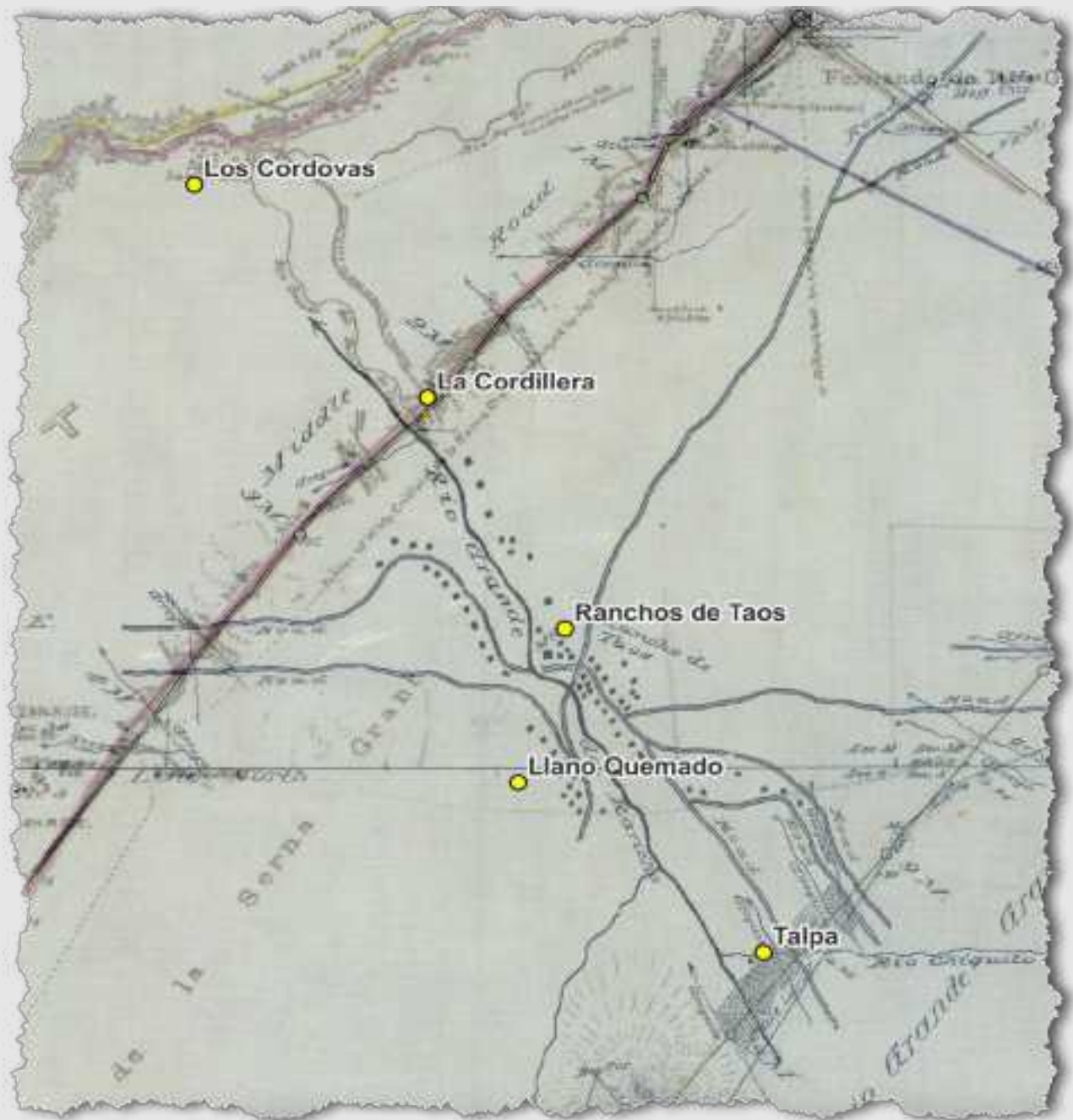


LAS COMUNIDADES DEL VALLE DE LOS RANCHOS TRADITIONAL HISTORIC COMMUNITY



Submitted by the
Rancho de Taos Neighborhood Association
December 2022



THANK YOU!

The Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association wishes to acknowledge and thank the many friends, neighbors, and families that have made this application for Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community possible.

Over 1400 residents signed the required petition within a 60-day period during a pandemic. This was an extraordinary statement of support for which we cannot thank everyone enough. Many volunteers sat through sun, wind, and rain at tables collecting signatures and went door to door visiting family and friends.

Businesses and organizations displayed banners and residents posted yard signs showing support, throughout the community. And when a donation card was included in a mailing, many responded with generous contributions that provided the funding for advertising, office supplies, and legal expenses.

In addition, volunteers have spent countless hours completing this application for submittal to the Taos County Commission, support for La Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Córdovas, Ranchos de Taos, and Talpa as one Traditional Historic Community: Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos.

Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association
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Cynthia Patterson, President
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Hank Saxe, Secretary
Sanjay Poovadan, Treasurer
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Application Summary

Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos

Traditional Historic Community

The Traditional Historic Community (THC) designation was created by the New Mexico State Legislature to empower unincorporated historic communities to maintain their independence and identity. When statutory requirements are met, a county commission may declare a village, community, neighborhood, or district to be a Traditional Historic Community.

Traditional Historic Community status is declared under two statutes and accomplishes two objectives: protection from annexation and exclusion from extraterritorial jurisdiction by an adjacent municipality.

The statutes are:

(1) **NM Stat § 3-7-1.1, Traditional historic community; qualifications; annexation restrictions** provides protection from annexation by a neighboring municipality. To qualify, the community must document at least one hundred years of existence, with a distinctive character or traditional quality and structures or landmarks that are associated with the identity of the place. This THC statute also provides an option for the area to be annexed into the neighboring municipality if the majority of registered voters petition for annexation.

(2) **NM Stat § 3-21-1, Zoning authority of county or municipality** requires the collection of signatures of 25% of the registered voters within the area to be designated. An area that meets this requirement and is declared as a THC is excluded from extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction of the adjacent municipality.

The residents of **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos** have been advised of the proposed designation since the beginning of 2021. Information letters were mailed to every registered voter in the district – approximately 4500 letters. Newspaper articles and radio interviews helped spread awareness of the proposed designation and the requirement of submitting a petition signed by 25% of the qualified electors in the area. In June 2021 a petition drive was initiated and was concluded 60 days later, gathering nearly 1500 signatures. The Taos County Clerk verified that the petition satisfied the statutory requirement of NM Statute 3-21-1.

In addition to the individual signatures on the petition, letters of support have been received from the principal community organizations, including: acequia commissions, community centers, mutual domestics, and the water & sanitation district. These are submitted with this application.

The five distinct, yet intimately related neighborhoods of La Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Córdovas, Ranchos de Taos, and Talpa have come together to collectively form **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos** and to request designation as a Traditional Historic Community by Ordinance declared by the Taos County Board of Commissioners. This presentation demonstrates that the five neighborhoods, through their common history and shared activities, constitute a single community. The history and character of **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos** fulfills statutory requirements and qualifies it for Traditional Historic Community designation.

Each of these neighborhoods contains structures and landmarks that are documented to have existed for well over the 100-year minimum required by statute. Structures which are still in use have been dated to the 1700s. Many homes and community structures in the area are conclusively dated to the 1800s.

The neighborhoods were established within the context of the Cristobal de la Serna and Francisca Antonia Gijosa Land Grants made under Spanish governance in 1715. These grants were established in accordance with land use guidelines advanced in the Recopilación de Leyes de Los Reynos de las Indias. An integral component of these land grants was the establishment of acequias to provide irrigation for croplands, and the provision of commonly held lands for grazing, and gathering of forest products. When the grants were established and again in the 1760s, title papers noted that pastures, woods, water, and watering places were to be in common and free to inhabitants.

The acequias which primarily originate from the Rio Grande del Rancho and the Rio Chiquito form the original infrastructure of the five neighborhoods and extend from one to the next, uniting the entire valley, both hydrologically and socially. The maintenance and governance of acequias is a community endeavor which is still practiced today.

Upon settlement of the Ranchos Valley, vecinos established capillas, camposantos, moradas, and a central church at the community hub on Ranchos Plaza. Over time each neighborhood built a schoolhouse. Small molinos were built along several acequias to process the agricultural production. Fortified haciendas and communal plazas were constructed with torreones for protection and communication with other centers of settlement within the Taos Valley. Some of these structures exist to this day and remain an important element of the community fabric.

Beyond these physical manifestations of adobe brick and mortar, communal activities unite the valley, including annual cleaning of the acequias, the enjarre of San Francisco de Asis church, Las Posadas, neighborhood gatherings to celebrate saints' days, and the songs and dances of Los Comanches that have been passed down over many generations.

The neighborhoods of **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos** were settled before the Town of Taos, and while there is a close relationship, residents of the area have traditionally been independent of the neighboring municipality. In the mid-20th century three Mutual Domestic Water User Associations were established to provide potable water. El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District was created in 1978 as an independent utility to preserve ground water quality for the neighborhoods of the Ranchos Valley.

This document demonstrates that the statutory requirements for Traditional Historic Community designation have been met in exemplary fashion and therefore, the designation should be forthcoming from the Taos County Commission.

Respectfully submitted,
Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association

Note: Historic research has been conducted to create this document in order to provide an overview of the historical background of each neighborhood and of the community as a whole. A bibliography of sources is included in Appendix VIII. Importantly, much of the history presented here has been gathered through conversation with those in the community who carry the querencia in their minds, hearts, and souls.

Applicable New Mexico Statutes

2019 New Mexico Statutes Chapter 3 - Municipalities Article 7 - Annexation of Territory Section 3-7-1.1 - Traditional historic community; qualifications; annexation restrictions. Universal Citation: NM Stat § 3-7-1.1 (2019)

A. To qualify as a traditional historic community, an area shall:

- (1) be an unincorporated area of a county;
- (2) be an identifiable village, community, neighborhood or district that can be documented as having existed for more than one hundred years;
- (3) include structures or landmarks that are associated with the identity of the specific village, community, neighborhood or district seeking designation as a traditional historic community;
- (4) have a distinctive character or traditional quality that can be distinguished from surrounding areas or new developments in the vicinity; and
- (5) be declared a traditional historic community by an ordinance of the board of county commissioners of the county in which the petitioning village, community, neighborhood or district is located.

B. A traditional historic community may be annexed by a municipality only by petition of a majority of the qualified electors of the territory within the traditional historic community proposed to be annexed by the municipality or by the arbitration method of annexation only upon petition of a majority of the qualified electors of the territory within the traditional historic community.



San Francisco de Asis Annual Enjarre, 1959 & 2021

Photos: Left – Unknown; Right – Hank Saxe

N.M. Stat. § 3-21-1 Section 3-21-1 - Zoning-authority of county or municipality

A. For the purpose of promoting health, safety, morals or the general welfare, a county or municipality is a zoning authority and may regulate and restrict within its jurisdiction the:

- (1) height, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures;
- (2) percentage of a lot that may be occupied;
- (3) size of yards, courts and other open space;
- (4) density of population; and
- (5) location and use of buildings, structures and land for trade, industry, residence or other purposes.

B. The county or municipal zoning authority may:

- (1) divide the territory under its jurisdiction into districts of such number, shape, area and form as is necessary to carry out the purposes of Sections 3-21-1 through 3-21-14 NMSA 1978; and
- (2) regulate or restrict the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair or use of buildings, structures or land in each district. All such regulations shall be uniform for each class or kind of buildings within each district, but regulation in one district may differ from regulation in another district.

C. All state-licensed or state-operated community residences for persons with a mental or developmental disability and serving ten or fewer persons may be considered a residential use of property for purposes of zoning and may be permitted use in all districts in which residential uses are permitted generally, including particularly residential zones for single family dwellings.

D. A board of county commissioners of the county in which the greatest amount of the territory of the petitioning village, community, neighborhood or district lies may declare by ordinance that a village, community, neighborhood or district is a "traditional historic community" upon petition by twenty-five percent or more of the qualified electors of the territory within the village, community, neighborhood or district requesting the designation. The number of qualified electors shall be based on county records as of the date of the last general election.

E. Any village, community, neighborhood or district that is declared a traditional historic community shall be excluded from the extraterritorial zone and extraterritorial zoning authority of any municipality whose extraterritorial zoning authority extends to include all or a portion of the traditional historic community and shall be subject to the zoning jurisdiction of the county in which the greatest portion of the traditional historic community lies.

F. Zoning authorities, including zoning authorities of home rule municipalities, shall accommodate multigenerational housing by creating a mechanism to allow up to two kitchens within a single-family zoning district, such as conditional use permits.

G. For the purpose of this section, "multigenerational" means any number of persons related by blood, common ancestry, marriage, guardianship or adoption

Examining the Relevant Sections of NM Statute Chapter 3, Article 7, Section 3-7-1.1

Section 1: To qualify as a traditional historic community, an area shall:
(1) be an **unincorporated area** of a county

The proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community is an unincorporated area of Taos County. The area encompasses several historic neighborhoods: La Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Córdovas, Ranchos de Taos, and Talpa. Each of these neighborhoods has a distinctive character, identity, structures, and landmarks, developed over centuries. They are situated within a rural setting and although they each have an historic identity, there are no clearly defined boundaries between these neighborhoods within Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos.

In this application for Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community, qualifications are presented for the district as a single unit. In addition, information relative to each of the five neighborhoods is presented to demonstrate that each one qualifies for THC designation on its own merits.

Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos is an unincorporated area of Taos County and includes 5 unincorporated neighborhoods:

La Cordillera is a neighborhood within the area of the proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community, an unincorporated area of Taos County. The historic neighborhood of La Cordillera is located approximately one mile from the nearest municipality, measured from its center at State Road 240 and Camino del Medio to the southwestern boundary of the Town of Taos.

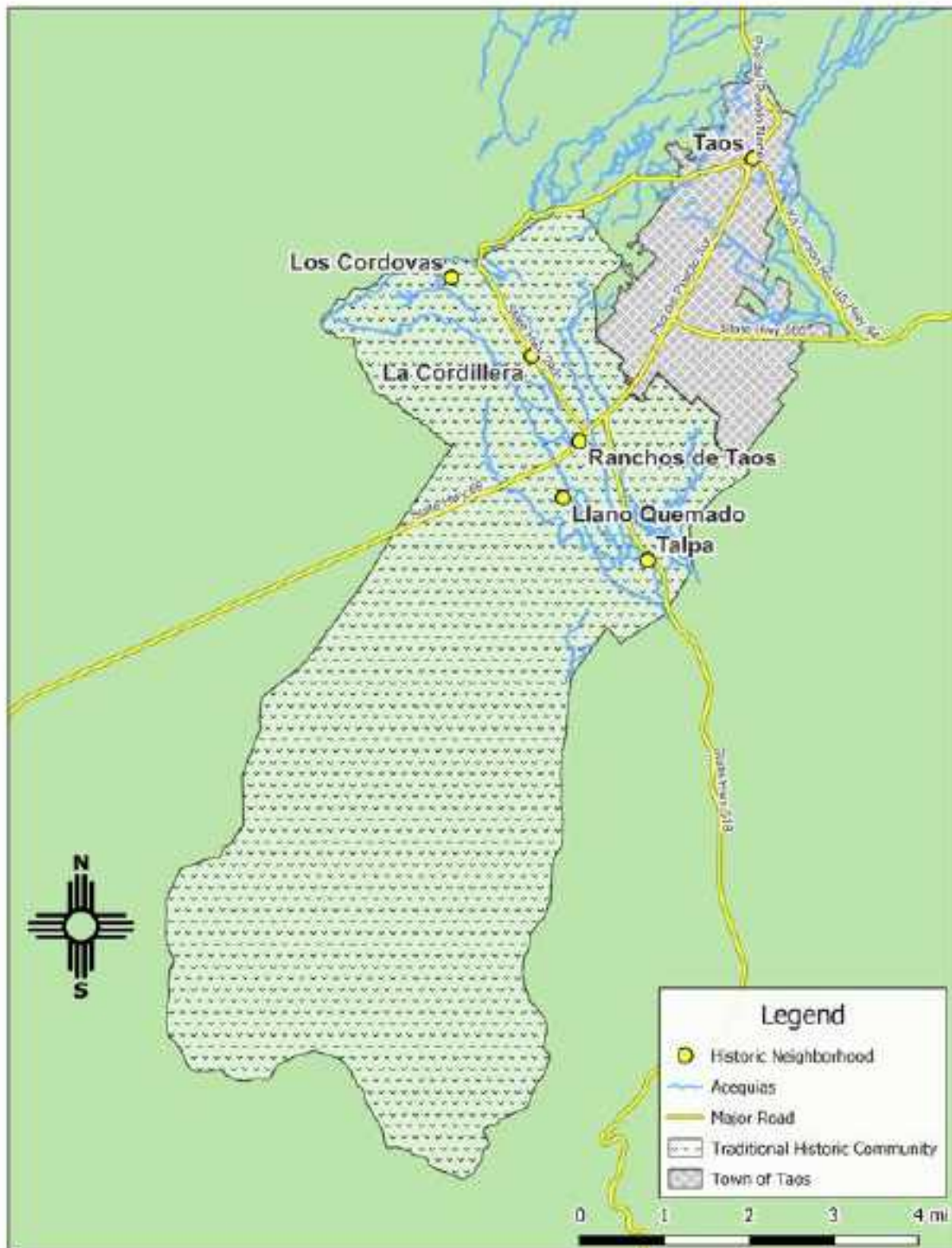
Los Córdovas is a neighborhood within the area of the proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community, an unincorporated area of Taos County. The historic village plaza of Los Córdovas is located approximately two miles from the southwestern boundary of the Town of Taos, the nearest municipality.

Llano Quemado is a neighborhood within the area of the proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community, an unincorporated area of Taos County. The historic capilla of Nuestra Señora del Carmen in the heart of the village of Llano Quemado is located approximately one and a half miles from the southern boundary of the Town of Taos, the nearest municipality.

Ranchos de Taos is a neighborhood within the area of the proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community, an unincorporated area of Taos County. The historic church of San Francisco de Asis, situated on the village plaza of Ranchos de Taos, is located approximately four-fifths of a mile from the southwestern boundary of the Town of Taos, the nearest municipality.

Talpa is a neighborhood within the area of the proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community, an unincorporated area of Taos County. The historic capilla of Nuestra Señora de San Juan de los Lagos, situated on the plaza of Río Chíquito in the heart of Talpa, is located approximately one and a half miles from the southeastern boundary of the Town of Taos, the nearest municipality.

Map: Boundary Map - Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos



Boundary Description - Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos

The beginning point: Beginning at the junction of the Callejon and Camino del Medio and proceeding in a clockwise direction, the boundary follows Camino del Medio to its junction with Chamisa Road. Thence the boundary follows Chamisa Road to the Town of Taos boundary, following the boundary across Highway 68 to the Taos Valley RV Park, owner number 55140. This parcel is divided by the boundary line between the Town of Taos and Taos County. From this parcel the boundary line proceeds in a southeasterly direction along Este Es Road and Maestas Road to the property boundary between owner number 54429 and 11697, thence proceeding in a southeasterly direction to the southeastern corner of the Town of Taos at the boundary line of owner number 42310 and 17569 on La Semilla Road, thence proceeding northeasterly along La Semilla Road for approximately 360 feet to Este Es Road, thence east-southeasterly for approximately 360 feet to the boundary of owner number 11698 and owner numbers 11431 and 11339 in a southerly direction for approximately 750 feet to the boundary of the Carson National Forest. Thence the boundary proceeds clockwise along the boundary of the Carson National Forest to owner number 79963, thence clockwise along the external boundary of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant until the Arroyo de la Guera crosses the boundary between the Serna and Gijosa Grants. Thence the boundary proceeds in a northwesterly direction along the Arroyo de la Guera to the confluence with the Río Pueblo de Taos. Thence the boundary proceeds along the Río Pueblo de Taos in a northeasterly direction to the Callejon. Thence it follows the Callejon in a southeasterly direction to the point of the beginning at the junction of Callejon and Camino del Medio.

Notes:

The boundary description proceeds in clockwise direction. The boundary follows the original boundary of the El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District as described in 1978 and recognized by District Court decree in 1979, except where the boundary of the Town of Taos has moved in a southwesterly direction from the original El Valle boundary, which was the Arroyo de los Coyotes, overlapping into lands previously within El Valle. The current boundary between the Town of Taos and Taos County does not split any properties except for owner number 55140 identified in the text. With that exception, the Town / County boundary falls on property lines and public roads.

The proposed Traditional Historic Community boundary follows the boundary of the Carson National Forest up to a point to the southeast of the Ponce de Leon Hot Springs, thence follows the Cristobal de la Serna Grant boundary clockwise until crossing the Arroyo de la Guera. The 2015 transfer of lands within the Serna Grant, from the Weimer Properties to the United States Forest Service, requires the boundary description to rely on the 1894 survey of the Serna Grant by John H. Walker, rather than descriptions of the National Forest boundary, within the Miranda Canyon area, since the USFS administers lands on both sides of the Serna grant boundary in that location.



