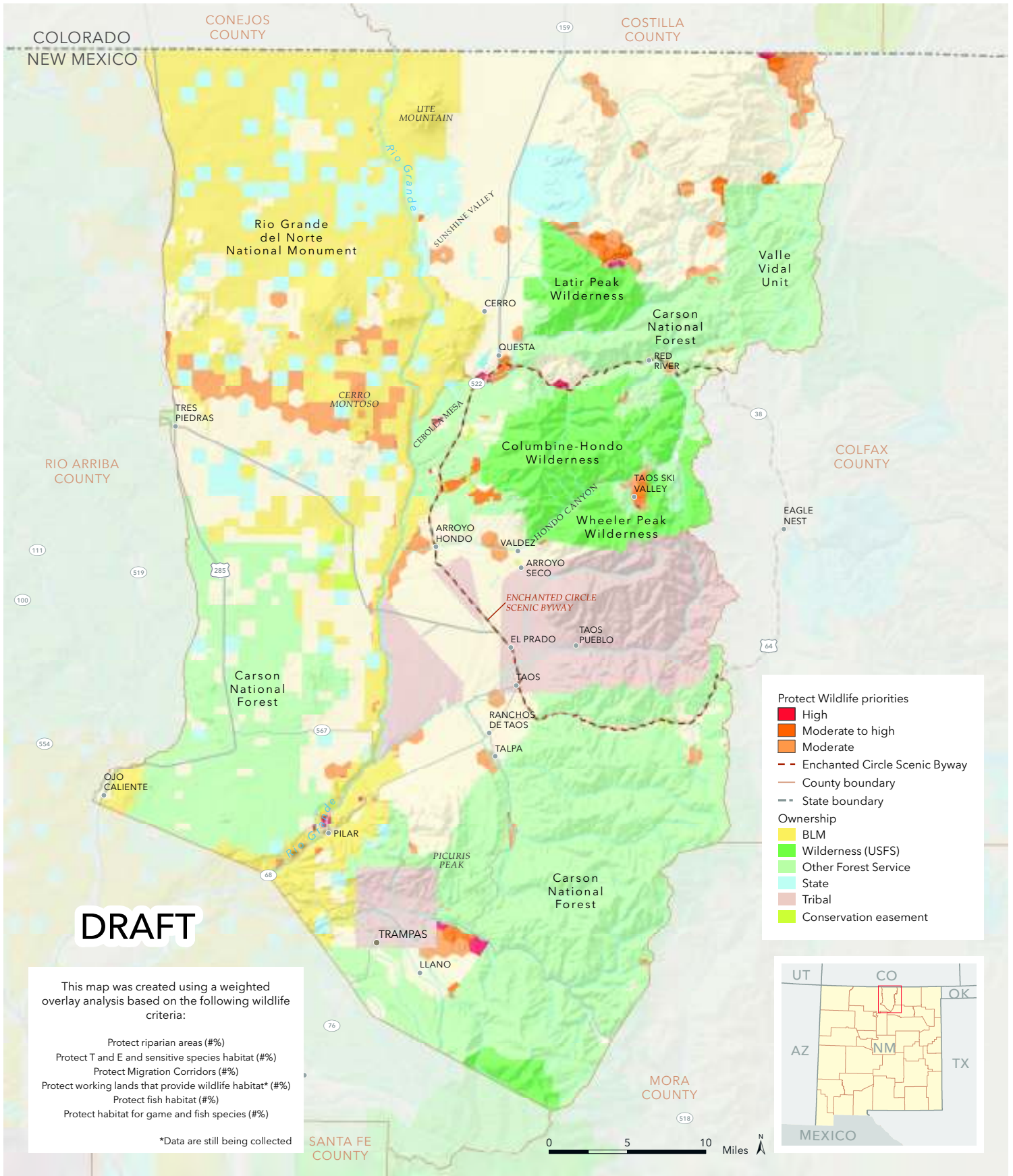


Protect Water Quality and Quantity

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN

Special thanks to the following data providers: Taos County
 April 11, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org





DRAFT

This map was created using a weighted overlay analysis based on the following wildlife criteria:

- Protect riparian areas (#%)
- Protect T and E and sensitive species habitat (#%)
- Protect Migration Corridors (#%)
- Protect working lands that provide wildlife habitat* (#%)
- Protect fish habitat (#%)
- Protect habitat for game and fish species (#%)

*Data are still being collected

Protect Wildlife

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN

Special thanks to the following data providers: Taos County
 April 11, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org



Meeting Summary

Taos County Community Conservation Plan

August 19, 2016; 12 to 2 PM
Council Chambers, Town Hall
400 Camino de la Placita, Taos, NM 87571

Meeting Goals

- (1) Review draft goal maps and discuss approach to overall map
- (2) Begin strategizing for implementation of the Community Conservation Plan

Participants

Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land	Kristina Ortez de Jones, Taos Land Trust
Andy Jones, Taos Magazine	Lara Miller, The Trust for Public Land
Daniel Escalante, RER, Casa Taos	Matt Foster
Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land	Nathan Sanchez, Taos County
Jake Caldwell, LOR Foundation	Nina Anthony, Taos Land Trust
Jean Stevens	Peter Rich, Carson National Forest
John Miller, Planner for Town of Taos	Rudy Perea, Taos County Planning
JR Logan, Taos News	

1. Welcome

Kristina Ortez de Jones from Taos Land Trust welcomed participants and led introductions. Participants shared one of their favorite places to spend time outdoors.

2. How will the Community Conservation Plan be used?

Amy Morris from The Trust for Public Land reviewed the objectives of the Community Conservation Plan, which are to: steer growth away from key resources; preserve unique local cultural heritage; protect natural and recreational assets that are important to local quality of life; combine community input with state-of-the-art mapping and best available GIS data; identify areas with opportunities to meet multiple goals; and prioritize areas for voluntary conservation. Amy also reviewed the community-based goals that are being mapped as part of this process. The four goals are: Protect water quality and quantity; Protect wildlife habitat; Provide access to recreational opportunities; and Preserve cultural and historic resources (*note: we will include agriculture here*).