Manuel Valerio's Sheep, Talpa, 2022
Photo: Hank Saxe



**Threshing wheat with machine belonging to Leandro Durán,
Río Chiquito, 1939. L-R: Antonio Lopez, Alfredo Archuleta, &
Leandro Durán.**

Photo: John Collier, Jr.

Statutory qualifications required in **Sections (2), (3), and (4) of New Mexico Statute 3-7-1.1** are addressed in the following pages of this document.

Section 2: be an identifiable village, community, neighborhood, or district that can be documented as having existed for *more than one hundred years*

Section 3: *include structures or landmarks* that are associated with the identity of the specific village, community, neighborhood, or district seeking designation as a traditional historic community

Section 4: *have a distinctive character or traditional quality* that can be distinguished from surrounding areas or new developments in the vicinity.



San Francisco de Asis, Ranchos de Taos Plaza
Photo: Mary E.T. Collier, Courtesy Collier Family Collection

Overview – Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Documentation

The statute on Traditional Historic Community, NM Stat § 3-7-1.1, requires documentation of the “...village, community, neighborhood or district... as having existed for more than one hundred years;” which is easily demonstrated. Structures and landmarks associated with the community identity must be listed and separate lists for each of the five neighborhoods are provided as well in this document. A “distinctive character or traditional quality that can be distinguished from surrounding areas or new developments in the vicinity” is demonstrated for the Valley as a whole.

The agricultural lifestyle and traditional activities which have been passed down for many generations remain and differentiate the area from both the neighboring municipality and modern developments. Furthermore, each of the five neighborhoods has traditions and activities centered around their unique identity, family histories, churches, capillas, and moradas.

Certain components of the community function as valley-wide systems. These include the longest-established infrastructure: the acequias that run through the Valley; and newer infrastructure of water, sanitation, transportation and utilities. The unified governance required for these systems to function optimally unites all the neighborhoods of the Valley.

The valley of the Río Grande del Rancho and Río Chiquito contains 19 historic acequias which are recognized by the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer. These acequias provide the infrastructure which supports the neighborhoods of La Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Córdovas, Ranchos de Taos, and Talpa.

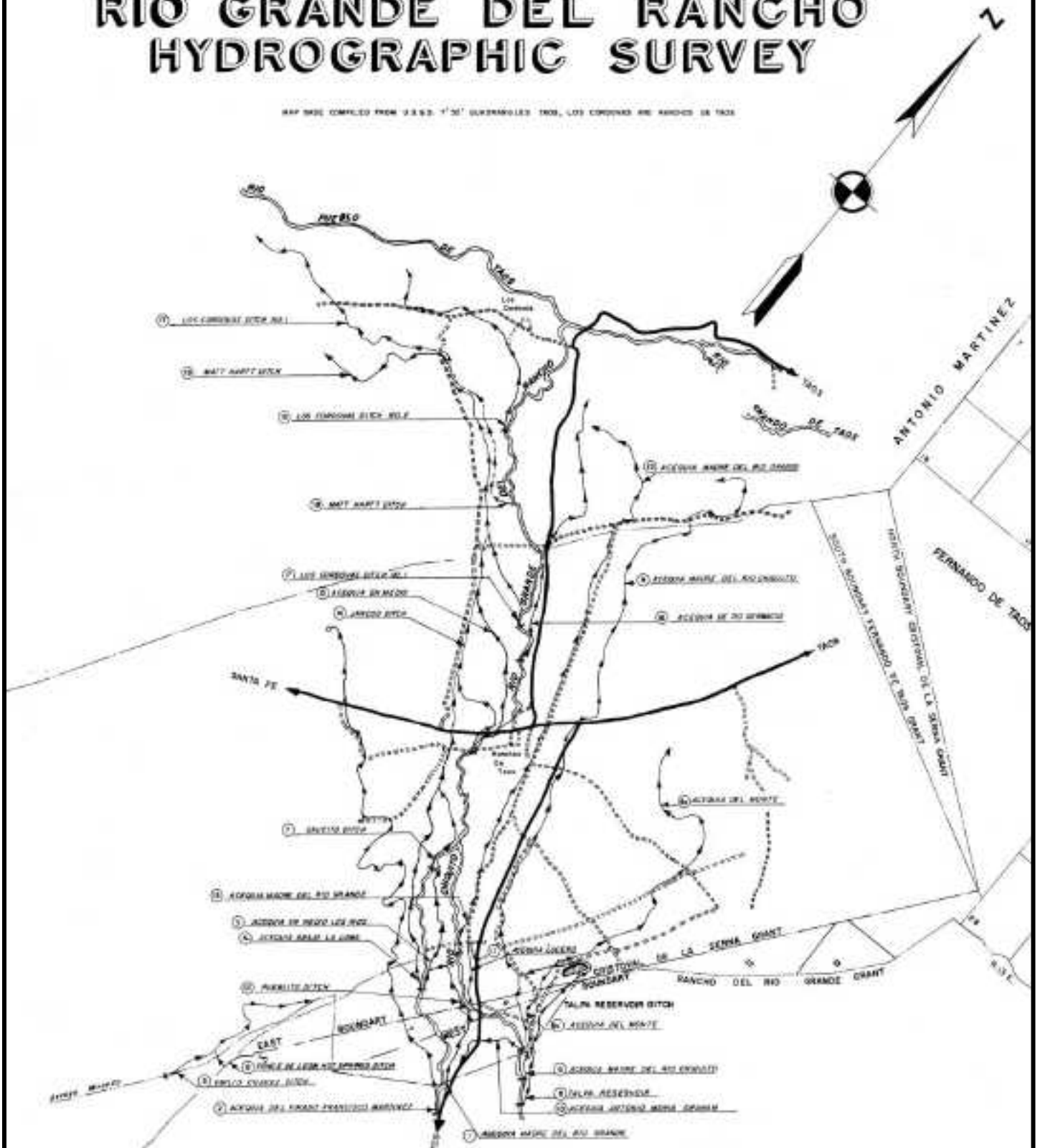


Orchard on Acequia Madre del Río Grande, Talpa, 2021

Photo: Jackie Kolbenschlag

RIO GRANDE DEL RANCHO HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY

MAP MADE COMPILED FROM U.S.G.S. 1"=30' SUPERIMPOSED TRAC, LOS CORDOVAS AND RANCHO DE TALPA



Map of acequias that provide surface irrigation across the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho from Talpa to Los Córdovas

New Mexico Office of the State Engineer, 1968

Considerations for Inventories of Structures and Landmarks

This proposal being presented to the Taos County Commission is for the designation of Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos as a Traditional Historic Community that includes the five neighborhoods of La Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Córdovas, Ranchos de Taos, and Talpa. In accordance with the directive of Taos County government officials this document also presents the history and qualifications of the five neighborhoods within the proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community, individually, demonstrating that each of the five neighborhoods satisfies the qualifications required by statute. Therefore, the history and qualifications of Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos are documented for the area as a whole, and for each of the neighborhoods individually.

New Mexico statute 3-7-1.1 A. (3) requires that a traditional historic community shall “include structures or landmarks that are associated with the identity of the specific village, community, neighborhood or district seeking designation as a traditional historic community” to qualify.

An inventory of qualifying structures and landmarks that are within the public realm has been compiled. Included in the inventory are structures and landmarks that fit the following categories and descriptions: churches, capillas, oratorios, moradas, camposantos, schools, plazas, post offices, and other structures on state and federal registries. Additionally, acequias are listed in Appendix I, Exhibit A as an element of the historical infrastructure of this community.

Two other sets of qualifying structures are not included in the inventory for reasons of confidentiality or will only be included with conditions. These are archaeological sites and private residences.

Information about the location of archaeological sites is restricted by both New Mexico state and federal law. The public disclosure of the location of archaeological sites on state and private lands is prohibited by Section 18-6-11.1 NMSA 1978. Public disclosure of archaeological site locations is federally prohibited by USC 470hh (CFR 296.18).

Numerous archaeological sites exist within the area of the proposed traditional historic community. While many of these sites have been documented and information on them is available in publications the applicants will not be including specific information in the inventories of sites and landmarks. General information about the areas where these sites occur is included in the neighborhood histories and profiles. In accordance with law and good practice, no site locations are mentioned in the printed application documents.

For private residences, the applicants maintain constraints on divulging specific location information. No locations of historic single family residential structures are included in the inventory without owner’s consent, for reasons of confidentiality. In some instances, information is shared in a manner that provides historical background without identifying exact locations.

A list of structures in the area proposed for designation which have had tree ring (dendrochronology) dating research is provided in the appendix, with the dates that structural timbers were cut. This provides a precise determination of the time that components of the buildings were cut, without divulging specific locations.

The applicants can discuss further information in confidence with County officials but cannot share information about private residences without the owner's consent unless the property owners agree to sharing of the information in a public document.

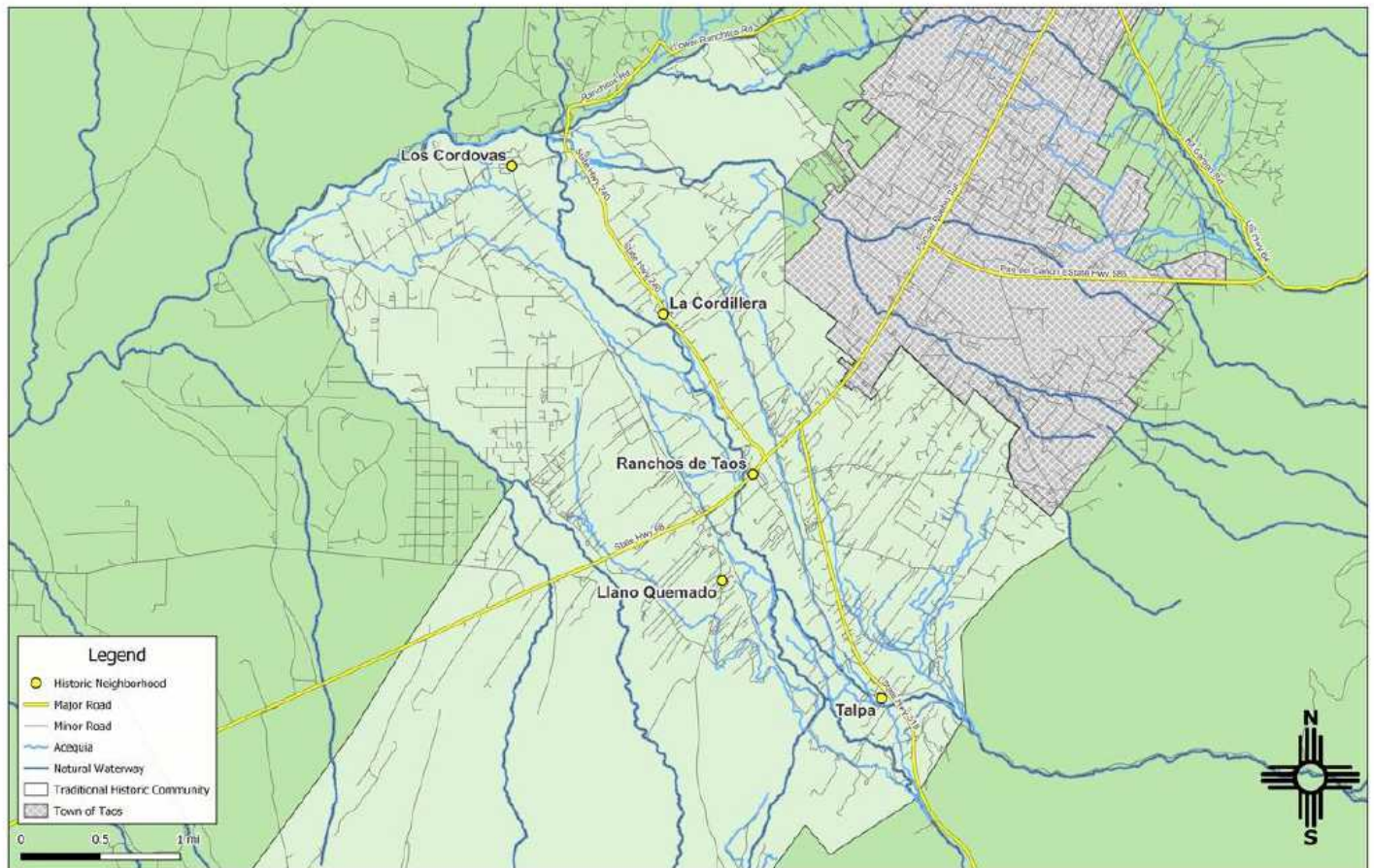
Structures are located on the 1897 Easley and 1901 Turley surveys of the Francisca Antonia de Gijosa Grant, and the 1894 Walker survey of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant. Additionally, the Taos and Vicinity N. Mex. 30' topographic map published by the U.S. Geological Survey in 1936 shows the locations of structures existing at the time of the surveys which were conducted for it, in 1928, 1931-1933, and 1936. Many of these structures exist to the present day. These maps and plats, which are 125, 121, 128 and 86 years old, respectively, record the existence of structures and show settlement patterns and road and acequia networks in the five neighborhoods of Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos.

Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos is well represented on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties and the National Register of Historic Places. The lists of properties on these registers are included in Appendix I, Exhibit B. Although these properties are noted in the public record, there are a few privately owned properties which may be partially redacted on the inventories due to owner's concerns for privacy.



Limpiando la Acequia Madre del Río Grande, Valerio Road, 1958
Photo: Mildred Tolbert, Courtesy Mildred Tolbert Family

Qualifications for Designation Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos



The entire valley of the Río Grande del Rancho is a single community.

Five self-identified neighborhoods exist within the Ranchos Valley, each with a history that goes back for centuries. While each neighborhood has an identifiable character and unique history, they all developed from a common set of historic circumstances.

The many phases of human activity in the area resulted in patterns of settlement and development that were shared across the length and breadth of the valley, changing over time as events and the comings and goings of new groups of people took place.

The history of the valley has focused on the cooperation and interaction of groups who worked together to create and sustain communities, rather than on powerful individuals who shaped society in their own image.

The Taos Valley has been a frontier of sorts, an edge of the habitable world for many centuries, with just enough resources and just enough of a growing season to support a community on a sustainable basis. The valley of the Río Grande del Rancho comprises a garden spot within the region, and throughout much of its history has supported the largest population in the Taos Valley.

A thousand years ago the Ranchos Valley was home to many small settlements of people from clans related to Taos and Picuris Pueblos. Groups of pit houses and unit pueblos were built on the alluvial terraces above the valley bottom, from present-day Los Córdovas up the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho as far as Rito de la Olla / Pot Creek.

While there were a few larger settlements such as the 18-room pueblo at Llano Quemado, most residents lived in separate single-family dwellings, often within shouting distance of one another. Around the year 1260 the population of the lower Ranchos Valley began moving out and consolidating at T'aitōna, a pueblo of some 300 rooms near the junction of the Rito de la Olla and the Río Grande del Rancho in Pot Creek, four miles south of Talpa. About 1320 the residents abandoned T'aitōna and relocated to Taos Pueblo and Picuris. The Ranchos Valley was not left unoccupied as members of Taos Pueblo clans continued to use the valley for farming and maintained residences in the area into the early 1800s.

The first Spanish entry into the Taos area occurred in 1540, with settlement by Europeans beginning in the region in 1598, with the arrival of the Oñate colony in the Española Valley. The establishment of Spanish outposts in the Taos area began soon thereafter. There is only patchy documentation of Spanish presence in the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, or Río de las Trampas, as it was then called, in the 17th century. Don Fernando Durán y Cháves was the major landholder in the area, through a grant made by the Spanish Crown of lands extending from the site of the Town of Taos into the area of Ranchos de Taos. During the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, Durán y Cháves fled from the area, never to return, and the area was devoid of European settlement until the end of the 17th century. In 1710 the soldier Cristóbal de la Serna petitioned the Spanish government for a grant of the rancho previously held by Durán y Cháves. This was confirmed in 1715, the same year that an adjacent rancho was granted to Francisca Antonia de Gijosa. Serna's land extended from the Cruz Alta south of the Town of Taos to the crest of the Picuris Mountain, and Sra. Gijosa's rancho extended from near the Town of Taos to the Hondo Canyon. Together, the lands extended from the Miranda Canyon to the Río Pueblo. These two grants encompassed all the arable land of the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho and Río Chiquito and were the cradle for the establishment of the present-day neighborhoods of Talpa, Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, La Cordillera and Los Córdovas.

Cristobal de la Serna died before settling on his rancho, and his heirs sold to Diego Romero in 1724. The Romero family had established the hacienda of Talachia in the vicinity of Ranchos de Taos by the 1730s. The early population that coalesced around the Romero headquarters included an eclectic mix of nationalities; members of clans related to Taos Pueblo and Picuris, Españoles, Coyotes of mixed Spanish and Indian lineage, Jicarilla Apaches, and Genizaros.

The land grants were made with adherence to specific requirements spelled out in the Recopilación de las Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias, which created a template for community planning in the colonial empire of Spain. These guidelines controlled the siting of settlements, access to water and other resources, the distribution of private homesites, and the designation of communally held and jointly utilized areas of land grants. These laws with their somewhat utopian aspirations, determined that the core areas of the settlement should be designed as a communal center, with individual ownership of building sites, and farm plots. According to law and practice, outlying areas of the land grants, whether they were made to communities or to individuals, were maintained as common lands for pasturage and gathering of resources such as fuel wood and timber.

Spanish government reports as early as 1760 describe acequias carrying water from the Río de las Trampas to productive farms. The system of acequias was the first permanent community infrastructure,

bound by a form of local governance that has survived the transitions of rule from Spain to Mexico to the United States. Settlements were established within the network of the acequias enabled by agricultural development. For the most part, the population of the valley followed the acequias.

Groups of Jicarilla Apaches located within the river valley and encamped in the foothills of the Picuris Mountain. Census records of the mid-1700s tally the Jicarillas as constituting some 15% out of the total multinational population of the area. A period of fierce Comanche raids climaxing in the 1760s drove the residents of the Río de las Trampas Valley to live within the protective enclosure of Taos Pueblo until the defensible plaza of San Francisco de las Trampas was completed. Torreones were constructed at elevated points above the river valley, where movement in the whole region could be observed. The Antonio Vigil family's torreón south of Ranchos de Taos was in visual contact with the torreones and observation posts at Los Córdovas, the plaza of San Francisco de las Trampas, El Prado and Taos Pueblo.

Ironically, the completion of the plaza fortress coincided with decreased Comanche raiding activity. With the populace no longer confined to the plaza, settlements proliferated, concentrating around the placitas at Río Chiquito (Talpa), Llano Quemado, and Los Córdovas. Farms and homes began to fill the fertile ground of La Cordillera, on the road between the plazas of San Francisco de las Trampas and Los Córdovas. The longer acequias eventually had two or three clusters of settlements along their courses through the valley, forming a regional ne



Procession from San Francisco de Asis Church, Ranchos de Taos Plaza, 1934 or 1939(?)

Photo: John Collier, Jr.

The principal church of the valley, dedicated to San Francisco de Asis, was completed in 1815, and capillas were built in the outlying placitas in the following decades. Communally held lands within the Serna Grant were open to residents for pasturage, timber, fuelwood, and other resource exploitation. Vecinos of the whole grant were provided with rights to use the lands and resources of the slopes of the Picuris Mountain and the Miranda Canyon regardless of the neighborhood they lived in. This cross-community linkage bound neighboring placitas together, while intermarriages and sharing of a main religious center at the church

of San Francisco de Asis further created an overall community in the valley. The need to apportion water throughout the valley created physical and social community structures for equitable water distribution and avoidance or resolution of disputes.

Beginning in the mid-19th century, American military outposts began purchasing agricultural production from farms in the valley, initiating a cash economy. A commercial hub serving all the neighborhoods in the valley grew around the plaza in Ranchos de Taos. A succession of stores served the neighborhoods of the Ranchos Valley, until the early 1980s when the last community-based general merchandise store, the Ranchos Trading Post, closed.

In 1937 the Parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which included all the settled areas of the Taos Valley, was divided into three separate parishes, with the populated area of the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho becoming the Parish of Saint Francis. This parish occupies essentially the same territory as the irrigated lands of the nineteen historic acequias within the valleys of the Río Grande del Rancho and the Río Chiquito.

The acequias, as shared infrastructure and the initial, essential components of the settlement of the valley, require a valley-wide management of the water resources. Several generations after the development of the acequias and roads as community assets, mutual domestic water users' associations were organized in Talpa, Ranchos de Taos, and Llano Quemado.