John Miller from the Town of Taos described how the Community Conservation Plan and related maps will be used in town planning and priority-setting. Participant Matt Foster stated that this process is long overdue and can help identify areas for open space dedications. Kristina Ortez from Taos Land Trust described the central role that the Community Conservation Plan will play in the land trust's ongoing work.

3. Review of Community Conservation Goal Maps

Lara Miller from The Trust for Public Land reviewed the draft goal maps and the criteria that currently contribute to each of the goals. For now, each criteria is weighted evenly within each goal, but before the next meeting, the technical advisory team (TAT) will work with The Trust for Public Land to individually weight criteria based on community preferences and the quality of the data available among other factors. For example, the list of viewshed areas is not exhaustive, and that may affect the weighting of that category. All of the goals and criteria are shown in the attached draft criteria matrix.

One participant raised a question about mapping of sites that are sacred to local Native Americans. Lara explained that we do not have a data layer showing sacred sites, and that may be something that would be too sensitive to include, but that we are happy to work with the Pueblo on designating cultural priority areas. For potentially important areas for prehistoric cultural resources, a consulting firm is doing pro bono work to develop a predictive model for use in the mapping effort. Most local acequia data is now included in the maps. Unfortunately there is no publicly available spatial data right now connecting agricultural lands and water rights. Modeling that addresses the likelihood of uncontrolled fire is being incorporated into the maps.

Fred Gifford from The Trust for Public Land demonstrated the use of a recently developed web tool for a conservation plan in Bonner County, Idaho. The web tool is similar to what will be created for Taos County; it allows targeted queries and priority-setting. The final web tool will contain parcel-level data and will only be available through Taos Land Trust and the town and county planning departments.

There will be 1-2 webinars in October during which Lara will demonstrate the Community Conservation Plan mapping and modeling for participants who were unable to attend the August meeting. Webinar dates will be announced soon.

4. Discussion of Overall Map Scenarios

Amy and Fred led a discussion of how we should approach creating an overall map for the Community Conservation Plan. An overall map will include weighted overlays of each of the goal maps. An overall map is important because clear priorities will make the plan more useful and reducing the amount of high priority land can ease public concerns. The individual goal maps will still be part of the final report, and the web tool can be used to focus in on a range of priorities. Amy asked each participant to share their opinion on how they believe the goals should be weighted for the overall map. Most participants argued for using the weighting from the community survey. Others wanted to increase the weighting for important agricultural land and cultural sites. Amy noted that some priorities, such as those involving riparian areas and water quality, may already be heavily weighted because they appear under multiple goals.

5. Action Planning

Amy introduced a brief writing exercise to kick off action planning. Ideally, action steps should be implementable by the core team and by stakeholders. The worksheet for the writing exercise asked about most important steps for implementing the Community Conservation Plan and for identifying who/what/when/where/how as much as possible. Other community members who would like to give input on this topic can fill out the form here <https://goo.gl/forms/yNtvdqBraakyku5A2> until September 23. Input from the worksheets and online form will be incorporated into a draft action plan to be presented to stakeholders for feedback at the final meeting in November.

6. Wrap Up and Next Steps, and Closing

Amy and Kristina thanked participants for coming. Amy also reviewed the next steps shown below.

Next Steps

- Fill out action plan form here <https://goo.gl/forms/yNtvdqBraakyku5A2> by September 23
- Webinars in October to demonstrate mapping and modeling for participants who could not attend the August meeting
- Final technical advisory team meetings
- The Trust for Public Land will begin work on parcel prioritization and creation of the web tool this fall
- Final stakeholder meeting on November 10 (time TBD)

- The Trust for Public Land will prepare final report, action plan, and web tool in late 2016 and early 2017

Attachments

- Meeting slides
- Criteria matrix
- Vision statement and guiding principles document

Taos County Community Conservation Plan

August 15, 2016

Vision

- *Aspirational statement about what we want to see at the end of this process*
- *A catalyst that communicates purpose and values*

Our vision is a Taos County where cultural traditions are embraced and quality of life is excellent because everyone is connected to the land and committed to sustainable stewardship of our unique natural and cultural landscapes by and for our community.

Principles

- *Whose values should the Community Conservation Plan reflect?*
 - *What resources are especially important to protect?*
 - *Who needs to have input in order to make the Conservation Plan effective?*
 - *What potential environmental, cultural, or economic benefits are the highest priorities?*
 - *Are there political or cultural sensitivities that we need to reflect to make the guiding principles inclusive and effective?*
1. The Community Conservation Plan should be inclusive and should demonstrate respect for our tri-cultural traditions.
 2. The planning process should foster participation from locals of all ages; from the Pueblo and Hispano communities; and from diverse interest groups.
 3. We need to identify ways to conserve natural and open space resources while also protecting cultural values and local traditions.
 4. Local residents value traditional working lands and particularly want to protect our irrigated agricultural lands and acequias.
 5. Conserved open space and access to recreation are important for connecting local residents to the outdoors and to attracting tourists and jobs to Taos County.
 6. We support voluntary conservation efforts.
 7. We need to build support for sustainable stewardship of our unique natural and cultural landscapes by and for our community.

Taos County Community Conservation Plan Enchanted Circle Trail Plan

November 15, 5:30 to 7:30 pm
The Mabel Dodge Luhan House
240 Morada Lane, Taos, NM 87571

Meeting Goals

- (1) Reach (near) consensus on final overall map for Community Conservation Plan
- (2) Discuss proposed Phase 1 priority trails for Trail Plan and recruit trail champions
- (3) Discuss and refine implementation plans for both the Community Conservation Plan and the Trail Plan
- (4) Celebrate all our work!

Participants

Adriana Blake, Enchanted Circle Trail Association
Adrienne Anderson, Village of Taos Ski Valley
Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land
Andy Leonard, Upward Bound
Angela Bates
Attila Bality, National Park Service
Barbara Dry, Red River
Barry Weinstock, BLM
Ben Soderquist
Ben Thomas, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
Beth Robinson
Bill Adkinson, Trout Unlimited
Caitlin Legere
Carl Colonius, Enchanted Circle Trail Association
Cindy Brown
Craig Saum, Carson National Forest
Chris Ellis
Darien Fernandez, Town of Taos Council
David West
Eddie Dry, Red River
Eric Garner, Carson National Forest
Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land
Gary Jones
Gillian Joyce, Rio Chiquito
Hal Margolis
Jean Stevens, Environmental Film Festival
Jeff Muggleston, Carson National Forest
Jim May
Joe Wells
Joe Riter
Joe Zupan
Joel Serra
John MacArthur, Taos Saddle Club
Karlis Viceps
Kerrie Pattison
Kip Price

Kristina Ortez de Jones, Taos Land Trust
Lara Miller, The Trust for Public Land
Linda Hodapp
Linda Yardley, Taos Land Trust, Taos Pueblo
Lindsay Mapes, Zia Rides
Loren Bell
Louis Fineberg, Town of Taos
Lynn Aldrich, Taos Land Trust
Mark White, Taos County Community Distillery
Martha Moran, Taos Saddle Club
Matt Foster
Meg Peterson
Michael Ritterhouse
Nancy Montoya
Nathan Sanchez, Taos County
Pam MacArthur, Taos Saddle Club
Paul Schilke, US Forest Service
Peter Rich, Carson National Forest
Polly Raye, RFNA
Randolph Pierce
Rich Montoya
Roger Pattison
Rudy Perea, Taos County
Sonny Robinson
Stephen Mabrey
Stephanie Schilling
Susan Margolis
Susie Fiore, Field Institute of Taos
Teresa Pisaño, Taos Land Trust
Tim Corner, Taos County
Tim Rivera
Tim Rogers, Santa Fe Conservation Trust
Tom Romero, NRG NHA
Vince Rozzi
Will Clem

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome

Kristina Ortez de Jones from Taos Land Trust welcomed participants and thanked everyone for coming. She led introductions for the entire group, including asking for everyone's favorite place to spend time outdoors.

2. Review of Meeting Goals and Agenda

Amy Morris from The Trust for Public Land asked how many attendees had never come to a previous meeting for the Community Conservation Plan or the Trail Plan; approximately 1/3 of participants raised their hands. Amy provided a brief overview of the planning efforts for newcomers. The overall reasons for developing these two plans are to:

- Set priorities for trails and voluntary conservation in Taos County and the Enchanted Circle
- Tell the story of local conservation values based on local voices, perspectives, and knowledge
- Help protect unique local cultural heritage and natural and recreational resources
- Expand opportunities for locals and visitors to use trails for recreation, fitness, transportation, and connecting to the outdoors

The goals being mapped for the Community Conservation Plan are related to water, wildlife habitat, recreation access, and cultural/historical resources. During the trail planning, 158 trails were proposed. There is broad support for trails and a great deal of concern about lack of paved pathways and safe routes for road biking. Amy also reviewed the meeting goals (see above).

Here's where we are in the overall planning process:

1. Outreach (speak-outs, survey) – Sept 2015 to Jan 2016
2. Outreach (interviews, focus groups) – July 2015 and continuing
3. Kick Off Meeting #1 – July 2015
4. Trail Plan Meeting #2 – Sept 2015
5. Trail Plan Meeting #3, CCP Meeting #2 – Nov 2015
6. Trail Plan Meeting #4, CCP Meeting #3 – April 2016
7. Groundtruthing – April to July 2016
8. Trail Plan Meeting #5, CCP Meeting #4 – August 2016
9. Trail Plan Open House – August 2016
10. Preparing final maps, prioritizing trails
- 11. Final Meetings – November 2016**
12. Final Report, Web Tools, and Messaging – late 2016/early 2017
13. NEW: Finance workshop in Spring 2017

3. Community Outreach and What's Next

There has been enormous community engagement in these plans. Over 650 people participated in the online community survey; 736 people were contacted during speak outs and 300 participated in poster activities; and many other community members participated in focus groups, trail workshops, interviews, and field verifying proposed trails.

Kristina talked about the importance of these community plans in giving the land trust a blueprint for what's next. The plans will help Taos Land Trust work with the town and county and the Enchanted Circle Trail Association to be more pro-active. Kristina also introduced Carl Colonius from the Trail Association, and Carl

introduced two board members in attendance. The Trail Association will support implementation of the trail priorities, and will work with any and all champions to move forward.

The land trust is now working on a ParkRx program with local community health experts and practitioners. The land trust is also working on a plan for a community park (Rio Fernando Park) on 20 acres acquired by the land trust next to Fred Baca Park. The land includes habitat, wetlands, and irrigated acres for farming—but a lot of work needs to be done. The Rio Fernando Park will represent all the priorities that have come out of this community planning process. Kristina said that through future community-based efforts, we will “bring our river back to life.”

4. Review of Community Conservation Plan Goal Maps

Amy explained that one of the final steps in the Community Conservation Plan is creating a map that overlays all four goals to see where priorities are stacked—where conservation could meet the most goals simultaneously. Creating a priority map is important for targeting implementation and for building community support. Fred Gifford from The Trust for Public Land noted that the maps have been in development for the past year. The GIS team interpreted community input and worked to represent that input through creating GIS models using the best available data. The technical advisory team (TAT) has been deeply involved in helping to gather and interpret data. Lara Miller from the Trust for Public reviewed how criteria feed into how each goal is visualized. For protecting water quality and quantity, criteria include: protecting riparian areas, protecting erodible soils, reducing wildlife risk, and protecting wetlands, acequias, and headwater streams.

Next Lara described the potential scenarios for the overall map based on prior community feedback, including the community survey. The scenarios are: (1) Scenario 1: all four goals equally weighted; (2) Scenario 2: water quality/quantity weighted 40% and the other three goals each weighted 20%; and (3) Scenario 3: weights based on survey results: water quality 40%, cultural and historical resources (including agriculture) 33%, and access to recreation and protecting wildlife habitat each weighted 14%. (See attached scenario maps.) The main differences among the three versions of the overall map are how important the priorities are (red vs. orange). Areas that have already been protected either through conservation easements or public land are masked (see ownership legend on scenario maps). The Trust for Public Land recommended adopting Scenario 3 based on the community survey results and other community engagement. This scenario was the clear preference of attendees at the August 2016 Community Conservation Plan meeting.