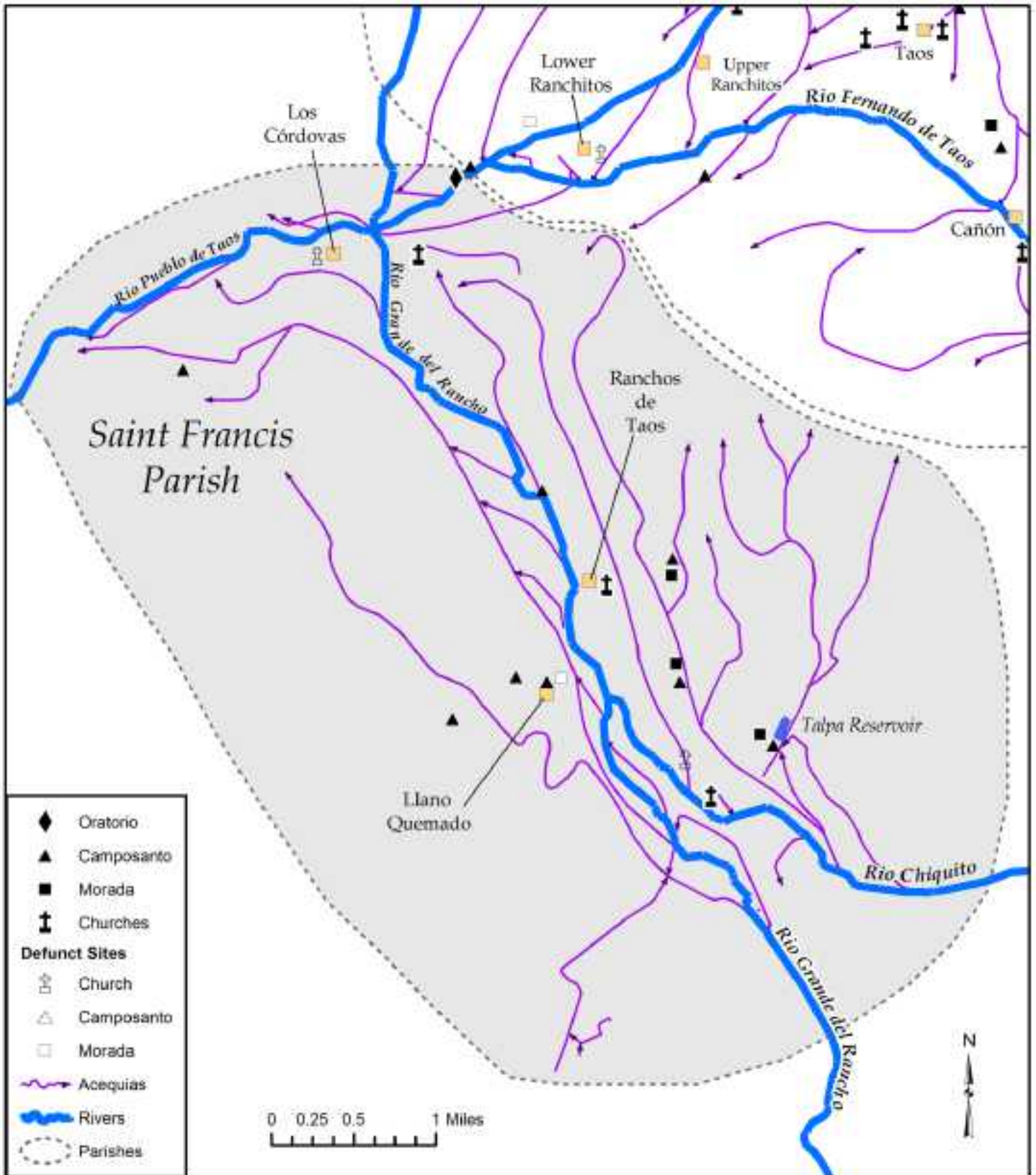
Some two hundred and fifty years after the land grants in the valley first spurred an influx of population, critical strains on the water resources were becoming evident, including pollution of shallow aquifers in the valley bottom. In 1978 El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District was organized to bring all the valley neighborhoods into a common system for wastewater collection and treatment. More recently, wells and domestic water distribution lines were constructed by El Valle de los Ranchos.



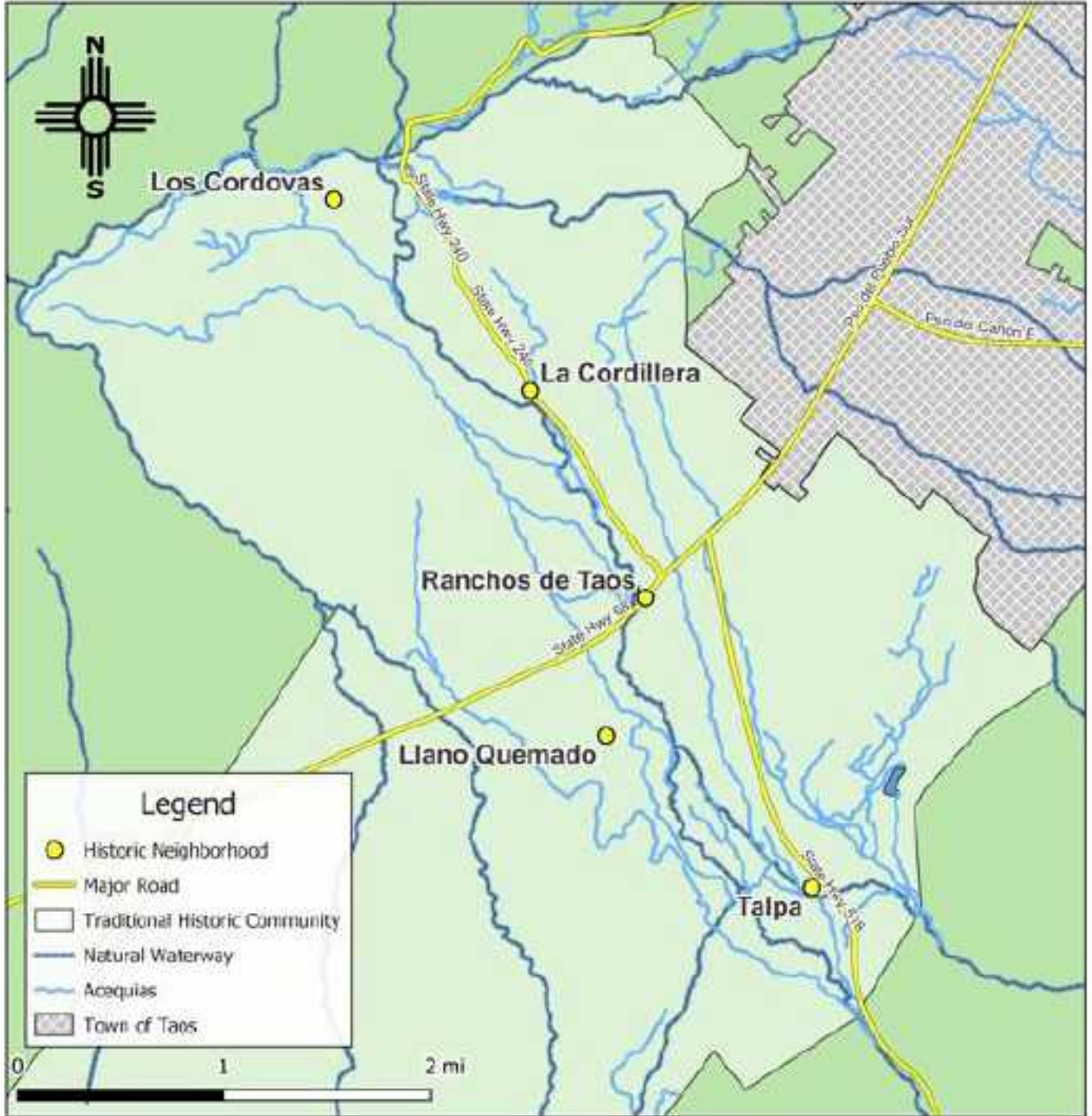
Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez, 2021

Photo: Hank Saxe

Saint Francis Parish & Irrigated Area Map



Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Acequias & Natural Waterways



Neighborhood Qualifications – Historic Structures

See additional information in Appendix I

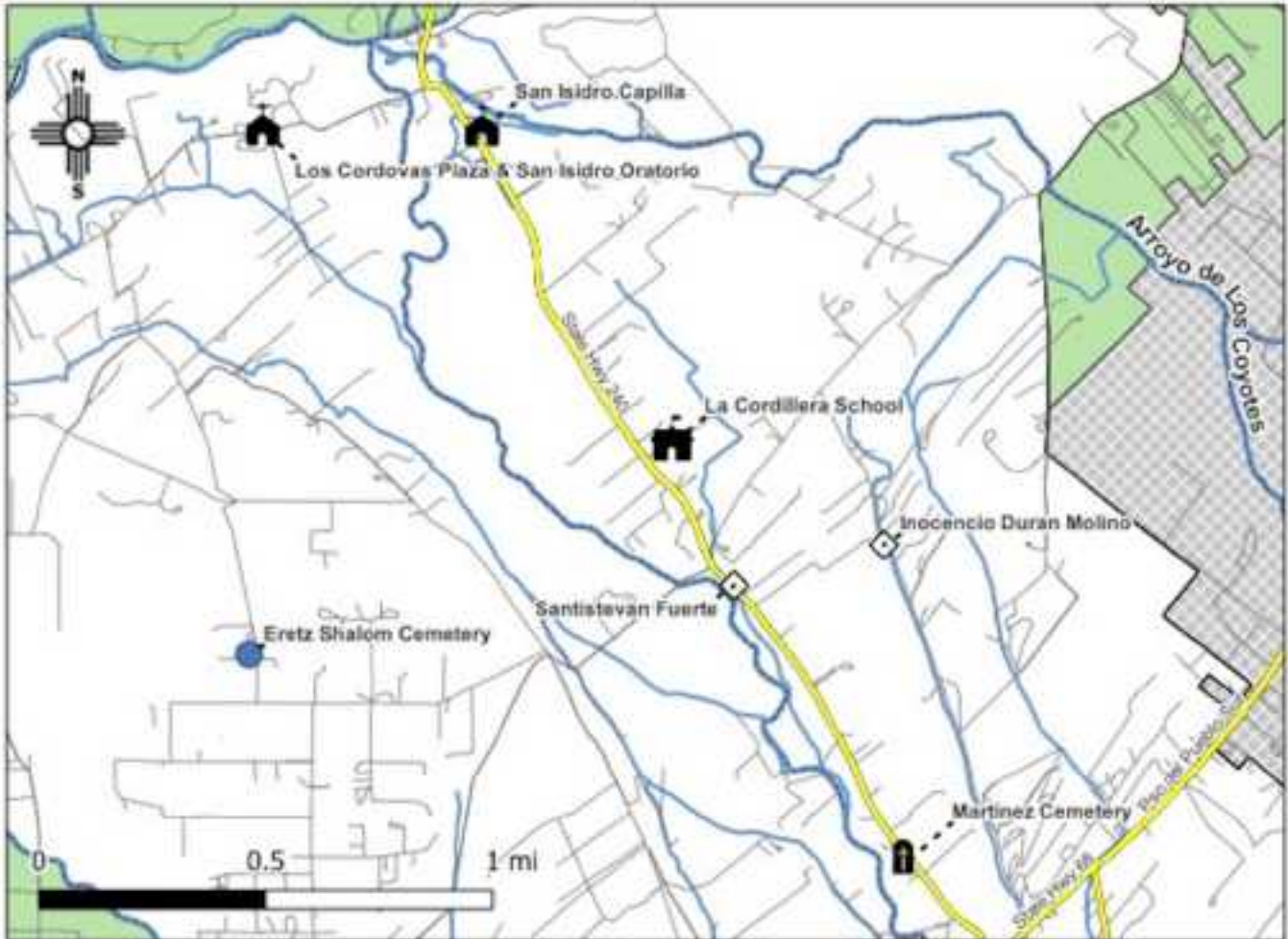
Historic Structures, Camposantos, and Cemeteries					
	Talpa	Llano Quemado	Ranchos de Taos	La Cordillera	Los Córdovas
Churches			San Francisco de Asis, Ranchos Presbyterian Church		
Capillas	Nuestra Señora de San Juan de Los Lagos, Nuestra Señora de Talpa	Nuestra Señora del Carmen		San Isidro	San Isidro
Oratorio					San Isidro
Moradas	Río Chiquito/Talpa Morada		Ranchos Morada, Nazareño Morada		
Camposantos and Cemeteries	Río Chiquito /Talpa Camposanto	Old Llano Quemado Camposanto, New Llano Quemado Camposanto, Eretz Shalom Cemetery	San Francisco Camposanto, Nazareño Camposanto, Descanso Cemetery, Hartt/Martinez Cemetery	Hartt/Martinez Cemetery	Los Córdovas Camposanto
Schools	Talpa Elementary ¹	Llano Quemado Elementary ² Llano Quemado Head Start	Ranchos de Taos Elementary, St. Francis School, Alice Hyson School	Cordillera Elementary	Los Córdovas Elementary
Community Centers	Talpa Community Center	Llano Quemado Community Center			Los Córdovas Community Center
Plazas	Talpa/Río Chiquito (Nuestra Señora de San Juan de Los Lagos)		San Francisco de Asis, Plaza Vieja		Los Córdovas Plaza
Post Offices	Talpa 1904-1923		Ranchos de Taos 1875-Present		
Structures on State and Federal Registries	Nuestra Señora de San Juan de Los Lagos altar screen		Antonio Vigil Torreon, Ranchos de Taos Plaza & Plaza Vieja	Inocencio Durán Molino	Los Córdovas Oratorio

¹ Repurposed as Talpa Community Center

² Now houses Llano Quemado Head Start

³ Repurposed as Los Córdovas Community Center

La Cordillera



La Cordillera occupies a swath of territory between the plazas of Ranchos de Taos and Los Córdovas. The neighborhood is situated on two adjacent land grants, the Cristobal de la Serna and the Gijosa. Camino del Medio and its extension, Tom Holder Road, runs through the community. This ancient pathway which connects Taos Pueblo to Picuris Pueblo, identified on older maps as the Camino de en Medio, Middle Road, or the Middle Road to Picuris, forms the boundary between the two grants. It predates, by centuries, the establishment of the grants in 1715.

La Cordillera steps down from El Llanito de la Hormiga, across alluvial terraces to the bottomlands along the Río Grande del Rancho. The Acequia Madre del Río Grande and the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito extend from Talpa, through Ranchos de Taos, into La Cordillera.

A productive belt of farm ground extends from the Acequia Madre del Río Grande to the lower brow of the terrace just above the valley bottom. This strip of land is traversed by Camino Abajo de la Loma on the upper end, and State Highway 240, or Cordillera Road, paralleling it at the lower end. Highway 240 closely follows the route of the centuries-old road from Ranchos de Taos to Los Córdovas, with houses,

many of which have existed since the late 1800s, built close to it on both sides. Many residents say that it is this strip of roadway, running between the farmhouses, which provides the name of La Cordillera. Ruben Cobos, a former resident of the area, in his Dictionary of New Mexico and Southern Colorado Spanish, defines a cordillera as “a street-like rural road with houses in a row along one or both of its sides. The term cordillera (correllera or corrillera) has been applied in the past to the row of houses along the cordillera”. Another opinion is that the line of old houses on the *ceja*, the brow of the hillside between the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito and the Acequia Madre del Río Grande is the cordillera that the neighborhood is named for.

Besides the two major acequias which water the upper terraces of La Cordillera, acequias within the inner valley bottomlands divert from the Río Grande del Rancho and serve the neighborhood, including the Acequia de Tio Gerbacio, Acequia en Medio, and the Jaroso Ditch. In 1951 parcientes of these three acequias claimed priority dates of 1675 and 1698. While it is difficult to find records for early acequia use in the area, land transaction records and court cases from the late 1800s clearly identify acequias and houses in La Cordillera, including a sale of a home by Maria de la Luz Cortez between the “Acequia del Medio” and the Ranchos-Los Córdovas Road, in 1876. The Acequia Tio Gerbacio is mentioned in a lawsuit regarding water apportionment in 1879.

La Cordillera did not coalesce around a plaza, nor did it have its own capilla, being close to both Ranchos de Taos and Los Córdovas. The capilla of the patron saint of the neighborhood, San Isidro is shared by residents of Los Córdovas and La Cordillera. Until 1951, services were conducted in the San Isidro Oratorio at the Los Córdovas Plaza. The space was deconsecrated that year and a new capilla was built on State Road 240 between Los Córdovas and La Cordillera. Dia de San Isidro processions every May 15th originate from the capilla and proceed to bestow blessings on the fields of the community. Banners carried during the procession bear the inscription “San Isidro Labrador de Cordillera”.



La Cordillera settlement on the road between Los Córdovas and Ranchos de Taos shown on a composite of the Jay Turley survey of the Gijosa Grant and the John H. Walker Survey of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant.

La Cordillera had its own neighborhood school, located a quarter mile north of the junction of State Road 240 and Camino del Medio, which was in use in the 1940s and 1950s.

Many of the houses of La Cordillera date from the 1800s. The Walker survey of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant made in 1894 shows a line of structures parallel to the northeast bank of the Río Grande del Rancho, likely the Cordillera that provides the name for the community. The 1897 Easley survey of the Gijosa Grant shows houses, ruins, acequias, and fields along the Middle Road in La Cordillera. The 1901 Turley survey of the Gijosa Grant shows acequias, wheat fields, an orchard, and fences along the Camino de en Medio or Middle Road to Picuris, within La Cordillera.

Among the historic structures for which dates of construction are known, the Corina Santistevan home on State Road 240 just south of Camino del Medio was built by Alfredo Santistevan circa 1881. A hewn log dispensa or fuerte was constructed to the south of the house. Tree ring analysis of the timbers establishes the date of construction as 1888.

The Horace Long House stood nearby, between State Road 240 and the Río Grande del Rancho until its demolition in the mid-20th century. This structure was a hacienda built around a central fortified placita, entered through massive zaguan gates. Tree ring analysis of the vigas from the oldest rooms that remained in the complex in the 1960's yielded cutting dates of 1810 and 1816. The complex included residential quarters, a tavern, a distillery, and a smokehouse.



Inocencio Durán Molino, West Camino Abajo de la Loma, La Cordillera

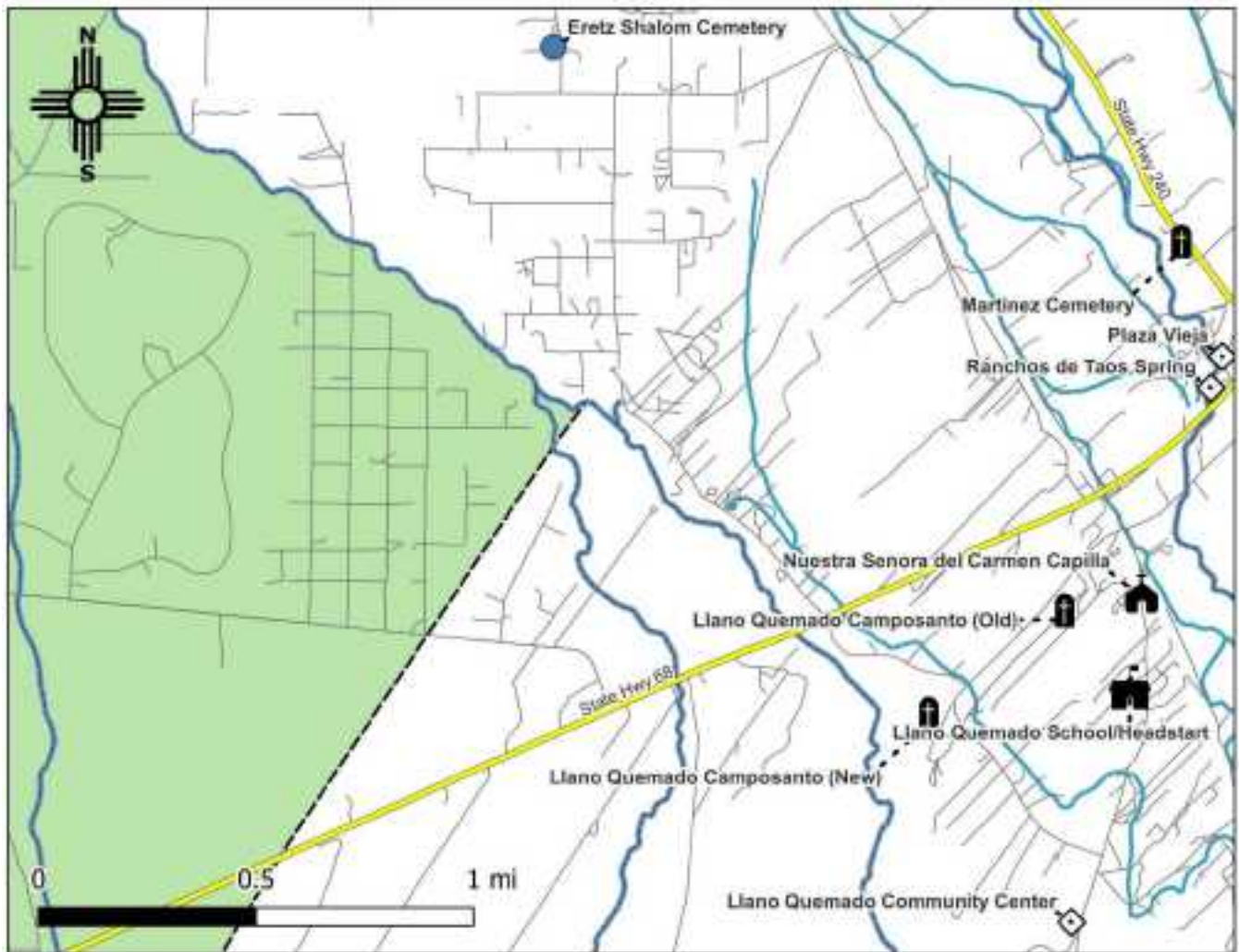
Photo: Hank Saxe

Numerous grist mills operated in the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho in the 1800s and into the 20th century. By 1880 farmers were bringing their grain to eleven of these small artisanal molinos throughout the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho for grinding. Only one molino exists today in the Taos Valley. Located on Camino Abajo de la Loma between Ranchos de Taos and Camino del Medio in La Cordillera, the molino was built and operated by the family of Inocencio Durán in 1879. It continued in use until the 1930's. The molino was powered by water from the Acequia Madre del Río Grande, which runs a few feet away. The Molino de los Duranes has been placed on both the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties and National Register of Historic Places.