Participants were given key pads to vote on overall scenarios. First participants did a practice vote in which 85% of attendees said they planned to go to the ski valley this winter. Lara and Fred asked attendees to vote yes or no to adopt Scenario 3. Only 52% of attendees voted to adopt it. Several participants asked for clarifications on the mapping approach. Then participants were given an up/down vote on Scenario 2 (water quality 40% and other goals 20%). This time, 56% of attendees voted to adopt. There was no vote on the equally weighted scenario (Scenario 1) because that scenario (equally weighted) was considered too artificial. Several participants, particularly those who had not been able to attend previous meetings, expressed some confusion about the goal weighting and what they were being asked to vote on. Other participants strongly suggested just using the weights from the survey feedback since hundreds of people contributed to those results. Since Scenario 3 was the consensus preference at the last community meeting and is based on the widest community input, Amy and Fred said that they would likely use Scenario 3 since that scenario is the most defensible.

5. Review of Preliminary Priority Trails

Amy noted that the 158 trails proposed by participants are far too many for the community to tackle. We need to strategize in order to put limited resources to the best use, focus public outreach, and have a relatively narrow target to build support. Fred described how most trails were identified through participants drawing on

maps of our 13 designated trail system areas (developed with input from community meetings and TAT). The trail TAT reviewed trails and over 120 trails were field verified by volunteers who analyzed trail corridors for constraints and opportunities and looked at potential safety issues, feasibility, and user experience (for example: Is there access to a particularly unique and beautiful view?). Fred noted that prioritization is critical because “if everything is a priority, then nothing is a priority.” Initial list of priority trails includes 31 in the top tier. There is a separate list for long road biking trails that includes 7 top tier routes. Road biking routes were treated separately because they are so long that they skew some of the metrics (listed below).

Trails were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Public preference** (overall score from field verification, stakeholder input)
- **Current use** as trail (Strava)
- **Proximity** to parks, schools, hospitals, libraries
- **Accessibility** (children, seniors, low income)
- **Feasibility** (length, stream crossings, # private parcels crossed, slope) + trail viability rating from groundtruthing
- **User experience** – field verification scores
- **Community health benefits** – field verification scores, local health expert input
- **Tourism** (new criteria)
- **Safety** (new criteria) – inconsistent data (traffic volume, speed, etc.) used as overlay information

Two new criteria were added since the August 2016 meeting: tourism and safety. The tourism metric is based on gross receipts tax and indicates where communities may benefit particularly from tourist use of trails (for example: Red River). The tourism metric helps trails outside the town of Taos rise in the priority rankings. Safety data are not consistently available across the study area, so this information will be part of the web tool, but not explicitly part of a metric used in prioritizing trails.

See meeting slides attachment for the lists of priority trails.

6. Action Planning

Participants received copies of the draft action plans for the Community Conservation Plan (based on writing exercise from August meeting) and the Trail Plan (based on recent online survey questions). (See attached drafts.) The group was divided into four small groups each of which worked with a facilitator (Kristina, Fred, Lara, and Amy) in a separate corner of the room. First, the groups were asked to brainstorm additions to the Community Conservation Plan action steps with a particular focus on implementation strategies outside of land acquisition (things that the larger community could participate in). Second, the groups were asked to discuss action steps for the Trail Plan with a focus on designating “trail champions” who will take the lead in getting priority trails implemented. The ideas and assignments generated by the small groups are listed below.

Community Conservation Plan: photo contest; use of plan by town and county planning departments (workshop); work with HOAs; school library presentations; one on one outreach to commissioners; work with VA association; site tours for priority areas to build community support; education (including about traditional uses) for general public, landowners, elected officials, tourists, kids; promoting the plan through signage and Taos.org; create programming around traditional uses, ParkRx, trash cleanup, River Keepers, nature interpretation, community farming, signage; need continued planning: firewise, ID development threats, county comprehensive plan, forest planning needs to take traditional uses into account; address fracking on BLM land; address dropping groundwater; make comments on Rio Grande National Monument Plan; highlight water and impacts; address farms that are not being farmed through providing wildlife tax benefits and designations instead; rezoning; bio blitz/Christmas bird count and educate about migratory birds (especially early May); organize volunteer days to work on restoration projects; host engaging events; create sense of place education—

promote connection with the natural world; work to address farm economy and markets; develop farm to flask program; create community gardens; partner with Audubon for fieldtrips; provide and promote public access; work with acequia easements; strengthen the Regional Water Plan; eat locally and support the food co-op.

Trail Plan Implementation Ideas: focus on bike commuting and sidewalks; environmental education; Youth Corps and service learning; work with scouting groups; work with local businesses on “adopt-a-trail” programs; need close coordination with all public agencies—including federal; make sure that towns and county play lead roles in implementation; utilize AmeriCorps/NCCC volunteers; work with the Pueblo; remove fence on Rubydoo Street; need to complete Adobe Street work to improve safety for youth and families; need to be cautious possible future conflicts between bike events and wildlife.

Trail Champions

The following community members volunteered to champion particular trails/trail segments at the November 15 meeting. We will continue to recruit additional champions. Rocky Mountain Youth Corps expressed interest in supporting trail development throughout the study area. Cat Legere, Matt Foster, and Adriana Blake also volunteered to champion trails. Participants noted that FIT Taos, the ski area, and Taos Ski Valley may also want to champion particular trails.