Hewn log fuerte, built by Alfredo Santistevan in 1888, La Cordillera
Photo: Hank Saxe

Llano Quemado



Llano Quemado and neighboring areas have been occupied for well over a thousand years. Numerous pit houses and unit pueblos were built along the alluvial terraces above the Río Grande del Rancho and in the lower valley of the Arroyo Miranda by clans ancestral to Taos and Picuris Pueblos. A pueblo structure consisting of 18 rooms and a kiva, at the southern edge of Llano Quemado, was excavated by J.A. Jeancon in 1920. To keep the historical timeline in perspective, that archaeological research was done over a century ago. The houseblock that was excavated and documented by the Smithsonian Institution was already some six centuries old, at the outskirts of a modern-day community that was by then well over a century and several decades old.

Following the establishment of the Diego Romero family on the Cristobal de la Serna Grant in the early 1700s, Jicarilla Apaches who had frequented the area settled at a location not far from the eventual site of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza. Local residents have suggested that the location of the Jicarilla mission was near the eventual site of the capilla of Nuestra Senora del Carmel or nearby in the bottomlands along the Río de las Trampas, as the Río Grande del Rancho was then called. While many of the Jicarillas of the Ranchos de Taos and Llano Quemado area left after several decades, some remained in the vicinity and integrated with incoming groups of settlers.

Comanche raids in the 1760s and 1770s endangered those living in the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, whether Spanish or Native, and residents moved into Taos Pueblo until a fortified plaza was completed at Ranchos de Taos, less than a mile from Llano Quemado, in 1779. The first mention of Llano Quemado as a community appears in the vital statistical records of the Spanish government in 1787.

Several families came to Llano Quemado from the village of Quemado, now called Cordova, south of Truchas. In its early days that village had also been known as Pueblo Quemado and as Llano Quemado. The name Llano Quemado was brought to the valley of the Río de las Trampas with the new settlers. The group who migrated from the Cordova area included many people of mixed Spanish and Mexican indigenous heritage. Through the mixture of these bloodlines and the intermarrying of Plains Indian tribal members Llano Quemado developed as a Genizaro community, which is recognized in the traditions of Los Comanches, passed down from generation to generation.



“La Fila”

**Los Comanches de la Serna dancing in Llano Quemado near La Capilla de Señora del Carmen,
seen in the background, 1997**

Photo: Miguel Gandert

While the location of the first capilla of the Jicarilla mission is not known, in the mid-twentieth century Don Abenicio Romero identified a ruined structure in Llano Quemado that was said to have possibly been the remains of the capilla for the Jicarilla Mission. There is some speculation that this capilla served the greater community of Llano Quemado as well, before the present-day capilla was built, since its construction occurred later than other capillas in neighboring communities. There is no definitive information about the date of construction of the capilla of Nuestra Señora del Carmen, but a license was granted for it by Father Damaso Taladrid in 1856, and Antonio Ramon Medina deeded a tract of land where the capilla of Nuestra

Senora del Carmen now stands on Hot Springs Road (formerly called NM State Road 382) overlooking the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, in 1864. The feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is celebrated in Llano Quemado annually on July 15th and 16th, and traditionally processions have originated from there at that time.

The longest acequia in the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, the Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez, begins within the Rancho del Río Grande Grant and runs for several miles through Llano Quemado, traversing the breadth of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant. In 1933 the users of the Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez declared to the State Engineer that their acequia had been in use for at least 100 years, and thus a priority date of 1833 was given for it at that time. The acequia has been in existence before that, as deeds from a land transaction between Pedro Martinez and Amador Vigil in 1827 reference “*la sequia que comunmente llaman del llano del don Francisco Martín*”, granting a *derecho de agua* for the parcel of land near the Arroyo Miranda. During the process of adjudication of water rights for the acequias of the Río Grande del Rancho drainage, the Acequia Finado Francisco Martinez was assigned a priority date of 1760 by the office of the New Mexico State Engineer.

Another long acequia, the Acequia Abajo de la Loma, runs along the valley floor just below the Llano Quemado rim, as described in its name. It diverts from the Río Grande del Rancho upstream of the Arroyo Miranda, and flows at the base of the bluff, joining the Saucito Ditch, which continues beyond Highway 68. The Saucito flows into the Jaroso Ditch which proceeds down the valley. These acequias had claimed various priority dates, but as with the Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez, priority dates of 1760 have been assigned to them by the New Mexico State Engineer.



Llano Quemado is the settlement on the southwest side of the Río Grande del Rancho across the valley from Ranchos de Taos – John H Walker survey of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant, 1894.

Numerous homes in Llano Quemado, along the Hot Springs Road and lanes leading from it date to the 1800s and early 1900s.

One of the first locations of an elementary school in Llano Quemado was established within the Andres Romero residence on the old State Road 382. Under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) a dedicated school building was built across the road in 1941 and opened in 1942. This facility continued to serve as the Llano Quemado Elementary School until the local schools were consolidated into a single location in Ranchos de Taos. The building continues to be used as the Llano Quemado Head Start.

The Llano Quemado Mutual Domestic Water Users Association was incorporated on August 13, 1952.

The Llano Quemado Community Center was opened on Hot Springs Road in 2008, to serve the community for meetings and social gatherings.

La Capilla de Señora del Carmen, Llano Quemado – 2 Views

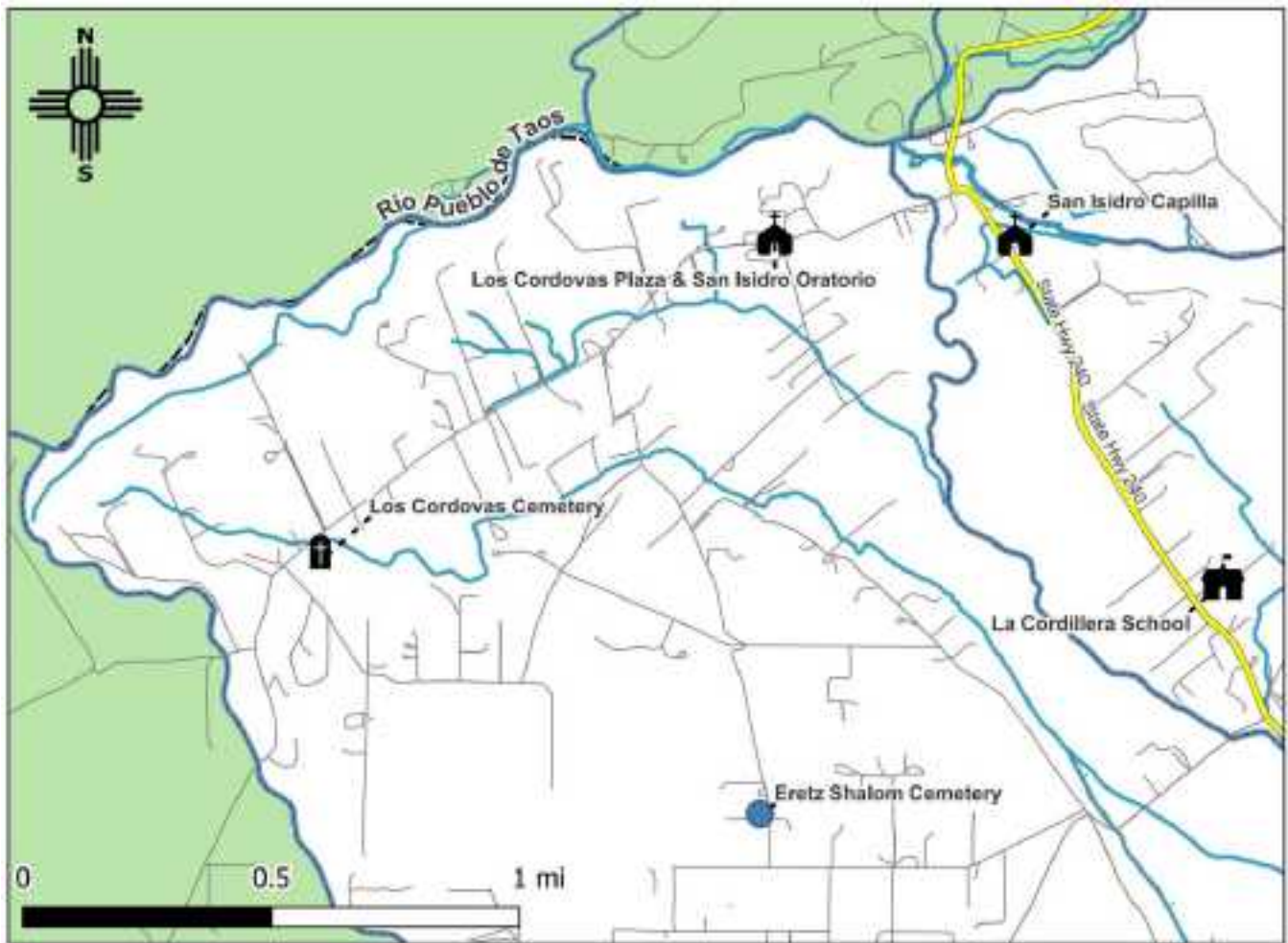


Photo: John Candelario, 1930-40



Photo: Frederick D. Nichols, August 1936

Los Córdovas



Los Córdovas is situated at the northern, downstream terminus of the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, near its junction with the Río Pueblo. The village plaza was built on the alluvial bench 500 yards to the southwest of the confluence of the two rivers.

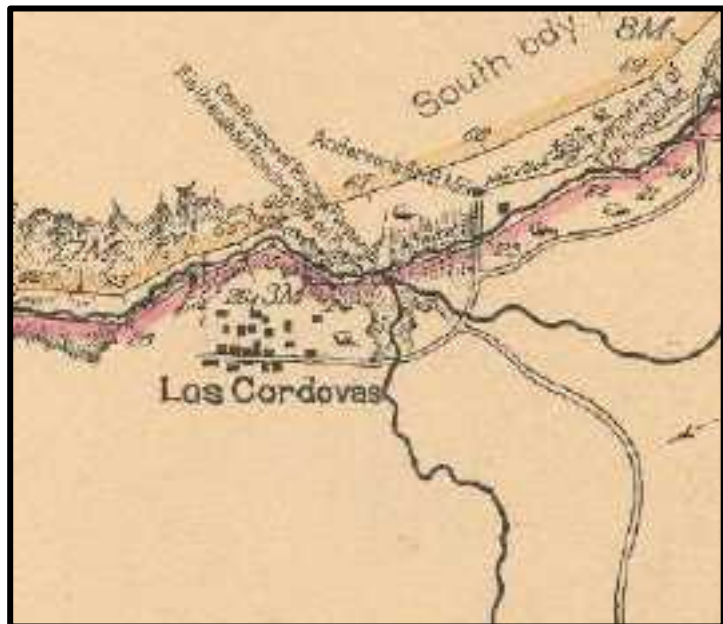
At Los Córdovas, the Río Pueblo begins incising its canyon, which descends to the Río Grande gorge. The exposed escarpment of lava on the river's banks, Las Peñas Negras, defines the northern boundary of the Gijosa Grant, within which Los Córdovas sits. Numerous petroglyphs have been engraved onto these basalt boulders by early residents of the valley.

Settlements in the vicinity of Los Córdovas go back centuries before the Spanish entrada into the area. Pit house and unit pueblo sites dot the mesa south of the community. Beginning about a thousand years ago, many dwellings were established, often in loose clusters within shouting distance of each other, close to the river valleys where crops were planted. By about 1320 most of these habitations would be abandoned, although members of Taos Pueblo may have continued to plant fields within the river valleys over the succeeding centuries, and Pueblo field houses may have been used seasonally.

A principal trail from the Santa Fe and Española region to Taos Pueblo passed through the area of Los Córdovas. This trail ascended from the lower gorge of the Río Grande above Pilar and proceeded across the mesa top along the present course of Los Córdovas Road once it crossed the Arroyo de la Guera. The trail

crossed the Río Pueblo a few hundred yards upstream of the location of Los Córdovas. Early European visitors to the area, including Hernando de Alvarado in 1541 and Juan de Oñate in 1498 used the trail on their way to Taos Pueblo. In time, this trail became a roadway and a main transportation link in and out of the Taos Valley.

Bartolomeo Romero had acquired title to lands in the Los Córdovas area in the 1600s but abandoned the landholding during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. In 1715, a triangular shaped tract of land comprising over 16,000 acres was granted to the young widow Francisca Antonia de Gijosa. This tract of land covered the locations of Los Córdovas, part of present-day La Cordillera, extended upstream along the Río Pueblo into Ranchitos, and downstream to the Hondo Canyon above Pilar.



Los Córdovas is the northern most settlement in the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, near its confluence with the Río Pueblo. Jay Turley Map of the Gijosa Grant, 1901.

Within a decade after Sra. Gijosa received the grant, ownership of the Gijosa Grant passed to Baltasar Trujillo, who later sold to Baltasar Romero. Beginning in 1752, divisions of the property were made to members of the Romero family and others, who began settling upon it, planting crops and raising livestock.

The establishment of Los Córdovas is attributed to Don Adan Cordova and wife Doña Juliana Torres, who came to the area from Truchas in the late 18th century. A quadrangular compound of buildings surrounding a central placita was built along the north side of the road from Santa Fe to Taos. Los Córdovas is situated at a point where pathways converged, with a route heading across the Río Pueblo and the mesa northward, a road up the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho towards Ranchos de Taos and beyond, and a main road into Taos Pueblo and Don Fernando de Taos, following the Río Pueblo. The central settlement of Los Córdovas was laid out as a defensive village, with a

three story torreón erected on the northeast corner. The Los Córdovas Torreón was part of a valley-wide network of torreones and lookout posts that could communicate with one another to spot movements of people through the area, and in the event of a raid by hostile parties, could be used as a fortified redoubt. The torreón remained into the 20th century.

Although no definitive dates have been established for the construction of the compound, ceiling boards from a home on the west side of the quadrangle are inscribed with the signatures of Jose Dolores Cordoba and Policarpio Cordoba and the date of 1829. When the earthen roofing was removed from the same house on the plaza, antique ammunition cartridges were discovered in the layer of adobe dirt, the residue of defensive actions by residents who were positioned on the roof of plaza buildings behind the parapets, firing at raiding parties of Comanches and other tribes.

The San Isidro Oratorio, occupying the southeast corner of the Los Córdovas Plaza, was a chapel consecrated within the residence of Don Juan Felipe Romero. The Oratorio is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The date of construction is given in the register as 1845, although some residents of Los Córdovas believe that the structure was built long before it began to be used as the Oratorio. When the Archdiocese of Santa Fe sought title to the Oratorio if it were to remain as an active site of devotional

activities, the owners withdrew it from use. The structure became a residence in 1951 and a new capilla of San Isidro was constructed a half mile away, alongside State Road 240 between Los Córdovas and La Cordillera. It is shared by residents of both neighborhoods.

Los Córdovas was a center for sheep ranching operations that reached out far and wide in the warmer months, when herds were taken into the mountains, as far as the Pecos River watershed. Members of the local community continued to graze large numbers of sheep on the lands of the Gijosa, Serna and Martinez Grant into the 1960s, as well as on federal lands that previously had been part of the mercedes, the land grants that have historically been the communal resource base.

The successful and well- run ranching operations of the Blas Chávez family and others attracted considerable attention to the Los Córdovas community, through the photographic documentation by John Collier Jr. working for the Farm Security Administration of the federal government. In 1953 Joseph Krumgold authored the book “And Now Miguel” about the Chávez family and their relatives and neighbors in Los Córdovas, a popular work about members of a rural Northern New Mexican community, with an economy and traditions centered on ranching and shepherding. A film based on the story followed, which was distributed and promoted by the US government, highlighting the persistence of the rural and pastoral agricultural lifestyle of the residents of Los Córdovas, in the face of modernizing forces.



Blas Chávez Ranch, Alamitos / Los Córdovas

Photo: John Collier, Jr., 1943

Los Córdovas, like all the five communities of the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, had its own community schoolhouse prior to consolidation of all local elementary schools into one location. After its closure this property became the Los Córdovas Community Center.

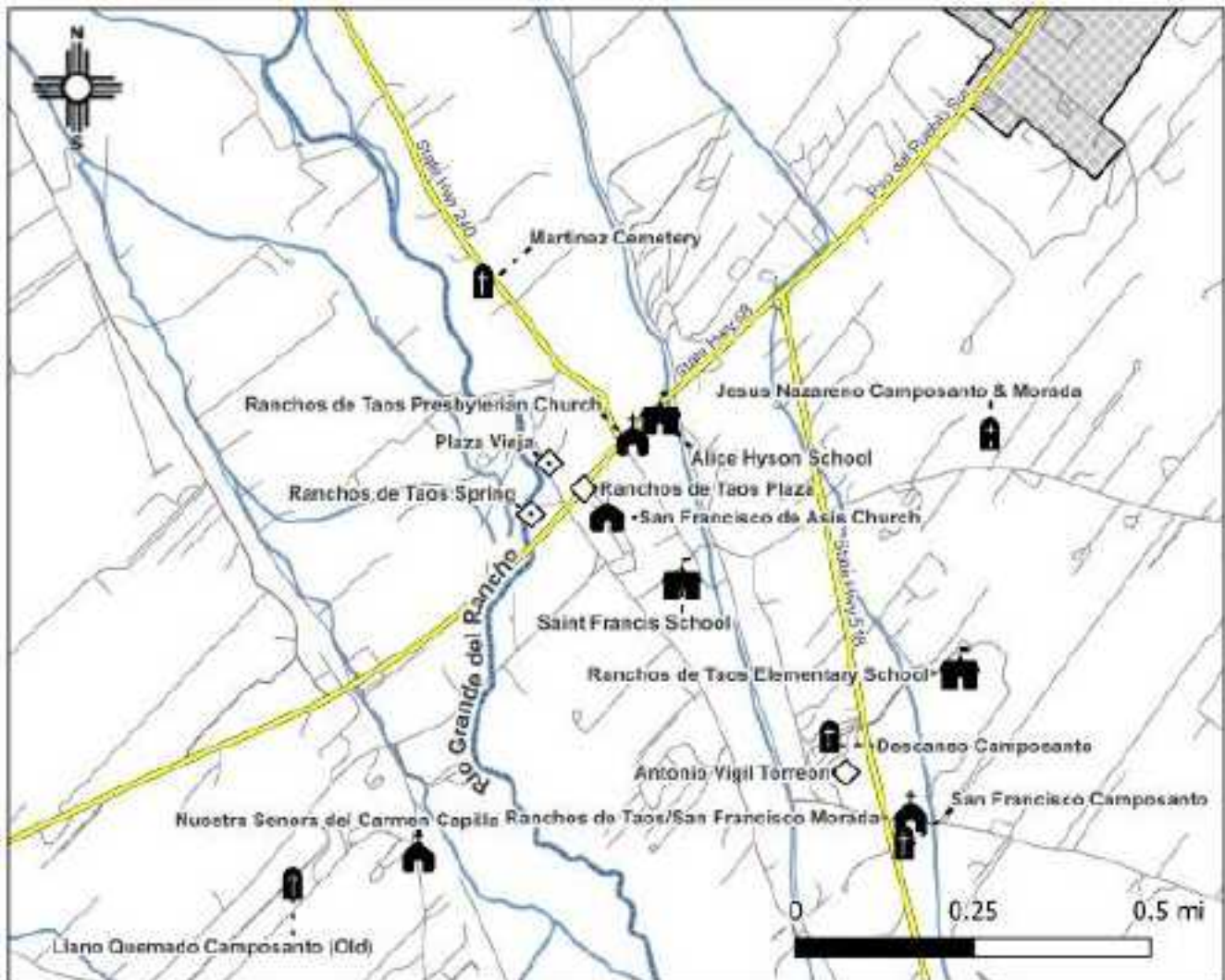
Like other neighborhoods in the Ranchos Valley, Los Córdovas has from time-to-time organized home-grown groups of Comanche singers and dancers who have carried on the traditions within Los Córdovas and nearby neighborhoods.

Located near the confluence of the Río Grande del Rancho, Río Pueblo de Taos, and the Río Fernando, several acequias run through the area around Los Córdovas. Acequia #1 de Los Córdovas and Acequia #2 de Los Córdovas (Los Córdovas Ditch no. 1 and Los Córdovas Ditch no. 2) were once combined as a single Acequia de Los Córdovas, prior to the construction of a new compuerta to serve Los Córdovas Ditch No. 2 in 1942. At the time of the construction of the new diversion, both acequia commissions claimed that their use of the acequias for irrigation dated to 1824, based on a petition to the governor of New Mexico to secure an apportionment of water from the river. Other acequias provide water in the area from the Río Pueblo including the Alamitos Ditch, the Acequia de la Otra Banda, and the Acequia de los Alamitos.



Sheep on Blas Chávez Ranch, Alamitos / Los Cordovas
Photos: John Collier, Jr., 1943

Ranchos de Taos

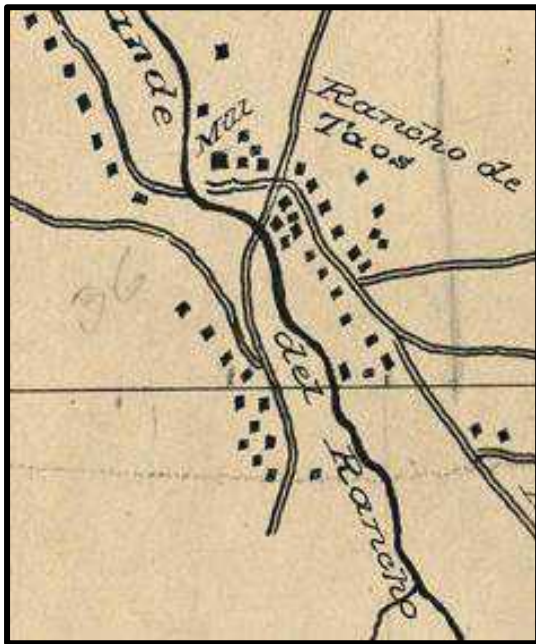


Ranchos de Taos is situated at the center of the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho and has served as a hub of communal activities for almost three centuries. Long before Europeans entered the Taos Valley the area around Ranchos de Taos was inhabited by clans ancestral to Taos Pueblo. They farmed in the valley and there is evidence of their occupation around the Ranchos de Taos area well into the 18th century.

The first Spanish land grant in the area of Ranchos de Taos was made to Don Fernando Durán y Cháves. It included lands extending from the location of the Town of Taos into the valley of the Río de las Trampas, as the Río Grande del Rancho was then called. Durán y Cháves vacated the province during the Pueblo revolt of 1680, never to return. There was minimal Spanish presence in the area until after 1715, when Cristobal de la Serna was granted a rancho extending from near the present-day Cruz Alta Road to the summit of the Picuris Mountain, and from the Arroyo Miranda to the Camino de en Medio, the Middle Road from Taos Pueblo to Picuris. Serna died during a military expedition to the Buffalo Plains in 1720, and his heirs sold the grant to Diego Romero, a coyote of mixed Spanish and Indian heritage, in 1724. His son Xavier Francisco Romero, “El Talache”, established a hacienda, “Talachia”, somewhere along the Río de las Trampas, presumably near the site of Ranchos de Taos Plaza, during the 1730s. Talachia was the first outpost of Spanish and mixed Spanish-Indian settlers in the valley, which was already occupied by Taos Pueblo farmers and Jicarilla Apaches. The location of the Jicarilla settlement has been variously assigned to the

bottomlands below the capilla of Nuestra Senora del Carmen in Llano Quemado, and to the fields between the Ranchos de Taos Plaza and the village spring, alongside the Río de las Trampas.

The early population of the settlement of Las Trampas de Taos, as it became known was a blending of multiple ethnicities. Besides the mixed blood coyotes and Españoles, the sizeable group of Jicarillas remained in close contact with the community, although many did not assimilate. A portion of the Taos Pueblo Indians who remained in the area may have assimilated eventually into the overall population if they did not relocate to the Pueblo. Close relationships have been maintained between some residents of Ranchos de Taos and Taos Pueblo over time. Indeed, oral accounts of Ranchos de Taos residents participating in cultural activities usually closed to non-tribal members, into the early 20th century, support the history of familial ties. Smaller but significant components of the population were categorized as Genizaros, detribalized Indians from Plains tribes, Utes and Navajos, who entered into the mix. A census of 1750 identifies the residents by ethnic identity, with fifty-five coyotes and fifty-seven Españoles making up the head count. Jicarillas were not counted, perhaps because they did not completely join the community as most did not convert to Christianity. One can question, given the complex casta system of the time, whether the proportions of these self-declared ethnic identities were skewed by the desire to pass into higher social ranking.



Ranchos de Taos is the settlement on the northeast side of the Río Grande del Rancho.
– John H Walker survey of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant, 1894

From the 1730s into the 1760s, dispersed farmsteads proliferated in the valley, and acequias were likely well established by 1760. A devastating Comanche attack in 1760 and continuing raids over the next several years led to an abandonment of residences in the valley of the Río de las Trampas, with settlers moving into the protection of Taos Pueblo until a fortified Plaza could be established in 1779. The completion of the plaza of Las Trampas de Taos with massive gates and defensive torreones provided protection for residents living within its walls. Simultaneously, the lessening of tensions with Comanches also encouraged the reestablishment of dwellings outside of the plaza.

By 1765, the plaza of Las Trampas de Taos had already been dedicated to San Francisco de Asis, although no records from that time have been found that refer to a place of worship. A license for the construction of a chapel at El Puesto de San Francisco de las Trampas was issued by the Bishop of Durángo in 1813, and the church was completed in 1815.

The oldest structure on the Ranchos Plaza, a two-story house to the northeast of the Church, may have been built directly onto the perimeter wall. Vigas in that building were cut in two batches: 1774-1775, and 1791-1795. Another structure, a house on the brow of the hill about 1100 feet northeast of the Church, has been dated to 1757-1758 through tree ring analysis.

The census of the Taos Valley performed in 1796 showed a population of 779 Hispanos of full or mixed blood, living in six communities. The oldest of these, the Plaza of San Francisco, (Ranchos de Taos), had a population of 191, a quarter of the total non-tribal population counted in the Taos Valley at the time.

By the early 1800s, a number of houses had been built well outside of the Plaza, along acequias and their venitas. Homes were built along the Venita de la Morada, along the east rim of the valley, with a

commanding view over the valley and the Arroyo Miranda and up to the summit ridge of the Picuris Mountain. Situated amongst these residences, the torreón of Antonio José Vigil provided a vantage to observe the comings and goings on the Camino Real which came into the Miranda Valley from Vadito and beyond. If a raiding party was observed riding towards Ranchos de Taos, the torreón provided a redoubt in which people could shelter and mount a defense. Tree ring dating of the wood in the torreón yielded cutting dates of 1811 and 1836, but the vigas that were analyzed may have been a replacement set, since many older buildings have gone through at least one set of roofing members in their time. When the history of the torreón was taken down for the nomination to the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 1975, the owner, Mr. Paul Vigil cited family lore that the torreón had been constructed in the mid-1700s. It was said to have once been two stories high.

Tree ring analysis of vigas in homes along the Venita de la Morada has provided dates as early as the 1750s, with a cluster of houses being built or added onto in the 1830s. The older of the two Ranchos de Taos Moradas is situated alongside the San Francisco Camposanto about 800 feet southeast of the Vigil Torreón. This morada, known as the Ranchos or San Francisco Morada, was presumably built in the latter half of the 1800s, although records of the date of construction have not been located.

The newer Jesus Nazareño Morada and cemetery, dating to around the beginning of the 20th century, is located a half mile east of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza on Espinosa Road. Again, no precise dates are available for its construction.

Ranchos de Taos is served by several acequias, including the Acequia Madre del Río Grande, the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito, the Jaroso Ditch and Acequia en Medio. These acequias had claimed different priority dates based on historic accounts presented to the State Engineer's office. In 1951 the Acequia Madre del Río Grande claimed a priority date of 1800, without citing specific documents to back the claim, undoubtedly much later than the actual use began. Similarly, in 1930 the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito made a claim of 1875 for a priority date, absurdly late since much earlier land transaction records exist for properties that were irrigated by that acequia. On the other hand, in 1951 the Jaroso Ditch and the Acequia en Medio both claimed priority dates of 1675, although documentary evidence has not been found that mentions these acequias before the latter part of the 1800s. Whatever the claims of priority dates are for individual acequias in the Ranchos Valley, the Office of the New Mexico State Engineer has put the question of inconsistent priority dates aside by assigning the priority date of 1760 for all of the acequias within the basin of the Río Grande del Rancho and the Río Chiquito, with the exception of the Los Córdovas ditches #1 and #2. This conclusion follows from the historic account of Pedro Tamarón, the bishop of Durángo, who visited the valley of the Río de las Trampas in 1760. Crossing the river while journeying from Picuris to Taos Pueblo, he noted abundant acequias that emanated from the Río de las Trampas, watering nearby fields. In 1776, Father Francisco Dominguez made a famous reconnoitering of the Taos area and observed the fortified plaza of Las Trampas de Taos / Ranchos de Taos under construction, even as the settlers were still sheltering at Taos Pueblo. Comanche raids did not deter the settlers from farming, though, and he noted that the Río de las Trampas "belongs" to Hispano farmers who use it to irrigate "very good lands" along its banks.

The early 1800s saw an expansion of settlement and farming into all parts of the Ranchos Valley. The plaza around the church in Ranchos de Taos remained a focal point for activities in the area; social, commercial, and religious.

A commercial hub firmly developed around the Plaza of Ranchos de Taos in the second half of the 1800s. The establishment of Cantonment Burgwin, six miles distant, spurred the growth of businesses, and merchants set up stores around the plaza. Alexander Gusdorf, an immigrant from Germany, established several commercial ventures in Ranchos de Taos. He operated a general merchandise store, planted a large orchard, and was involved in buying and selling a wide variety of agricultural produce. He went into the

grain milling business, first with a water powered mill on the Río Grande del Rancho in 1871. In 1879 he built the three- story high steam- powered Great Western Mill on the plaza opposite the front of the church, putting out 10,000 barrels of flour a year. The wooden mill burned to the ground in 1895 and Gusdorf relocated his center of operations to Taos.



Alexander Gusdorf's Great Western Mill, 1879-1895, Ranchos de Taos Plaza
Palace of the Governors Photo Archives

In the 1890s, Squire Hartt established a residence and store at the northwest corner of Plaza Vieja, which is now separated from the main area of the plaza by Highway 68. Tomas Rivera operated a general merchandise store next to the former site of the Gusdorf mill in the early 20th century. The portion of the Plaza Vieja that faces the highway was built up with the Ranchos de Taos Post Office, El Cortez Theater, The Popular Store, and Old Martinez Hall.

Artists had begun making images of the San Francisco de Asis Church by the first years of the 20th century. Georgia O'Keeffe wrote "The Ranchos de Taos Church is one of the most beautiful buildings in the United States...most of the artists who come to Taos have to paint it, I suppose, just as they have to paint a self-portrait."

In 1939 the New Mexico State Highway Department proposed rerouting the highway from Santa Fe to Taos through the Ranchos de Taos Plaza directly in front of the church of San Francisco de Asis, a plan that would have destroyed the integrity of the plaza. An intense public relations campaign focused attention on the harm this would do to the community, and to the church itself, if the road was built in that location. The affinity that local artists had for the church helped raise interest in the controversy, and they used their networks to publicize the issue. After an outcry from a broad spectrum of people locally, statewide, and nationally, the Taos County Commission directed the Highway Department to choose a different route. The new section of road was built parallel to the Old Santa Fe Road as it descends the hill from Llano Quemado, continuing on to the northeast side of the plaza in front of Old Martinez Hall. Around the same time as this construction was taking place, a new road was built along the brow of the hill running from Talpa towards the newly improved Santa Fe Highway. This road, originally named State Highway 3, cut through irrigated fields along the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito, parallel to and above the old road, the Camino Abajo de la Loma. The Lebanon-born merchant George Sahd built his Ranchos Trading Post at the junction of the Santa Fe Highway and State Road 3, now renamed Highway 518, in 1939. He and his family, “Los Arabes”, operated the Trading Post for over four decades, the last locally owned and operated general merchandise store to serve the residents of the Ranchos Valley.



Ranchos de Taos Businesses, Northwest Side of Plaza

Photo: John Collier, Jr., Courtesy Collier Family

Ranchos de Taos has had several schools within the neighborhood center. The Works Progress Administration built the Ranchos de Taos Elementary school, constructing it of adobe made in the neighborhood, employing local labor, as was the standard with WPA projects in the Taos Valley. It was situated on East Camino Abajo de la Loma, across the Acequia Madre del Río Grande from the Saint Francis Parish parochial school. This facility was replaced by the present-day Ranchos Elementary School

which consolidated several smaller neighborhood schools. The Saint Francis Parish parochial school was built in the 1930s. The school operated for well over a half century. The large gymnasium on its grounds provided a community gathering place for decades, even after the school ceased operating.

In the latter part of the 1800's, tensions between the central authority of the Roman Catholic Church under Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy and the popular Taos-based padre, Don Antonio José Martínez resulted in the rise of other religious affiliations in the area. The excommunication of Padre Martínez led to the growth of Los Hermanos Penitentes. Besides the establishment of moradas under the Penitente Brotherhood, the Presbyterian church began to acquire adherents among local residents. Alice Hyson, a Presbyterian missionary, established a school to the north of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza in 1884. This school, bearing her name, continued operating into the middle of the 20th Century. As an outgrowth of the school project, La Iglesia Presbiteriana de El Rancho organized on August 7, 1892, to build the Ranchos Presbyterian Church about six hundred feet north of the Church of San Francisco de Asis, at the corner of present-day Highway 68 and San Francisco Street. The Descanso cemetery was dedicated by the Presbyterian congregation just to the north of the Antonio José Vigil Torreon.

On February 3, 1875, the first post office was opened in Ranchos de Taos, with Alexander Gusdorf as postmaster. The name of the post office, and the cancellation stamp used on mail that originated within it, was officially Ranches of Taos, until it was changed to Ranchos de Taos in 1982. The post office moved from its long-established location between the Ranchos de Taos Plaza and the Plaza Vieja, to a new dedicated building between the Ranchos de Taos Plaza and the Ranchos Presbyterian Church in 1995.

Following the Second World War, mutual domestic water users' associations were set up in many communities in Northern New Mexico. The Ranchos de Taos Mutual Domestic Water Users Association was established in the first half of the 1950s. A well and water tank located atop the hill near the Ranchos Trading Post serves the water system. Another well and a larger storage tank, located adjacent to the Ranchos Morada, were added to the system in the 1970's.

In 1978, in response to growth pressures and pollution of the shallow aquifer that many residents had drawn their domestic water from, El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District was organized to bring a wastewater collection system to all five neighborhoods of the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho. An extensive network of sewer lines has now been built by El Valle in the bottomlands of the valley and onto the alluvial terraces above it.

The church of San Francisco de Asis has been maintained by community members over the two centuries since its construction. The enjarre, the renewal of the exterior adobe plaster, is completed every year in the last week of June, with volunteer participation. There has been only one short lapse. After a period of diminished involvement in the middle of the twentieth century, the church was hard plastered in 1967, in an ill-considered effort to supplant the communal maintenance of the structure. Within a dozen years the cement stucco had failed, and it was removed to save the church building from structural failure. Parishioners and other helpers restored the earthen plaster in 1979 and continue to do so in an annual effort which once again brings the community together on that project.

October 6th is the Día de San Francisco, patron saint of Ranchos de Taos. A blessing of the animals is traditionally made on that day on the plaza in front of the church, in recognition of San Francisco de Asis's compassion for living creatures.

The church of San Francisco de Asis is the focal point of Las Posadas in the nine days leading up to Christmas. Processions between the church, homes and capillas in the neighborhoods bind the community on winter evenings during Las Posadas.

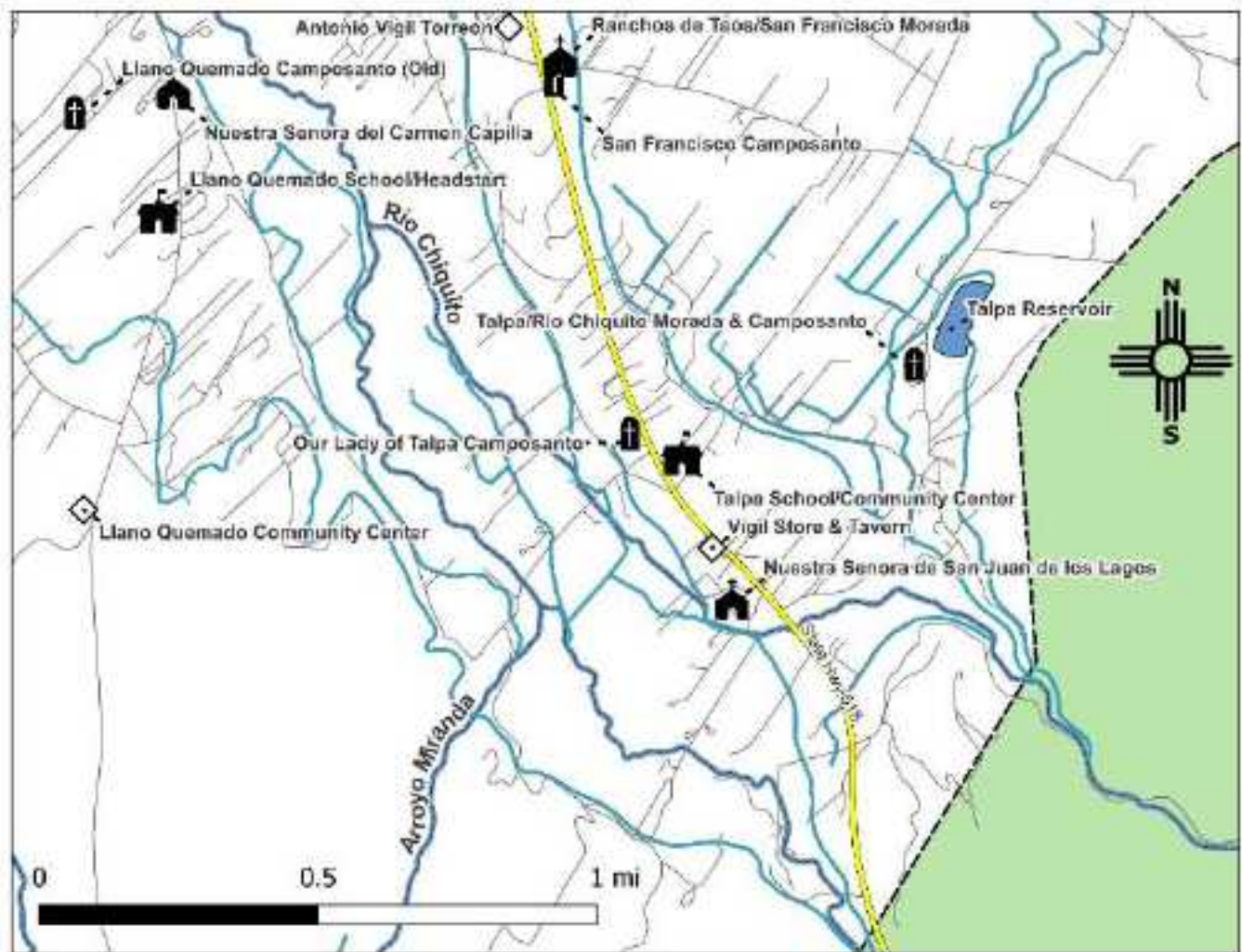
At New Years, Los Comanches de las Serna gather at the church to perform songs and dances that have been passed on for at least two and a half centuries, a part of the Genizaro heritage of the Ranchos Valley. Beginning at the church and plaza, Los Comanches go on to visit households and perform through the day, reuniting with neighbors and sharing blessings.



El Descanso Cemetery, Ranchos de Taos

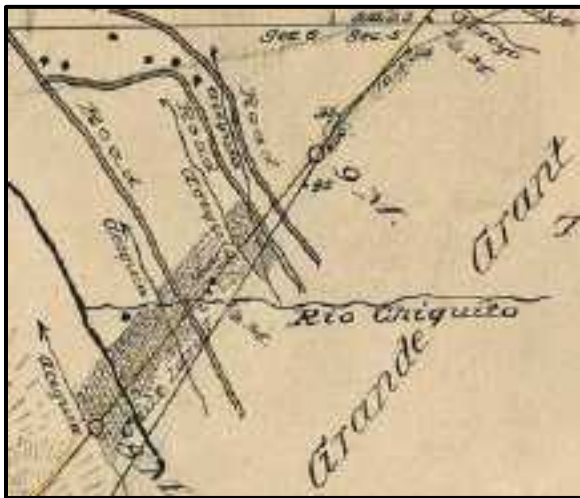
Photo: Hank Saxe

Talpa



The community of Talpa has grown up along the Río Chiquito and the Río Grande del Rancho at the upstream end of the Ranchos Valley. It has been the site of human occupation and agricultural activity for at least the past thousand years. In places near Highway 518, on the edge of the alluvial terrace above the two rivers, potsherds of styles that were popular prior to the 1300s indicate the extent of activity in past centuries. Members of clans who later joined into Taos Pueblo farmed in the Talpa area, both before and after Spanish settlement of the area began.