Volunteer	Trail
Joel Serra	68 to Old Blinking Light; Old Blinking Light to Seco
Louis Fineberg and Kristina Ortez de Jones	Town of Taos trails—beginning with Baca to Kit Carson
Eddie Dry and Ben Thomas	Middle Fork to Bavarian
Rich Montoya and Craig Saum	Talpa Traverse
Barbara Dry	Flagge Mountain
Chris Ellis	Area: Arroyo Hondo/Seco
Joe Riter	Salazar/Town of Taos/Ranchitos
Suzie Soderquist	Nequeia Trail
Mugzy (Jeff Muggleston)	Talpa Traverse and Bull of the Wools
Barbara Dry	Nature Trail and RR, Mid Fork Lake to Wheeler
Darian Fernandez	Kit Carson to Fred Baca Park
Karlis Viceps	Rio Fernando

7. Wrap Up and Closing

Kristina and Amy thanked everyone for coming—especially those who have contributed many, many hours to these plans over the past 18 months. There is a lot to celebrate, including:

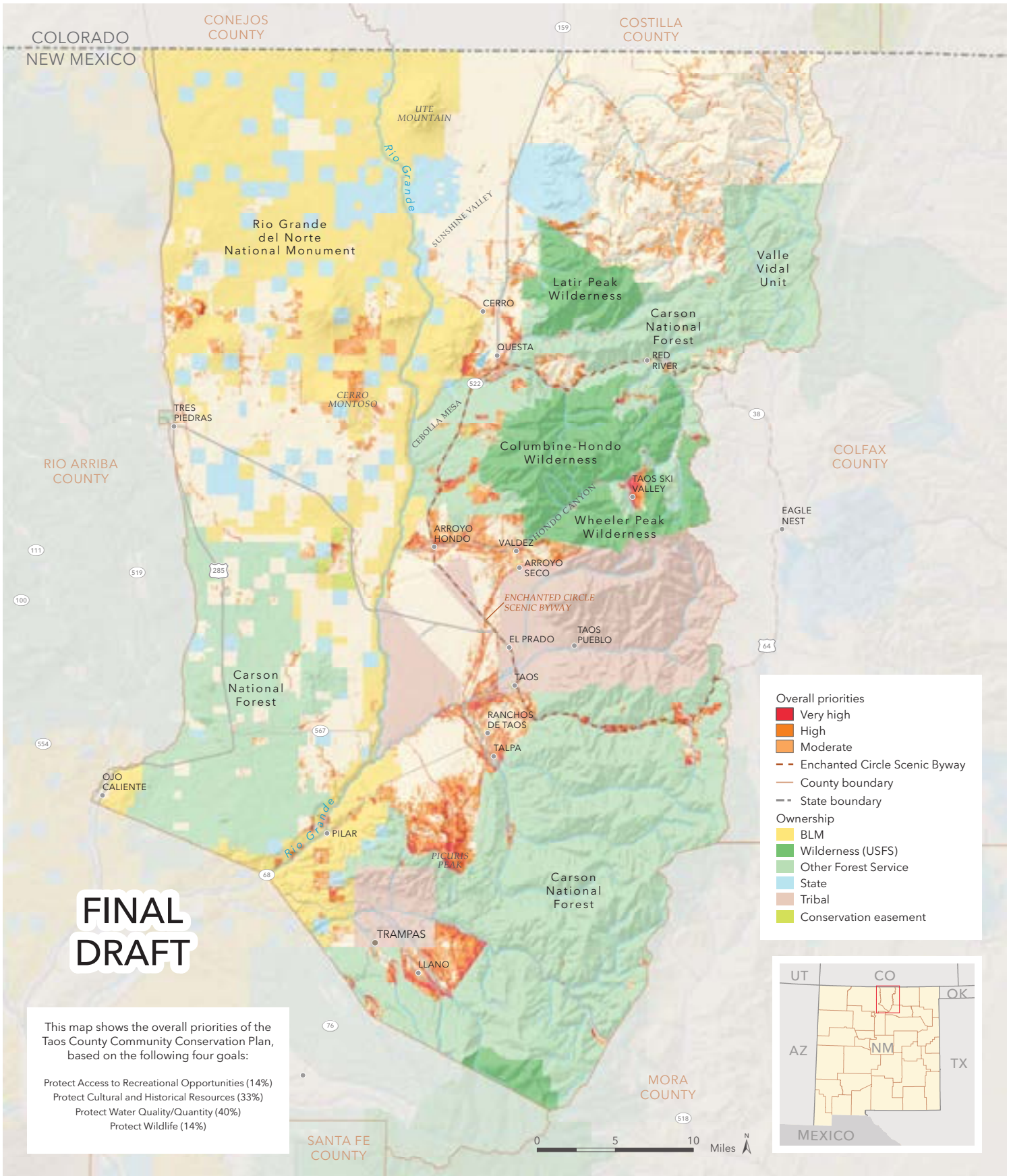
- Huge community involvement in both plans
- Major local support for protecting water and land and for expanding opportunities to access trails/pathways for health, transit, and connecting to the outdoors
- Taos Land Trust, Enchanted Circle Trails Association, and town and county governments are well-positioned to implement key parts of both plans.
- Momentum is building! There is a lot of opportunity to continue working with the land trust and trails association to: champion and build trails, develop Taos’s Parks and Trails Rx program, and create Rio Fernando Community Park.

8. Next Steps

- Core team and Enchanted Circle Trail Association to continue refining action plans; email amy.morris@tpl.org if you'd like to help with this.
- TPL to write draft report for Taos County Community Conservation Plan
- TPL to write draft report for Enchanted Circle Trail Plan
- TPL to create web tools for the Community Conservation Plan and the Trail Plan. Trail Plan web tool will be available to the public.
- Core team to launch reports and tools and generate support for the plans.
- Core team to work to have the plans adopted by the county and towns.
- Participants can stay involved by volunteering with the Taos Land Trust or the Enchanted Circle Trail Association.

9. Attachments

- Scenario maps
- Action plan drafts
- Meeting slides



**FINAL
DRAFT**

This map shows the overall priorities of the Taos County Community Conservation Plan, based on the following four goals:

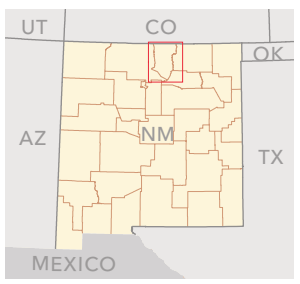
- Protect Access to Recreational Opportunities (14%)
- Protect Cultural and Historical Resources (33%)
- Protect Water Quality/Quantity (40%)
- Protect Wildlife (14%)

Overall priorities

- Very high
- High
- Moderate
- Enchanted Circle Scenic Byway
- County boundary
- State boundary

Ownership

- BLM
- Wilderness (USFS)
- Other Forest Service
- State
- Tribal
- Conservation easement