Talpa is located on the Cristobal de la Serna Grant, which was made in 1715. The first Spanish settlement of the Serna Grant was downstream from Talpa, closer to the location of the Plaza of Ranchos de Taos. Following devastating Comanche raids in the 1760s and 1770s, the population of the Serna Grant relocated to Taos Pueblo for mutual defense. Spanish and mixed-blood settlers who had lived on the Serna Grant did not reoccupy the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho, or Río de las Trampas, as it was then called, until 1779 when the fortified Ranchos de Taos Plaza was completed. By the early 1780s, with Indian raids decreasing, resettlement may have begun in outlying areas of the valley. No records exist which determine the date of the first Spanish settlement in Talpa, but within a few decades after the return from the Pueblo, the population of the valley had grown, lands were being transferred between buyers and sellers, and new lands were being utilized for residences and farms. Documents from before 1820 concern lands irrigated by the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito, owned by Bernardo Lucero and neighbors.



Talpa homes and fields at the confluence of the Río Chiquito and Río Grande del Rancho – John H Walker survey of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant, 1894

A community was formally established in 1823 at El Barrio de Nuestra Senora de San Juan de Río Chiquito, two miles from the Ranchos de Taos Plaza. Manuel Lucero gave land to twenty new settlers of the area for a plaza which was to be constructed between the Camino Real and the Río Chiquito. This is the plaza of Río Chiquito, where the capilla of Nuestra Senora de San Juan is situated. Don Bernardo Durán, a leading citizen of Río Chiquito, petitioned for the right to build the capilla in 1827 and funded its construction in 1828. The painter and santero Antonio Molleno created the altar screen in the capilla in the same year, the only work of his that he inscribed with a date. This altar screen remains in the capilla and was listed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 1968. The image of Nuestra Senora de Talpa is painted on one of the panels of the altar screen. Nuestra Senora de Talpa and Nuestra Senora de San Juan de los Lagos both had chapels devoted to them in Jalisco, Mexico, and the founders of the Río Chiquito community dedicated their new places of worship to them.

In 1838 Don Nicolas Sandoval built a private oratorio, dedicated to Nuestra Senora de Talpa, one-third of a mile southeast of the Plaza of Río Chiquito. This capilla, built without a license from church authorities, was used by Padre Antonio José Martinez and the Penitente Brotherhood, the Sandoval and Durán families, as well as vecinos of the barrio. After more than a century of use, the capilla was abandoned. The religious artwork was purchased and removed to a museum in Colorado Springs in the mid-20th century.



Rudolfo or Alfonso Sandoval threshing alverjon – peas – Río Chiquito, 1939
Photo: John Collier, Jr.

Three major acequias originate in Talpa: the Acequia Madre del Río Grande, the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito, and the Acequia del Monte del Río Chiquito. The Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito was sometimes identified in early records as the Acequia del Llano del Río Chiquito and the Acequia del Monte del Río Chiquito as the Acequia del Troz. The acequias of Talpa use the year 1760 as the priority date for the beginning of their beneficial use of water for irrigation.

By the end of the 1700s there was already evidence of heavy utilization of the water resources of the Río de los Trampas and Río Chiquito. Concern over diminished stream flow late in the irrigation season was cited in the 1795 petition for a grant of land immediately upstream of Talpa, on the Río Grande del Rancho. The Rancho del Río Grande Grant was made in that year to residents of the Ranchos Valley, in part to protect the headwaters from diversion and use by others. Additionally, the Rancho del Río Grande Grant, adjacent to the Cristobal de la Serna Grant, provided timber, firewood, and grazing lands as a community-held resource.

Considerable acreages were devoted to raising wheat in the valley, and several grist mills were built along the rivers and acequias. Following the conquest of New Mexico by the United States a fort, Cantonment Burgwin, was built four miles south of Talpa. The demand for flour created by the military presence was met by both the small family operated molinos and larger commercial mills like the one that Cerain St. Vrain built on the Río Grande del Rancho a couple of miles upstream of Talpa. These mills provided an outlet for excess production and the sale of grain by local farmers, bringing cash into the local economy.

The Río Chiquito Morada and camposanto were established about two thirds of a mile to the northeast of the plaza of Río Chiquito. According to local sources the morada is believed to have been constructed in the 1890s.



Darryl & Julie Maestas loading hay bales from a field irrigated by the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito, Talpa / Río Chiquito, 2021

Photo: Jackie Kolbensschlag

Juan N. Vigil constructed a store and tavern on the main road, near the plaza in 1902. A post office was established in 1904. At the request of the United States Postal Service, Río Chiquito's official name was changed at that time to Talpa as part of a postal service campaign to "simplify" village names in New Mexico.



Talpa Reservoir / Deposito Photo: Hank Saxe

Juan N. Vigil applied to the New Mexico State Engineer to construct a reservoir, to smooth out fluctuations in the flow from the Río Chiquito into its two main acequias. The application for the Deposito, or the Talpa Reservoir, declared that it was to store water from the Río Chiquito for use in irrigating as much as 1000 acres. The project was taken over by the Talpa Water Users Association the following year. Residents of the area excavated the reservoir basin and built the presa, over the next ten years, using horse drawn screpas and fresnos. The Deposito continues to serve as storage for the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito and Acequia del Monte del Río Chiquito.

Parts of Talpa retain traditional names and identities, such as Río Chiquito and El Tros. Rio Chiquito is the neighborhood near the Deposito, the Morada and Camposanto. El Tros is the area northwest of the Deposito, along Tros Road.

The Talpa Elementary School was built on a crossroads near the Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa, in the early 20th Century. Like other community schools in the area, the original structure was replaced by a new schoolhouse built under the Works Progress Administration. Construction commenced in 1939, with neighbors making the adobes and providing labor for the project. When the public schools in the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho were consolidated, the building and grounds were repurposed as the Talpa Community Center, which houses a library, meeting rooms, activity rooms, kitchen, and rooms for events and social gatherings.



Los Comanches de la Serna
“Danza del Aguila”, Talpa, 1998
Photo: Miguel Gandert

The Talpa Mutual Domestic Water Users Association was founded in the early 1950s, providing water throughout the community to 275 active members. Four wells provide water to two storage tanks at the upper end of the service area, above Maestas Road between the Deposito and the Río Chiquito.

During winter celebrations residents of the Valley of the Río Grande del Rancho continue to carry on the traditions of Los Comanches, celebrating the shared Genizaro heritage. Los Comanches de la Serna make their way from home to home in Ranchos, Llano Quemado, and Talpa sharing songs and dances passed down over generations.

History of Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos

By F.R. Bob Romero

The area of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza was and is the hub of a larger community; Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos de Taos. Although historically the southern part of Taos Valley was occupied by Native Americans living in pit houses beginning around 1000 A.D. and then at the Llano Quemado Pueblo at least until the 1300s. The Spanish settlements of the area began in the 1600s and then started again after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 A.D. The Spanish re-settlement began in 1715 as a result of the ceding of the Cristobal de la Serna and Gijosa land grants.

After the granting of those two Mercedes by the Spanish Crown the lands were used by settlers for subsistence agriculture. They planted crops and raised livestock that they had transported from Spain. Even though they lived in designated portions of the land grants they utilized the entirety of the lands for grazing and to secure needed resources.

After the death of Cristobal de la Serna in the 1720 Villasur Expedition, Serna's heirs transferred the Serna Grant to Don Diego Romero (El Coyote). The Romero family lived on the grant for several decades, and by the 1700s there was a diverse community in Ranchos de Taos (Trampas), made up of the Romero's, several Spanish families (Españoles), some Pueblo Indians, a band of Jicarilla Apache seeking refuge from the Comanche, and some detribalized plains Indians (Genizaros).

Some ranches and several haciendas were built and worked along the major tributary, (Rio de las Trampas) now El Río Grande del Rancho, and near the arable lands. The raising of crops and livestock was the major activity and pre-occupation. Acequias were constructed to irrigate crops being grown in the narrow river valleys. Twelve of these acequias remain active. It was also essential to gather firewood, building material, and other resources from the mountains.

Security and protection from the raids of the nomadic Indians, primarily the severe Comanche attacks was a main concern. Torreones or lookout towers were built to provide warnings of an impending attack. After the so-called "Taos Massacre of 1760" the settlers were forced to abandon their ranches and retreat to the Taos Pueblo for their safety and security. Beginning in the 1770s efforts were made by the authorities in Santa Fe to form enclosed plazas and by 1779 the Ranchos de Taos Plaza was completely enclosed with defensive walls.

The San Francisco de Asis Catholic Church had still not been built, although St. Francis de Assisi had been accepted as the patron saint of Ranchos since the decade of the 1750s. Although the beginning of the construction of the church is not known definitively, the church was completed and dedicated in 1815. Two penitente moradas in the vicinity are dedicated to the Ranchos church.

In 1779 the Ranchos Plaza was fortified, and in the same year Juan Bautista de Anza defeated Cuerno Verde and the Comanche, and in 1786 he then signed a peace treaty with them. The area then became relatively safe for continued settlement by the Spaniards, mixed bloods, and the diverse population of the area. The Spanish speaking population doubled by 1815, and the Ranchos community began to spread outside of the centralized plaza to form new satellite communities and plazas.

History of Talpa

Talpa was one of the new plazas established in the western part of the Serna Grant in the early 1800s. In 1803 Manuel Lucero established a community on the Río Chiquito which is a tributary of the Río Grande del Rancho. Nuestra Senora de San Juan de Río Chiquito, now San Juan de los Lagos, was built in 1828. The capilla was situated two miles east of Ranchos de Taos, and in 1838 became the area now known as Talpa when the chapel of our Lady of Talpa was established one-third of a mile away from the first chapel. Even though the two chapels were started in Talpa, the settlers continued to be parishioners of the Ranchos San Francisco de Asis church thus maintaining the cohesiveness of the people and the communities as most of them were often related and already living in Ranchos de Taos.

From this point forward the Talpa community continued to grow until the two communities of Ranchos and Talpa met, overlapped, and then completely intertwined in terms of families, customs, and traditions. Today it is difficult to determine where Talpa ends, and Ranchos begins. There is no formal line of demarcation, and the area is very cohesively tied together by, the Catholic faith, kinships, the theo-social system (compradazo), and the river and acequias that run through both communities.

Regarding infrastructure and historical structures, Talpa has its own Talpa Mutual Domestic Water Association and its own penitente morada at the Talpa Camposanto. It also has the Talpa Deposito (reservoir) and an old historic torreón just off of Highway 518. An active Talpa Community Center serves the people of Talpa.

History of Llano Quemado

Old Llano Quemado is totally within the southern reaches of the Cristobal de la Serna Land Grant, but Llano Quemado West runs westward across State Road 68 into the Gijosa Land Grant. Similar to Talpa, Llano Quemado traces its enduring European origins to the early 1820s. Indigenous occupation of the area dates back to the 1100s when native people lived in pit houses and small pueblos particularly along the Cuchilla Road ridge. Then they lived at the Llano Quemado Pueblo when it was occupied in the 1200s and 1300s. Some historical documentation indicates that an Apache mission was established in the area in the 1700s, but the location is not known, and archeological evidence of a mission has not yet surfaced.

Shortly after the Cristobal de las Serna received the land grant the land was transferred in 1724 to Don Diego Romero and was occupied by the Romero family and the array of other people that lived, mixed, and blended by the middle of the 18th century. The area has aspects and is considered by some to be a true Genizaro community.

The Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez dates to the 1820s, 1830s, or the 1840s depending on the sources. According to one source, "Therefore the ditch had certainly been begun by 1827 and likely was substantially complete by 1840." In any case the Martinez ditch brought much needed irrigation water onto the arid and scorched Llano Quemado lands.

The Llano Quemado capilla, Nuestra Senora de Mount Carmel, interchangeably known as Mount Carmen was deeded in 1864 by Antonio Ramon Medina to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe but was probably built about ten years earlier according to correspondence between local clergy and Archbishop Lamy. The Llano Quemado capilla is located only about one-half mile from the Ranchos Church, but the growth of the population by midcentury on the southwest rim of the Llano Quemado hilltop was sufficient to support the need and the construction of a new chapel.

When the Llano Quemado chapel was built, the area was still referred to as the Llano del Finado Francisco Martinez. The origin of the Llano Quemado name is uncertain, but probably is derived from a commonly used reference to the land that it was very dry and scorched, especially before the Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez was constructed. The area perhaps did experience a big fire according to local folk history. In any case by 1828, the Llano Quemado name became popular and was in common use and continues to be used to the present day.

Llano Quemado has its own mutual domestic water association and El Valle del los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District is housed in the same building next to the Llano Quemado Community Center. The Old Llano Quemado Camposanto and New Llano Quemado Camposanto serve the community, but no penitente morada remains active in the community.

History of Los Córdovas

The history of Los Córdovas is not well documented. It is a community that dates back to the early years of Spanish occupation of Taos valley. It has a very old plaza and was located along one of the earliest historical roads into the Taos Valley after the Spanish colonization in 1598. The old road climbed out of the Horseshoe similar to State Road 68 today, but then is descended toward Los Córdovas and Ranchitos Road instead of toward the Ranchos Plaza as State Road 68 does now.

The Los Córdovas community was presumably founded by a Cordova family, and now has numerous families that have lived in the vicinity for generations raising sheep and growing hay and crops. Los Córdovas is in the Gijosa Land Grant and has several acequias that provide irrigation water for the surrounding fields and gardens. Los Córdovas does not have its own mutual domestic water association although it is part of El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District as are all five of Las Comunidades Del Valle De Los Ranchos. The regional water treatment plant is located at Los Córdovas.

Los Córdovas does not have an existing Morada structure, but it does have its own camposanto and the Los Cordova Capilla was built in the 1940s at a site on Highway 240. Los Córdovas continued its long agricultural tradition when the chapel was dedicated to San Isidro, the patron saint of laborers and farmers.

History of La Cordillera

La Cordillera runs as a corridor from Rancho to Los Córdovas. It begins in the Serna Grant and runs through the Gijosa Land Grant. It is basically the road that today is State Road 240 where development and growth took place over the years along the river and the road.

La Cordillera does not have its own chapel or morada, but it does have several acequias and once had its own school building, and the still standing Durán Molino (grist mill) that remains as a reminder of the time when eleven grist mills popped up along the Río Grande del Rancho in the mid to late 1800s when Taos became the “breadbasket” of northern New Mexico. The agricultural activity taking place in Ranchos de Taos was a big part of this historical designation. La Cordillera is basically a thoroughfare that connects all the communities of Ranchos de Taos. The area continues its long agricultural tradition and history that encompasses the entire area of the original land grants. Ranchos has its own unique pastoral history and traditions that sets it apart from the rest of Taos Valley and should be designated as a Traditional Historical Community.

– by F. R. Bob Romero

NM Statute Chapter 3, Article 7, Section 3-7-1.1

Section 5: To qualify as a traditional historic community, an area shall:

“be declared a traditional historic community by an ordinance of the board of county commissioners of the county in which the petitioning village, community, neighborhood or district is located.”

Las Comunidades del Valle de Los Ranchos has met all the requirements defined by the statutes and requests designation as a Traditional Historic Community.

The documentation presented contains the necessary information to satisfy the requirements of New Mexico statute 3-7-1.1.

**PETITION REQUESTING THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF TAOS COUNTY, NEW MEXICO
TO ADOPT AN ORDINANCE DECLARING
LAS COMUNIDADES DEL VALLE DE LOS RANCHOS
(LA CORDILLERA, LLANO QUEMADO, LOS CORDOVAS, RANCHOS DE TAOS, TALPA)
A TRADITIONAL HISTORIC COMMUNITY**

Pursuant to NMSA 1978 §3-7-1.1 and 3-21-1 the undersigned petitioners state that:

1. Attached hereto and incorporated herein as Ex. 'A' is a map accurately describing territory proposed to be the traditional historic community of *Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos (La Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Cordovas, Ranchos de Taos, Talpa)*.
2. So as to establish County zoning under §3-21-1(E) and prohibit annexation by town of Taos under §3-7-1.1, Taos County Commissioners are requested to approve an ordinance declaring the territory a traditional historic community.
3. By signing this Petition, I swear or affirm that I am a resident qualified elector (registered voter) residing within the territory proposed to be declared a traditional historic community.

Date of Signature	Name (Printed)	Signature	Petitioners Registered Voter Address
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

4. Any person knowingly providing or causing to be provided any false information on this Petition, forging a signature, or signing this Petition when that person knows that they are not a resident qualified elector (registered voter), in the territory proposed to be declared a traditional historic community, is guilty of a fourth-degree felony.

January 21, 2021
Date of County Clerk Approval

Valerie Rael Montoya
Approved As To Form Only
Valerie Rael-Montoya, Taos County Clerk



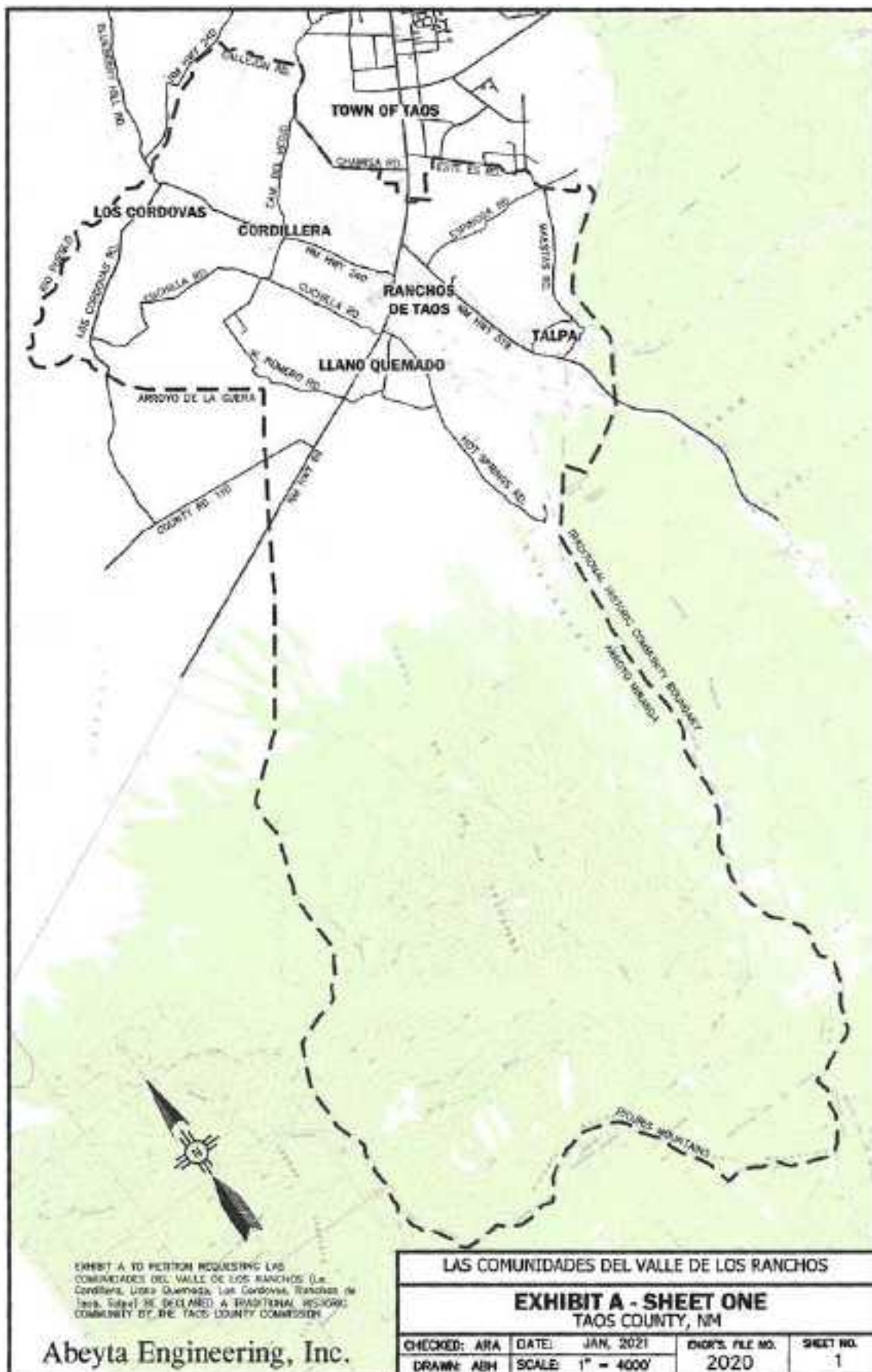


EXHIBIT A TO PETITION REQUESTING LAS
 COMUNIDADES DEL VALLE DE LOS RANCHOS (i.e.
 Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Cordovas, Ranchos de
 Taos, Talpa) BE DECLARED A TRADITIONAL RESORING
 COMMUNITY BY THE TAOS COUNTY COMMISSION

Abeyta Engineering, Inc.