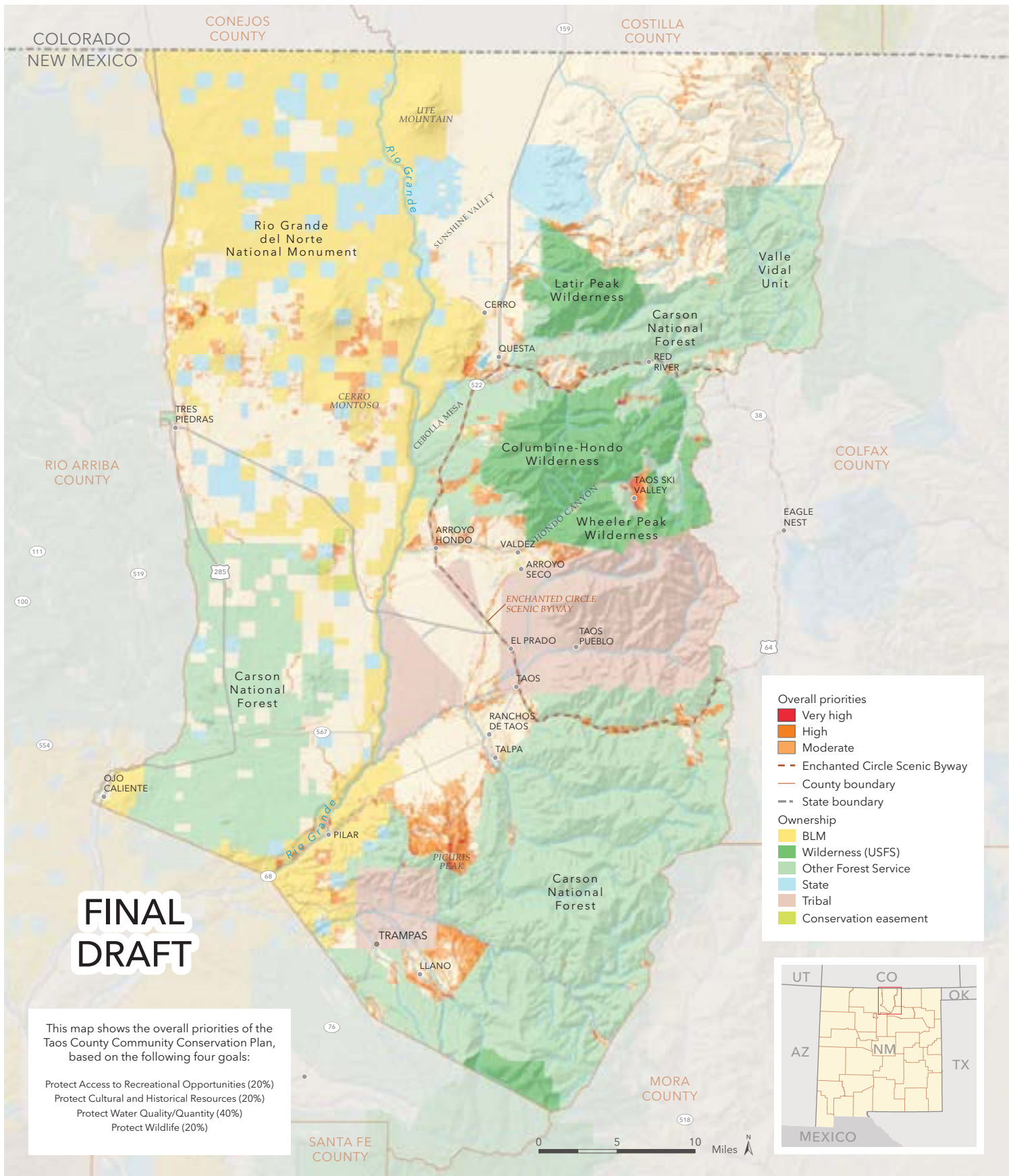


Overall Priorities

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN

Special thanks to the following data providers: Taos County
 November 22, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org





**FINAL
DRAFT**

This map shows the overall priorities of the Taos County Community Conservation Plan, based on the following four goals:

- Protect Access to Recreational Opportunities (20%)
- Protect Cultural and Historical Resources (20%)
- Protect Water Quality/Quantity (40%)
- Protect Wildlife (20%)

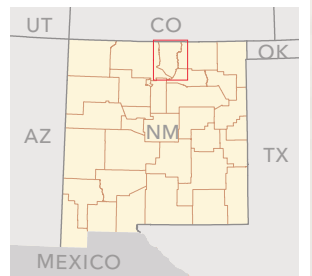
Overall priorities

- Very high
- High
- Moderate

--- Enchanted Circle Scenic Byway
 --- County boundary
 --- State boundary

Ownership

- BLM
- Wilderness (USFS)
- Other Forest Service
- State
- Tribal
- Conservation easement