LAS COMUNIDADES DEL VALLE DE LOS RANCHOS

EXHIBIT A - SHEET ONE
 TAOS COUNTY, NM

CHECKED: ARA	DATE: JAN, 2021	DRAWN'S FILE NO.	SHEET NO.
DRAWN: ABH	SCALE: 1" = 4000'	2020	1

NM Statute 3-21-1 (D) Petition Requirement Satisfied & Declaration of Ordinance

Satisfaction of Petition Requirement, NM Statute 3-21-1 (D)

NM Statute 3-21-1 Paragraph D. requirement has been met.

In accordance with New Mexico statute 3-21-1 (D), a petition requesting the designation of the “village, community, neighborhood or district” as a “traditional historic community” was presented to the Taos County Clerk and verified in a letter dated September 8, 2021 (see the following page), to have signatures in excess of 25% of the qualified electors of the territory requesting the designation.

Therefore, having fulfilled the requirements of NM Statutes 3-7-1.1 and 3-21-1 the applicant, Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association hereby requests that the Taos County Board of Commissioners declares Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos a Traditional Historical Community by County Ordinance #2022-5.



Valerie Rael Montoya
Taos County Clerk
105 Albright St., Suite D
Taos, New Mexico 87571
(575) 737-6380 FAX (575) 737-6390
valerie.montoya@taoscounty.org

September 8, 2021

Re: Petition Declaring Las Comunidades del Valle de Los Ranchos a Traditional Historic Community

To All it May Concern:

I have reviewed the signatures on the petitions which were submitted to my office on Friday, August 20, 2021, for Las Comunidades del Valle de Los Ranchos to obtain Traditional Historic status. This letter is for reference to schedule a meeting to request approval, at a future Taos County Board of Commission Meeting. Attached to each petition was an exhibit of the outlined area to be considered.

Las Comunidades del Valle de Los Ranchos did meet the 25% of total registered voters, and all signatures verified had the same physical address as the Affidavit of Registration.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Valerie Rael Montoya
Taos County Clerk

Cc: Chairwoman Candyce O'Donnell
Vice-Chair Darlene Vigil
Commissioner Jim Fambro
Commissioner Mark Gallegos
Commissioner AnJanette Brush
Brent Jaramillo, Manager
Edward Vigil, Planning Director
Randy Autio, Attorney



June 17, 2021 – La Cordillera
Photo: Hank Saxe



July 6, 2021 – Talpa Deposito
Photo: Hank Saxe



June 26, 2021 – Petition Signing
Photo: Hank Saxe

Appendix I Historic Structures and Landmarks

Acequias

Acequias	Talpa	Llano Quemado	Ranchos de Taos	La Cordillera	Los Córdovas
Number of Acequias:	11	6	7	7	6
Acequia Madre del Rio Grande					
Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez					
Acequia en Medio los Rios					
Acequia Abajo la Loma					
Emilio Chavez Ditch					
Ponce de Leon Hot Springs Ditch					
Saucito Ditch					
Talpa Reservoir Ditch					
Acequia Madre del Rio Chiquito					
Acequia del Monte del Rio Chiquito					
Acequia Antonio Maria Graham					
Acequia Lucero					
Pueblito Ditch					
Jaroso Ditch					
Acequia en Medio					
Acequia de Tio Gerbacio					
Los Cordovas Ditch #1					
Matt Hartt Ditch					
Los Cordovas Ditch #2					
Acequia de La Otro Banda					
Alamitos Ditch					
Acequia de Los Alamitos					

- Acequias irrigating 3 communities
- Acequias irrigating 2 communities
- Acequias irrigating a single community

State and National Registers of Historic Properties Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos

SR= New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties

HPD=New Mexico State Historic Preservation Division Registry Number

NR = National Register of Historic Places

HPD 833 Ranchos de Taos, Dasburg, Andrew, House and Studio SR Date 9/4/1981(not on Natl registry)



HPD 696 Ranchos de Taos (Talpa) Durán Chapel SR Date 9/1/1978 (not on Natl registry)



HPD 405 Ranchos de Taos (La Cordillera) Molino de los Duranes SR Date 8/22/1975 NR Date 2/3/2020



HPD 51 Ranchos de Taos, Ranchos de Taos Plaza SR Date 3/21/1969 NR Date 10/2/1978

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail/19725c86-61c6-4419-b711-97ae2eda3c86>

HPD 24 Ranchos de Taos, San Francisco de Assisi Mission NR Date 4/15/1970 Church NHL

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail/de1314f7-a8b5-4bc8-8789-c67608f2b108>

HPD 409 Ranchos de Taos, Vigil Torreon SR Date 8/22/1975



HPD 783 Los Córdovas San Ysidro Oratorio SR Date 9/16/ 1980 NR Date 1/5/1984



HPD 78 Ranchos de Taos (Talpa) Talpa Altar Screen SR Date 1969?



Tree Ring Dates of Historic Structures Talpa, Ranchos de Taos, and La Cordillera

A list of tree ring samples from structures in Talpa, Ranchos de Taos, and La Cordillera has been provided by Dr Thomas Windes, archaeologist and dendrochronologist, University of New Mexico.

Two properties that have been researched are included on state and federal registers of historic and cultural properties, thus knowledge of them is in the public domain. Their locations are shared. These are the Annabelle Velarde / Durán Molino which is located along Camino Abajo de la Loma and the Acequia Madre del Río Grande in La Cordillera and the Antonio José Vigil Torreón near State Highway 518 between Ranchos de Taos and Talpa.

28 timbers and vigas sampled in the Durán Molino have cutting dates of 1879 and 1880. 12 vigas in the Vigil Torreón yielded cutting dates of 1811 and 1836.

In the interest of confidentiality, names and locations of private residences and certain other structures are not revealed in this table. Should members of the Taos County Commission or Taos County Government Administration wish to see information redacted from the table, please contact the authors of this report.



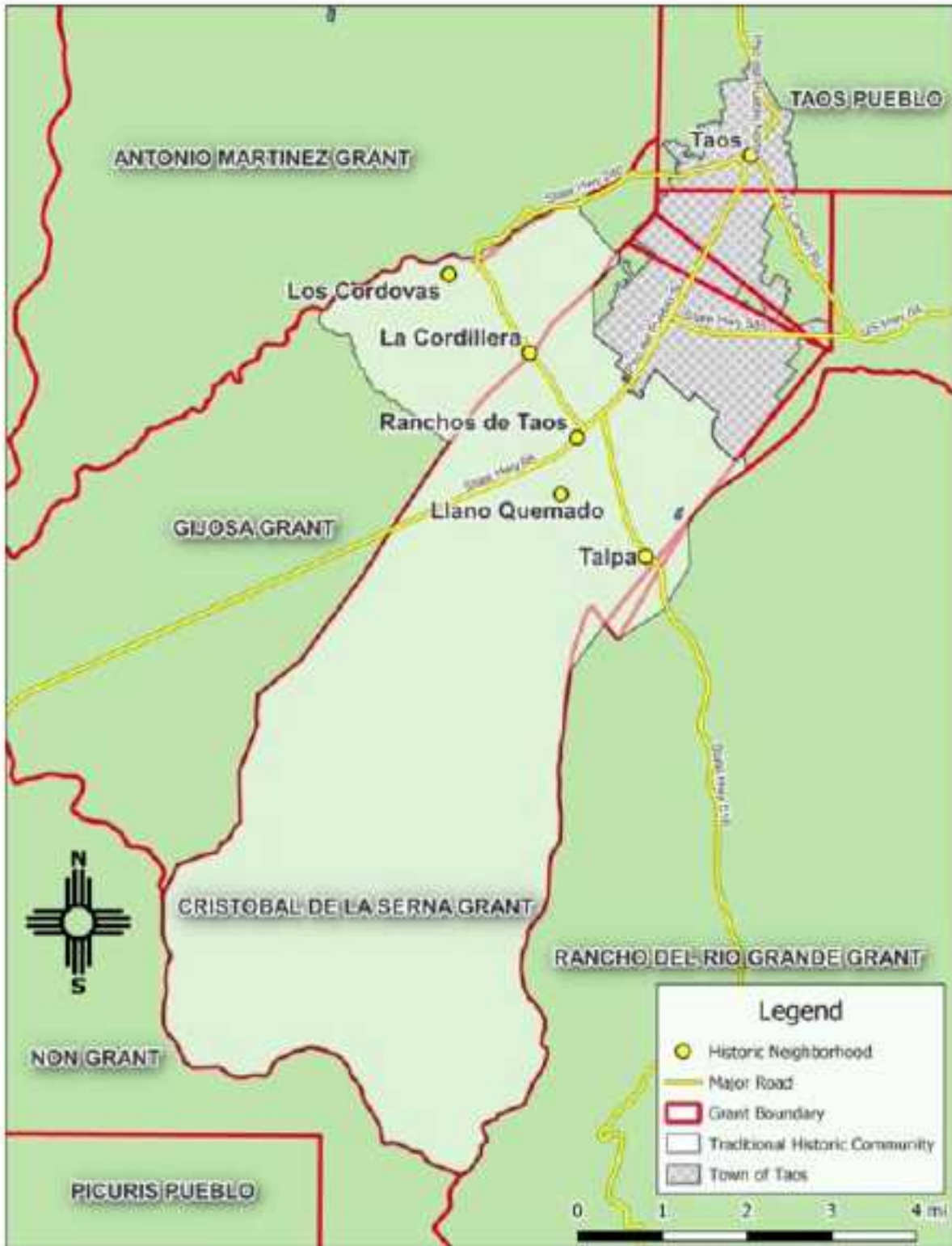
Vigas and latillas with mud roof in a house researched by Dr. Windes. These vigas are tree ring dated as having been cut 1824-1826. Latillas are “painted” with blue-tinted tierra blanca from La Cueva Blanca, south of Llano Quemado.

Photo: Hank Saxe

Note: Cutting dates shown in green are 18th century. Dates in black are 19th and 20th century. These dates give the approximate time of harvest of structural members, which in most cases are vigas or timbers used in wall construction. Cutting dates indicate the time of construction or refurbishment.

<u>Samples Obtained 2010-2018</u>	<u>Cutting Date (# of Samples)</u>
Private Residence, Espinoza Road, Ranchos de Taos	1830 (1), 1833 (1), 1843-1844 (6)
Private Residence, Valerio Road, Ranchos de Taos	1827-1829 (14), 1882-1894 (3)
Private Residence, Hwy 518, Ranchos de Taos	1835-1842 (6); 1853-1842 (3)
Durán Chapel (La Capilla de Nuestra Señora de Talpa), Talpa	1766-1781 (3); 1824-1838 (5)
Private Residence, Ranchos de Taos Plaza	1860, 1903, 1918, 1930, 1972
Private Residence, Hwy 518, Talpa	1883-1886 (14)
Private Residence, East Camino Abajo de la Loma, Ranchos de Taos	1720 (1), 1757-1758 (4), 1824-1826 (2); 1884-1885 (3)
Santistevan Fuerte, Cordillera Rd (SR 240), La Cordillera (See photo, page 27)	1888 (19)
Private Residence, Ranchos de Taos Plaza	1824-1829 (10), 1949 (4), 1955-72(2)
Private Residence, Hwy 518, Talpa	1903 (4), 1942 (15), 1958-1965 (6)
2-Story Ruin, Ranchos de Taos Plaza (See “Caretaker’s House” photo, page 87)	1774-1775 (5), 1791-1795 (82), 1808-1809 (2), 1934-1937 (2)
Inocencio Durán / Annabelle Velarde Molino along Acequia Madre del Rio Grande, W. Camino Abajo de la Loma, Ranchos de Taos (See photo, page 26)	1879 (26), 1880 (2), 1970 (2)
José Vigil Torreón, Hwy 518, Ranchos de Taos	1811 (1), 1836 (11)

Appendix II Land Grants



Three land grants have played a critical role in the history of Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos. The mercedes of Cristobal de la Serna, Francisca Antonia de Gijosa, and the Rancho del Río Grande, were all granted by the Spanish crown in the 18th century.

These land grants were made with adherence to specific requirements spelled out in Spanish law and custom. The land use concepts were codified in the Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias, which provided a template for community planning in the colonial empire of Spain. As part of the establishment of grants, guidelines controlled the siting of settlements, access to water and other resources, the distribution of private homesites and the designation of communally held and jointly utilized areas of land grants. These laws determined that the core areas of a settlement should be designed as a communal center, with individual ownership of building lots and farm plots. The arrangement of agricultural fields and the water supply network of the acequias were laid out in accordance with traditional practice, adapted to the local geography. Based in general law and reiterated in specific title documents, outlying areas of the land grants, whether they were made to communities or to individuals, were maintained as common lands, providing access to resources and pasturage for the benefit of grant residents.

Acequias were established within the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho as the necessary first steps for settlement. The boundaries of the Serna Grant and the Gijosa Grant were laid out in recognition of the potential for agriculture. The two longest acequias in the valley, the Acequia del Finado Francisco Martinez and the Acequia Madre del Río Grande, divert from the Río Grande del Rancho just upstream of the Serna Grant boundary. These two diversions were made at that location to supply water optimally to the upper reaches of the arable lands. A complex network of smaller acequias weaves through the inner valley of the Río Grande del Rancho and its upper terraces, irrigating most of the tillable ground in both land grants.

The Serna Grant encompasses all the irrigable valley lands as far as the Camino de en Medio, which forms the grant boundary on the downstream side. Below that line the Gijosa Grant includes the agricultural lands of the lower valleys of both the Río Grande del Rancho and the Río Pueblo.

The Serna and Gijosa Grants were established in the same year, and settlement of both proceeded in similar fashion, with a different set of people initially. Over time the communities which developed on these lands have become so closely associated that it is difficult to determine where one grant transitions into the next without knowing the histories.

The Rancho del Río Grande Grant was made 80 years after the Serna and Gijosa. It was intended to safeguard the water supply for residents of the lower valley, and to provide pasture lands and forest resources for them. An anomaly among grants in the Taos Valley, the Rancho del Río Grande Grant was scarcely populated in the nineteenth century but served as an adjunct to existing communities. In the 20th century the grant heirs lost ownership and the property came under the control of industrial logging operators. Except for a small enclave of private land along the Río Grande del Rancho in Pot Creek, and an area comprising about 270 acres along the southeastern fringe of Talpa, the grant was eventually sold to the federal government and added into the Carson National Forest. While the communities whose members petitioned for it in 1795 did not expand into its boundaries and no longer control the grant, it still provides a buffer and protects the headwaters of the Río Grande del Rancho and the Río Chiquito from diversion and consumptive use.

Among the three grants, only the heirs of the Cristobal de la Serna Grant have been able to retain most of their common lands outside of the populated areas. Grant heirs still consider the area between Llano Quemado and the crest of the Picuris Mountain as an integral part of the community.

Cristobal de la Serna Grant

A grant of land that extended into the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho was made to Don Fernando Durán y Cháves in the 1600s, but the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 resulted in the abandonment of that landholding. Subsequently Cristobal de la Serna, a soldier garrisoned in Santa Fe, who had done tours of duty in the Taos Valley from time to time, petitioned for a grant of lands covering the same area as the Durán y Cháves rancho. In 1710 Captain Serna's petition was accepted, but military duties in the field kept him from taking possession of the land. It was revalidated in 1715, as the oldest non-Pueblo grant in the Taos Valley.

Serna did not utilize his grant and died on a military reconnaissance expedition into the Great Plains in 1720. His widow sold the land to Diego Romero, nicknamed El Coyote, in 1724. Members of the Romero family set up a hacienda, Talachia, presumably in the vicinity of the site where the plaza of San Francisco de las Trampas was later established.

Settlement occurred in the valley bottom and terraces which could be irrigated by acequias. Outlying upland areas of the grant were set aside for communal uses, primarily pasturage, fuel wood and timber gathering. These land use guidelines were advanced in the *Recopilación de Leyes de Los Reynos de las Indias* and were in general practice in New Mexico, whether the grant was made to an individual or to a community. In the case of Captain Serna's grant of 1715, when Governor Juan Ignacio Flores Mogollon approved the transaction, he stipulated that "the pastures and water are to be common". A half century later, in 1764, heirs of Diego Romero partitioned the estate and title papers again noted that the "pastures, woods, and watering places.... (were) free and common to them."

In response to Comanche raids in the mid-1700s, a fortified plaza of San Francisco de las Trampas (Ranchos de Taos) was constructed, with residences enclosed inside the walls. Once raiding diminished and residents didn't need to shelter in the protective plaza the population began to disperse. Satellite settlements were made in Llano Quemado and Río Chiquito (Talpa), close to acequias and arable lands. The population of the Serna Grant increased from 1290 residents in 1837 to approximately 3000 residents some four decades later in 1876, larger than the population of Don Fernando de Taos and environs.

The Serna Grant heirs filed a petition for confirmation of the grant in 1887. The papers filed at that time provided statistics: the population of the main village of Ranchos de Taos was said to be upwards of 1000, with other small settlements or communities located on the grant. The grant was confirmed as a private, rather than community, grant in 1892. The survey made in 1894 found that the grant contained 22,232 acres. A patent was finally issued in 1903, recognizing the rights of 302 individuals as heirs to the grant.

In 1924 an association was formed to protect the interests of members and owners of lands within the Serna Grant. Some of the members of the grant had described the locations of lineas that extended from the valley into the uplands of the Picuris Mountain, as early as 1876. The 1941 New Mexico Reassessment Survey formalized the assignment of these lineas, dividing the whole of the grant into individually assessed parcels so that the whole acreage of the grant could be taxed, in accordance with the state government's position that the lands of the grant were all private. The lineas represented a distribution of the previously un-surveyed lands among the 302 identified owners and heirs. Many of the members of the organization regarded these upland areas of the grant as common lands, according to tradition and records from the period before American conquest. Litigation stemmed from this controversy, with the Eighth District Court deciding in 1983 that the Serna Grant is a private, not a community land grant. Approximately 5000 acres of unpopulated lands in the Miranda Canyon area of the Serna Grant were transferred to the Carson National Forest in 2015. Despite the division of the upland areas of the grant into individually owned parcels, some

members of the Serna Grant association utilize the area as commonly held pastureland, continuing to graze livestock in the area in season.

Francisca Antonia de Gijosa Grant

The same year that Captain Serna received his grant in 1715, Senora Francisca Antonia de Gijosa obtained title to a grant of land which bordered the Serna Grant, ostensibly to pasture her livestock on. Sra. Gijosa acquired lands which had previously been occupied by Bartolomeo Romero, abandoned since the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Governor Juan Ignacio Flores Mogollon approved the petition for her private grant, stipulating that the pastures and waters were to remain common.

Apparently, the land was not utilized by Sra. Gijosa, and she sold to Baltasar Trujillo ten years later. Trujillo sold to Baltasar Romero, and through a succession of owners, the arable lands were parceled out and farmed. In 1752 Romero made a sale of the grant to five parties, and the documents for the partition of the property specified that the cultivable lands were to be divided among the owners while the remainder of the grant was to be held in common as pasture for livestock. Settlement was concentrated around the Plaza of Los Cordovas and in the irrigated valley lands along the Río Pueblo and Río Grande del Rancho, in the areas of Los Alamitos, Lower Ranchitos and La Cordillera. The arable lands served by acequias were maintained as private holdings within the grant, while the open pastures outside of inhabited and farmed areas were considered common lands.

Felix Romero, on behalf of himself and other owners, filed a petition with the Court of Private Land Claims in 1892, for confirmation of their claim to the Gijosa Grant. The petition asserted that many people lived on the grant and held portions of it in severalty, with undivided interest in the common lands outside of the tillable areas. The grant was confirmed to the heirs and their legal representative in the following year. However, by 1908, when title for the grant was patented, the common lands had been alienated from the heirs. Most of the non-arable lands were re-sold in real estate promotions but remained unoccupied for the next seventy years. The outlying areas of the Gijosa Grant remained in use by local residents as free-range pasturage for livestock into the 1960s.

Rancho del Río Grande Grant

In 1795 the Rancho del Río Grande Grant was made in response to a petition by Nicolas Leal on behalf of ten families, residents of the valley of the Río Grande del Rancho and Río Chiquito, for lands in the mountainous watersheds above their homes and farms. The premise of the request was unusual in that a primary purpose of the grant was to secure the waters against competitive use by others. In their request for control and ownership of “the Río Grande place” the petitioners cited their need for pastures and waters for their livestock, but notably, that “the source of the river is becoming smaller, and there are years too when it becomes dry”. Thus, the grant was intended to protect the acequia users of the valley from potential upstream diversions.