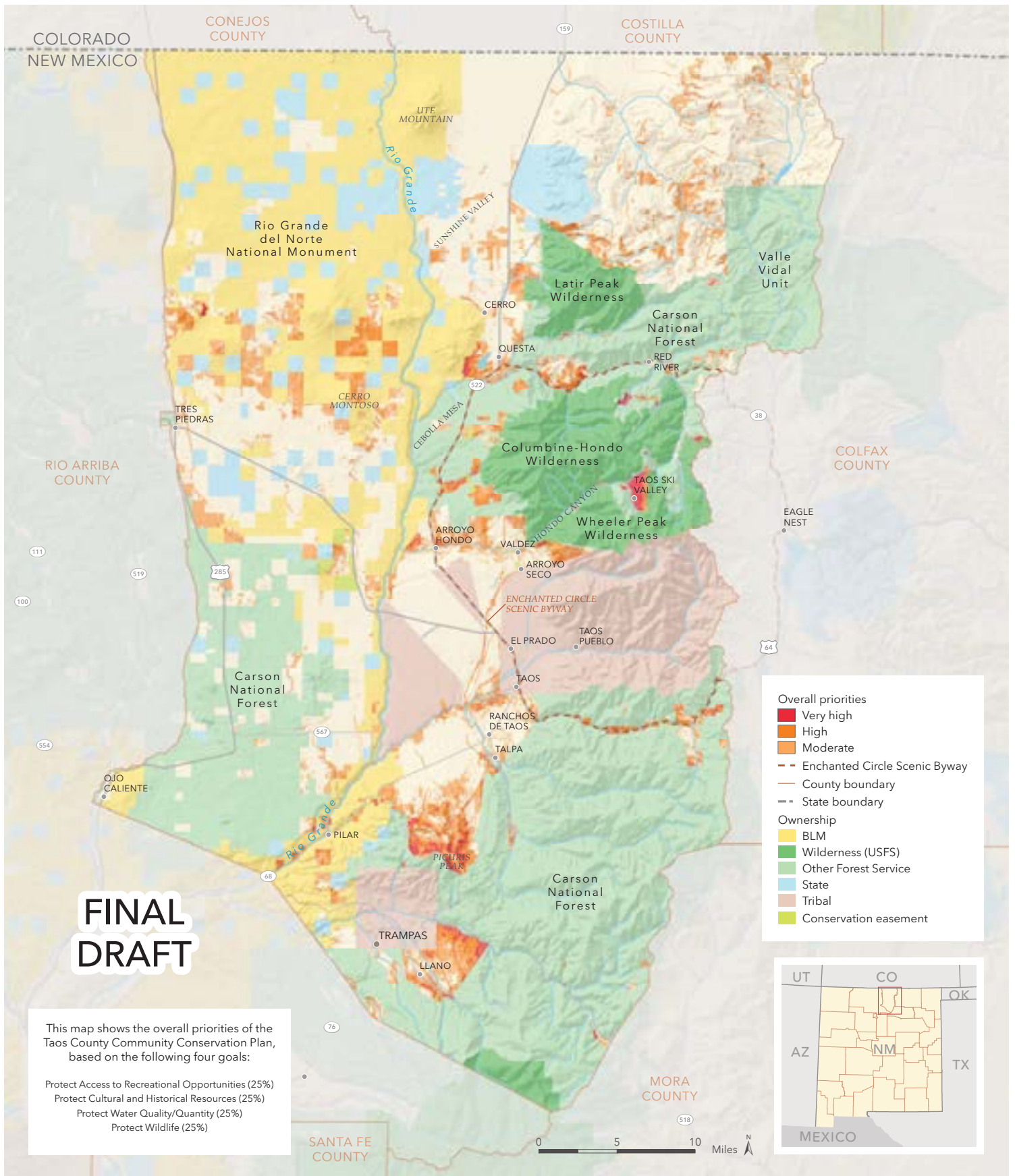


Overall Priorities

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN

Special thanks to the following data providers: Taos County
 November 22, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org





**FINAL
DRAFT**

This map shows the overall priorities of the Taos County Community Conservation Plan, based on the following four goals:

- Protect Access to Recreational Opportunities (25%)
- Protect Cultural and Historical Resources (25%)
- Protect Water Quality/Quantity (25%)
- Protect Wildlife (25%)

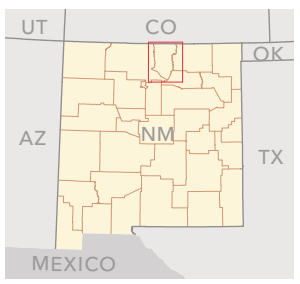
Overall priorities

- Very high
- High
- Moderate

--- Enchanted Circle Scenic Byway
 --- County boundary
 --- State boundary

Ownership

- BLM
- Wilderness (USFS)
- Other Forest Service
- State
- Tribal
- Conservation easement



Overall Priorities

TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN

Special thanks to the following data providers: Taos County
 November 22, 2016. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org



Taos County Community Conservation Plan: Action Plan Summary

What and How	Who
A. Protect highest priority local lands and resources	
A.1 Create maps of the high-priority areas for conservation based on best scientific data and community input (+ web tool for partners) → Maps and web tool should be used in strategic planning by Taos Land Trust and local governments—identify new voluntary conservation opportunities → Prioritize acquisition where development pressure is strongest → Coordinate closely with Taos County Comprehensive Plan → Create brochure and report	The Trust for Public Land and core team
A.2 Explore non-acquisition strategies for protecting land and promoting community health → Use plan as a starting point to work with landowners and land managers on best management practices → Use plan to discourage developers from developing priority lands → Promote Low Impact Development (LID) in areas where development is appropriate → Develop Rio Fernando Park as example of the power of community conservation → Develop parks Rx program	Taos Land Trust, Amigos Bravos, Soil and Water Conservation District, Town of Taos, County
A.3 Promote policies that will help protect priority lands, including traditional working lands → Work with local and regional groups to advocate for strong local water rights for traditional agriculture and acequia systems → Advocate for agricultural designation of all farmland → Promote additional tax incentive policies to protect traditional agricultural lands	Taos Land Trust, Agriculture Resolution Team (new name)
A.4 Develop education programs to promote appreciation and stewardship of close-to-home nature → Work to connect all locals to the outdoors; focus outreach on Hispano and Pueblo communities → Develop signage about good stewardship in outdoor areas that people are already visiting → Develop an outreach program to discourage illegal dumping in open space areas → Assemble materials and train volunteers to do outreach at local schools—include training for conducting interviews with elders	

What and How	Who
<p>A.5 Incorporate Community Conservation Plan into town and county plans → Coordinate closely with Taos County Comprehensive plan update → Create targeted materials and outreach for elected officials</p>	<p>Town and County staff and elected officials</p>
B. Develop a strong communications strategy for the Community Conservation Plan	
<p>B. 1. Build a communications strategy and outreach plan to showcase the benefits of the Community Conservation Plan. → Communications plan should include: website, social media, newspaper, radio, and public open houses for diverse audiences. → Information should be distributed in Spanish as well as English. → Target key partners such as landowners and developers with strategic communications</p>	<p>Core team (with help from UNM communications students?)</p>
<p>B.2. Select, engage, and train champions to drive policy and objectives of the Conservation Plan. In addition to core team, potential champions include: → Rocky Mountain Youth Corps → Local NGOs and civic groups → Hiking clubs → Chamber of Commerce → Soil and Water Conservation District → UNM</p>	<p>The Trust for Public Land, Taos Land Trust</p>
C. Develop a long-term strategy for using, updating, and adapting the Community Conservation Plan	
<p>C.1 Coordinate Conservation Plan updates → Determine where the online interactive version of the Conservation Plan will be housed in the long term → Create a mechanism through which the Conservation Plan and its corresponding communications strategy can be updated; ensure that updates happen annually (or more often) → Ensure that information about data sources is thorough and easily available in order to facilitate updates</p>	<p>The Trust for Public Land, Taos Land Trust</p>
<p>C.2 Evaluate the Conservation Plan annually, including 12 months after implementation for 5-10 years</p>	<p>The Trust for Public Land, Taos Land Trust</p>
<p>C.3 Convene core team twice per year to assess progress and adapt to changes as necessary</p>	<p>The Trust for Public Land, Taos Land Trust, County of Taos</p>
D. Identify and pursue traditional and non-traditional funding sources or actions to implement the Conservation Plan	

What and How	Who
D.1 Use Conservation Finance report from The Trust for Public Land as a starting point for assessing funding options → Coordinate with local and federal agencies to seek grant funding	
D.2. Identify potential incentives to assist landowners with voluntary conservation	Core team, local governments, land trusts, NRCS
D.3 Work with local groups to develop a local ballot initiative that would support conservation and trails → Convene conservation finance workshop for core team and stakeholders → Conduct additional polling to gauge support and/or possible ballot language	

DRAFT

Enchanted Circle Trail Plan—Implementation Planning

1. What group or groups will be best able to lead the implementation of the trail plan?

- contractors and Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
- Taos Land Trust, US Forest Service, BLM, City and County of Taos
- Good question, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Forest Service, BLM, Taos County,
- Town of Taos, NM DOT, interested local clubs and groups.
- Trust for Public Lands, US Forest Service, Taos Land Trust, BLM
- Grassroots groups with support from municipalities and agencies
- Enchanted Trail Advisory Committee and Board of Directors
- Taos Land Trust; Community Foundation; and is there an organized group promoting bike paths?

2. What is necessary to ensure that there is a strong communications and outreach strategy for the trail plan?

- Buy in from community and funding
- A central organization that coordinates emails, newspaper releases, etc.
- A spearhead and good funding source.
- good website, Facebook presence, continued e-mail network
- professional maps, a good web presence, local school outreach, maybe utilize an SCA conservation intern model to provide staffing, community presence at functions,
- Money
- It would help to have a map of the proposed trails . . . a nice big drawing so people can place the trails and surrounding terrain in their visual memories. So many of us in Taos are visual. Then perhaps a one-full-page article in the Taos News with the image of the trails and a simple outline of the advantages of it and reasons for it . . . not too much description, just key points to remember.

3. How can we ensure that the plan is useful to (and will be used by) local jurisdictions and public agencies?

- Broken out by land ownership
- Educate lawmakers (city and county) and heads of agencies (USFS, BLM, etc)
- They are going to know who is picking up the cost. If we can't answer that they will not really listen.
- involve all sectors of the community
- ask, talk, listen, communicate, provide feedback,
- That it is in-line with the local agency's plan, whoever that is.
- How do we want them to use it? Are you asking about how to get it implemented?
- If so there needs to be a core group of interested citizens that develops an implementation plan (including maps; meetings with neighborhood associations to hear their concerns and get their support,; proposals for funding purchases of rights of way if that is necessary; proposals for getting the support of those whose land is affected; trail builders, etc.). Public support for the plan will need to be demonstrated to Town and County governments through petitions, a big event, letters from neighborhood associations, letters from individuals

4. Are there local individuals or groups who are likely to champion particular trails?

- Del Norte Mountain Bike Assoc.
- The mountain biking community, hikers, fitness enthusiasts
- Yes, trail users and volunteers.
- bicycle riding groups, horseback trail riding group, hiking groups, birdwatcher groups
- FNA, DNMA - Talpa Traverse
- Absolutely, however they are restricted by resources like us all.

→ Impacted neighbors and neighborhood associations; parents and families (trails that allow children to ride bikes to school); bike-trail-supporters.

5. How can we overcome funding constraints to implementing the trail plan?

- Seek outside funding
- Get a grant writer who is familiar with rural development grants, Safe Routes to Schools, Bike Friendly Community funds, etc. (I've given Carl Colonius the name of a woman I know in Alaska who has been very successful in this work.) Have a team of "lobbyists" working with the Town and County commissions.
- Grants from Federal Transportation funding, NM Tourism/parks dept and private and corporate sources.
- grants - corporate, government, private foundations
- Volunteers need to show up!
- Grants and community money that is set aside for these projects.
- First define them

6. How can we overcome coordination challenges and make sure the trail plan is implemented?

- Organize plan by land ownership - agency jurisdiction so they can determine how their objectives match
- Have one central agency responsible ... maybe Taos Land Trust?
- Government officials need to be given a solid reason to make this a priority.
- have a strong organization and be willing to compromise
- Prioritize, create five-year priority plans
- Having a huge volunteer group and or advocates that are willing to help with the muscle.
- Identify those most passionate about the plan and organize them into the Core Implementation Group. Be sure it includes parents who want safe bike routes to school; bike riders; "walkers".

7. How can we best approach private landowners about potential trail easements on their property?

- Education about the value of trails ... economics, health, property values, etc.
- As good neighbors, if we can find people who know these land owners that would be a good start.
- property tax relief via transfer to public land trust
- for every easement or controversial trail that is won, demonstrate a commitment to managing each of those relationships successfully with integrity.
- Personally and in person. Education is huge in having the private party agree.
- Start with the neighborhood associations and help them identify the best routes through their neighborhoods.

8. What other steps will be most important in ensuring that the trail plan is successfully implemented? (Where possible, please identify who/what/when/where/how.)

- Start small with easily funded projects to build success and momentum.
- Carl Colonius to spearhead, the plan is rather diverse so it will require a team to work with Land Managers, Government agencies, etc. a grant writer, community volunteers, and time.
- support from all county and municipal governments
- Let the experts make room to lead and listen and learn collaboratively. Leadership is good but lets be open to new ideas. Safety first, wear the PPE, think before we act and speak, etc.
- Needs clear strong leadership, one or two key leaders and a core group, and a time line.