Residents of the valley would also use the grant for grazing, timber, and fuelwood collection. Among the stipulations in the decree of possession, the grantees were commanded to equip themselves with firearms and arrows, and after two years, for all to have firearms, as a defensive populace on the edge of the Taos Valley. The recipients of the grant were instructed that “said place be common, not only for them, but for all the neighbors who might join them in the future” and again, “that the pastures and watering places be common”. Very little permanent settlement occurred on the Rancho del Río Grande Grant during the period of Spanish and Mexican authority.

In 1837 Nicolas Sandoval, on behalf of himself and ten other residents of the area petitioned the Mexican Government for a grant of unoccupied land at the junction of the Rito de la Olla and the Río Grande del Rancho, within the already established Rancho del Río Grande Grant. The Taos Ayuntamiento and Governor Perez rejected the request, because of the scarcity of water and the harm that additional use would cause to the 300 families in the “Department of the Río de las Trampas” downstream. The Ayuntamiento noted the priority of the Rancho del Grande Grant, made to residents of the valley, who had not extended settlement into it or farmed it due to limited water availability.

The Rancho del Río Grande Grant was patented in 1909. The heirs lost the grant and title passed to timber operators and, except for a few hundred acres of land at Pot Creek and on the edge of Talpa, to the United States Forest Service in 1961. Nonetheless, it remains as an external headwaters reserve preventing consumptive use of the rivers before they reach the Serna and Gijosa Grants.



View of Picuris Peak, Arroyo Miranda, and Cuchilla del Ojo from Talpa, 1934

Photo: John Collier, Jr.

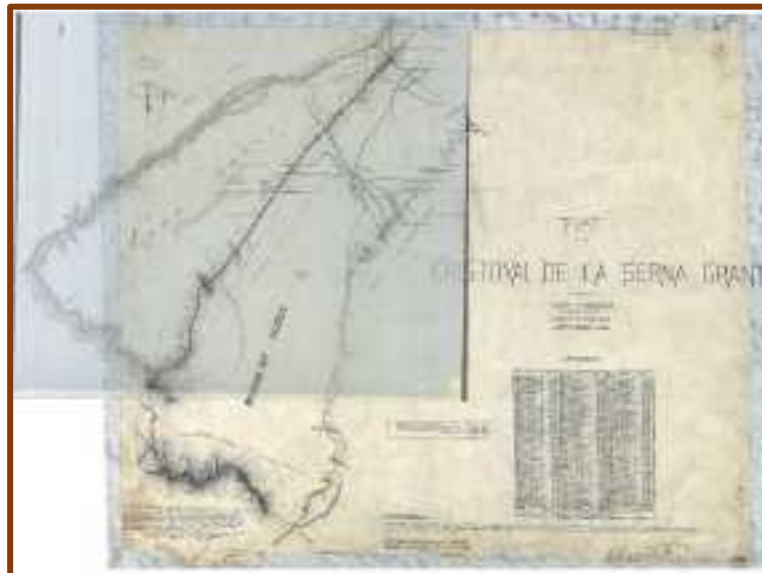
Appendix III
Notes on U.S. Government Land Office Surveys
1894 - 1901



Map of Gijosa Grant – Jay Turley, U.S.D.S. - 1901



Plat of Cristoval de la Serna Grant
John H. Walker, U.S.D.S. - 1894



Overlay of Gijosa Grant Map and Serna Grant Plat

Refer to Appendix V for larger scale maps.

Notes on US Government Land Office Surveys of La Cordillera

La Cordillera is situated on two adjacent grants, the Gijosa and Cristobal de la Serna. The United States Surveyor General contracted three surveys of the Gijosa and Cristobal de la Serna Grants over a seven-year period, from 1894 to 1901. Two surveys of the Gijosa Grant were made, the first by Albert F. Easley in 1896, with a second resurvey by Jay Turley made in 1901. The Easley and Turley surveys are especially

concerned with detail along grant boundaries, and attention was paid to physical features and structures along the exteriors of the grants. Certain internal features were recorded as well. Roads, buildings, acequias, orchards and fields were noted and drawn, with attention paid to houses and fields along the Camino de en Medio or Middle Road in the Easley survey plat. Fields, an orchard, acequias and a wheat field along Camino de en Medio or Middle Road are shown on the Turley plat. The Road from Ranchos de Taos to Los Córdovas, the route of the present-day State Road 240, is identified by name on the Turley survey and is drawn on both surveys. Several acequias are indicated on both surveys at the point where they cross the Camino de en Medio or Middle Road.

The Cristobal de la Serna Grant was surveyed by John H. Walker in 1894. The Walker survey shows a half dozen acequias crossing from the Serna Grant into the Gijosa Grant in the area of La Cordillera. The settlement of La Cordillera is shown on the Walker survey as the line of houses running in a northwesterly direction from "Rancho de Taos" towards the Camino de en Medio or Middle Road. This line of houses, La Cordillera, runs parallel to the Río Grande del Rancho, on its northeast side. Walker's survey does not show the location of the road from Ranchos de Taos to Los Córdovas. Matching the location of the road on the surveys of the Gijosa Grant, where it intersects the Camino de en Medio / Middle Road puts it running through the group of houses, La Cordillera, as it connects with the settlement at "Rancho de Taos".

Though many houses are shown on the Walker survey, indicating the settlements of La Cordillera, Ranchos de Taos, Llano Quemado, and Talpa, only one settlement, "Rancho de Taos" (sic) is identified by name.

Notes on US Government Land Office Surveys of Llano Quemado

Llano Quemado is situated within the Cristobal de la Serna Grant. The United States Surveyor General contracted with John H. Walker to survey the Serna Grant in 1894. The Walker survey is principally concerned with recording and showing detail along grant boundaries, with most attention paid to locations of certain physical features on or near edges of the grant. Features in the interior of the Grant were not located with precision, and that was not the purpose of the work that was contracted. Certain features: roads, buildings, acequias, fields and rivers appear on the survey plat, but give more of an indication of the pattern of settlement and agricultural activities, rather than a detailed record with exact locations. Nonetheless, the plat shows a pattern of human activity that existed well before the visit by the US Government surveyor.

An acequia is shown entering the grant from the southeast, below a mountain (the Cuchilla del Ojo), with "cult. (cultivated) land" lying between it and the Río Grande del Rancho. Though not labeled, this is the Acequia Madre del Finado Francisco Martinez.

The Walker Survey identifies "Rancho de Taos" (sic), the densest cluster of structures near the Río Grande del Rancho but does not name any other settlements within the Serna Grant. Roads which lead to other groups of structures converge on the center of "Rancho de Taos" (sic). The settlements shown clearly represent Talpa and Llano Quemado, though they are not identified on the survey. A road that is shown leading southward from "Rancho de Taos", across the Río Grande del Rancho, clearly is Hot Springs Road, and there are a dozen structures shown alongside it.

Notes on US Government Land Office Surveys of Los Córdovas

Los Córdovas is situated within the Gijosa Grant. The United States Surveyor General contracted two surveys of the Gijosa Grant over a five-year period, from 1896 to 1901. Two surveys of the Gijosa Grant were made, the first by Albert F. Easley in 1896, with a second resurvey by Jay Turley made in 1901. The Easley and Turley surveys are especially concerned with detail along grant boundaries, and attention was paid to physical features and structures along the exteriors of the grants. Certain internal features were recorded as well. Roads, buildings, acequias, orchards and fields were noted and drawn, with attention paid to houses and fields along the Camino de en Medio or Middle Road in the Easley survey plat. Fields, an orchard, acequias and a wheat field along Camino de en Medio or Middle Road are shown on the Turley plat. The Road from Ranchos de Taos to Los Córdovas, the route of the present-day State Road 240, is identified by name on the Turley survey and is drawn on both surveys. Several acequias are indicated on both surveys at the point where they cross the Camino de en Medio or Middle Road, and at diversion points on the Río Pueblo. The Los Alamitos Acequia and the dam at the head of Anderson's Mill Ditch are shown on the Turley survey.

The Easley survey shows the "Plaza de los Cordoves" (sic) and its church, located along the Road from Taos to Santa Fe. On the Turley survey Los Córdovas is shown, with the densest cluster of structures on the north side of the road, and several structures on the south side of the road as well.

Notes on the US Government Land Office Survey of Ranchos de Taos

Ranchos de Taos is situated within the Cristobal de la Serna Grant. The United States Surveyor General contracted with John H. Walker to survey the Serna Grant in 1894. The Walker survey is principally concerned with recording and showing detail along grant boundaries, with most attention paid to locations of certain physical features on or near edges of the grant. Features in the interior of the Grant were not located with precision, and that was not the purpose of the work that was contracted. Certain features: roads, buildings, acequias, fields and rivers appear on the survey plat, but give more of an indication of the pattern of settlement and agricultural activities, rather than a detailed record with exact locations. Nonetheless, the plat shows a pattern of human activity that existed well before the visit by the US Government surveyor.

Acequias are shown crossing the Camino de en Medio or Middle Road between the Callejon and the Río Grande del Rancho. Acequias are also shown entering the grant from the east and north, but their paths within the interior are not mapped.

The Walker Survey identifies "Rancho de Taos" (sic), the densest cluster of structures near the Río Grande del Rancho but does not name any other settlements within the Serna Grant. Roads which lead to the unnamed clusters of structures which represent Talpa, and Llano Quemado converge on the center of "Rancho de Taos" where a mill is shown, larger than any other structures. This is likely the large steam powered mill that Alexander GUSDORF built to the southeast of the San Francisco de Asis church in 1879. The mill burned the year after Walker made the survey. Some two dozen structures are shown in the area around the crossroads and along the northeast side of the river. Roads that are shown leading out from the center of "Rancho de Taos" correlate with the present-day Espinosa, La Morada, and Valerio Roads.

Notes on the US Government Land Office Survey of Talpa

Talpa is situated within the Cristobal de la Serna Grant. The United States Surveyor General contracted with John H. Walker to survey the Serna Grant in 1894. The Walker survey is principally concerned with recording and showing detail along grant boundaries, with most attention paid to locations of certain physical features on or near edges of the grant. Features in the interior of the Grant were not located with precision, and that was not the purpose of the work that was contracted. Certain features: roads, buildings, acequias, fields and rivers appear on the survey plat, but give more of an indication of the pattern of settlement and agricultural activities, rather than a detailed record with exact locations. Nonetheless, the plat shows a pattern of human activity that existed well before the visit by the US Government surveyor.

Three acequias are shown entering the Serna Grant from the Rancho del Río Grande Grant on the southeast. "Cult. (cultivated) land" is indicated within the grant, extending between the northeastern-most acequia and the Río Grande del Rancho. The acequia which diverts from the Río Chiquito divides into two sister acequias before entering the Serna grant. These are the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito and the Acequia del Monte del Río Chiquito, both drawn on the survey plat but not identified other than by "acequia". The third acequia shown on the Walker survey entering the Serna Grant in Talpa is the Acequia Madre del Río Grande, located between the road from Ranchos de Taos to the Rancho del Río Grande Grant and the Río Grande del Rancho.

The Walker Survey identifies "Rancho de Taos" (sic), the densest cluster of structures near the Río Grande del Rancho but does not name any other settlements within the Serna Grant. The group of structures shown on the survey to the southeast of "Rancho de Taos" clearly represents Talpa, though it is not identified on the survey. Roads are shown leading eastward branching off from the main road which runs from Ranchos de Taos to the Rancho del Río Grande Grant. These roads correlate to Espinoza Road and La Morada Road, both running from Ranchos de Taos into Talpa, and Ortiz and Archuleta Roads, which run alongside the Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito in Talpa. Several structures are drawn alongside these roads in Talpa, with a couple more drawn in near the Río Chiquito among the agricultural fields.

Appendix IV Letters of Support

Acequia #1 De Los Córdovas

Acequia De Abajo La Loma

Acequia de Tio Gerbacio

Acequia del Monte del Río Chiquito

Acequia Madre del Río Grande Newsletter

Acequia Madre del Río Chiquito

Del Norte Liquors, Inc.

El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District

Llano Quemado Community Center

Llano Quemado Mutual Domestic Water Users Association

Llano Quemado Mutual Domestic Water Users Association Newsletter

Old Spanish Trail Association

Ranchos de Taos Mutual Domestic Water Users Association

Talpa Community Center Association

Talpa Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association

El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District Customer Letter

Acequia # 1 De Los Cordovas

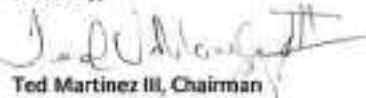
January 8, 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

We, the commissioners and Mayordomo of Acequia # 1 De Los Cordovas, write this letter of support for Las Comunidades Del Valle De Los Ranchos in our cooperative effort to acquire the designation as a Traditional Historic Community.

The communities of Ranchos have a rich social fabric and are connected by history, culture, and traditions. Ranchos is still a pre-dominantly rural area and has its own unique pastoral history and historical structures and landmarks such as the acequias that sets it apart from the rest of Taos Valley. Ranchos is a historic unincorporated area with a distinct character that should be protected and designated as a Traditional Historic Community.

Sincerely,



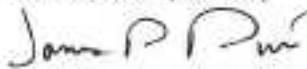
Ted Martinez III, Chairman



Armando Valerio, Treasurer



F.R. Bob Romero, Secretary



James Duran, Mayordomo

ACEQUIA DE ABAJO LA LOMA


November 30, 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

We, the commissioners of Acequia de Abajo La Loma, write this letter of support for Las Comunidades Del Valle De Los Ranchos in our cooperative effort to acquire the Designation as a Traditional Historic Community.

The communities of Ranchos, including Llano Quemado and Talpa through which our acequia flows, have a rich social fabric and are connected by history, culture, and traditions. Ranchos is still a predominantly rural area and has its own unique pastoral history and historical structures and landmarks such as the acequia that sets it apart from the rest of Taos Valley. Ranchos is a historic unincorporated area with a distinct character that should be protected and designated as a Traditional Historic Community.

Sincerely,


Steve Torres, President


Adelaido "Toby" Romero, Treasurer


Amy B. Gonzales, Secretary

To: Taos County Commission

From: Acequia de Tio Gerbacio Commission

Date: January 25, 2022

Re: Gerbacio Ditch commission supports the Ranchos Communities Neighborhood Association in their effort to designate the area a historical district.

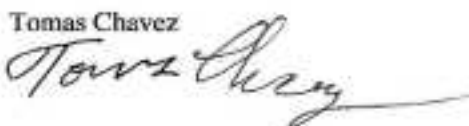
This letter, from the Gerbacio Ditch Commission to Taos County Commission, supports the effort of the Ranchos Neighborhood Association in their effort to designate the area a historical district.

Acequia de Tio Gerbacio diverts from the east bank of diversion of the Rio Grande del Rancho on Tract #48. Priority date established but not confirmed was 1698. However, on February 19, 2004, the United States District Court for the District of New Mexico, Rio Hondo/Rio Taos Adjudication, the court entered a Memorandum Opinion and Order (4419) that adopted a priority date of 1760 for the Acequia de Tio Gerbacio.

We, the Acequia de Tio Gerbacio Commission, hope you consider this information helpful in your decision making.

Sincerely,


Mario Barela

Tomas Chavez


Armando Valerio


Acequia del Monte del Rio Chiquito
362 Espinoza Rd.
Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557

February 12th, 2022

Taos County Board of Commissioners

LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT FOR DESIGNATION OF TRADITIONAL HISTORIC
COMMUNITY OF LAS COMUNIDADES DEL VALLE DE LOS RANCHOS

Dear Taos County Commissioners, County Manager and Planning Director

Whereas the Acequia del Monte del Rio Chiquito has been in existence for centuries and continues to be an active and vital entity within the boundaries outlined in the application and whereas the Acequia del Monte del Rio Chiquito is evidence of historical use in the communities of Talpa and Ranchos the Commission of the Acequia del Monte del Rio Chiquito does hereby endorse and fully support the application by Las Comunidades Del Valle De Los Ranchos for Traditional Historic Community designation.

We respectfully ask for your support in approving this designation as soon as possible.

Respectfully,


Commission Chair
John MacArthur
575-758-8366


Treasurer
Art Coca
575-770-7682


Secretary
Carlos Arguello
575-741-0450


Mayordomo
Victor Romo
575-224-5262

Acequia Madre del Rio Grande del Rancho Newsletter Summer 2021

Current Projects:

- The Acequia Board met with Peter Vigil from Taos Soil & Water Conservation District (TSWCD), and Sam DesGeorges who is our appointed liaison for the Acequia Wier construction. If you're not familiar with this project, it is reconstructing the diversion dam at the entrance of Pot Creek to Talpa. This project will be started this fall after water distribution is ended, and it is a joint project with El Finado Francisco Martinez Acequia, and the two smaller ditches La Acequia Al Medio De Los Dos Rios & La Acequia Abajo De La Loma. We will need to raise some funds as the project will be over \$100,000. TSWCD will help us with 85%, and we will need to ask for assistance from the NM Interstate Stream Commission who will possibly help us with some funds, and then the balance will be up to our ditches to come up with. All in all, we have a rough estimate of \$20,000 we need to raise. If everyone pays their acequia dues, we will start to see light at the end of the tunnel! This project will help all of us. Right now, the water that should be going into the Acequia's is going into the river and we have less water to irrigate with.

• Community Information:

A Community action which can be a benefit for all of us, and will help us protect and preserve our acequias and agricultural lands for our residents in the historic communities, is through the proposed Historical District to include Talpa, El Rio Chiquito, El Trus, Ranchos, Llano Quemado, La Cordillera, Los Cordovas, El Sunshine and Los Alamitos. You may have seen that El Prado has already been approved by the Taos County Commission. We started working on this several years ago, but the legislature never heard our request, and in the last 3 or 4 yrs. The Ranchos Neighborhood Assoc. has taken a lead on this and will be asking for signatures to present to the County Commission sometime soon, and make known our desire & request to protect our historical communities, and keep the Town of Taos from going further with their finger annexation, and possibly even claiming our waters. If you would like more information and are interested in helping them get the info out & signatures needed, contact Hank Saxe or Cynthia Patterson @ saxspatterson@gmail.com.

Thank you for helping preserve our agricultural lands, pray for snow & rain so that we can have an abundance of feed for our families and livestock.

Sincerely,

Beverly Armas, Chair
beverlyarmas@talpa.com
(575) 425-1100 home
(575) 224-5315 cell

**Acequia Madre del Rio Chiquito
Supports the Designation of
Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos as a Traditional Historic Community
by an Ordinance of the Taos County Commission**

February 12, 2022

The Acequia Madre del Rio Chiquito, serving the irrigated lands of Talpa and Ranchos de Taos, fully supports and endorses the submission of a petition to the Taos County Commission requesting designation of the neighborhoods of the Ranchos Valley as a Traditional Historic Community as provided for by New Mexico statute. The unincorporated neighborhoods of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, La Cordillera, Talpa, and Los Cordovas would be collectively designated as "**Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community**" under New Mexico law.

Within these distinctive neighborhoods, the interwoven acequia system comprises one of the most unique cooperative resource sharing systems in the nation. It is also one of our oldest systems of self-governance. Water sharing, maintaining the ditches, and enjoying the abundance and beauty that derives from irrigated land is a legacy we are proud to represent. It is also a legacy we pledge to protect.

We agree with Sylvia Rodriguez', who writes in *Acequia: Water Sharing, Sanctity, and Place*, "that the New Mexico acequia or irrigation communities involve a moral system, a way of life, and an attachment to place. This is why acequia associations resist the loss or transfer of water rights away from the ditches to nonagricultural use: it threatens the integrity of the whole, by removing not only water from the system, but also labor and participation from the ongoing communal effort to maintain the ditches."

The mayordomos of northern New Mexico's acequia system have always personified the spirit of community leadership and mutual welfare. We see ourselves as stewards of precious water resources and keepers of an important tradition. Within Los Comunidades, we see many, many families that share this dedication to the land, our culture, our way of life. Everyone in our community – residents, visitors, and our neighbors in the Town of Taos – is enriched by the continued existence and viability of the acequias.

Upon approval by the Taos County Commission, the designation will protect our neighborhoods from annexation by the Town of Taos. The Town will no longer be able to initiate annexation of any territory within **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**. The granting of a Traditional Historic Community (THC) designation requires twenty-five percent of registered voters within the community boundary to sign a petition requesting designation.


As leaders and parcientes dedicated to the preservation and continuation of the acequia way of life, we strongly urge residents of these neighborhoods sign the petition requesting that the Taos County Commission grant **Traditional Historic Community** status to **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**.

Sincerely,


Commission Chair
Darryl Maestas
575-779-7148


Treasurer
Cynthia Patterson
575-770-7096


Secretary
Tommy Tafoya
505-692-0423


Mayordomo
Aaron Romero
575-779-5162

Del Norte Liquors Inc
1574 Paseo del Pueblo Sur
Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557
575/758-8904
February 28, 2021

Taos County Commissioners

Dear Commissioners:

We support the Traditional Historic Community designation for the communities of Ranchos de Taos, Talpa, Llano Quemado, La Cordillera and Los Córdovas. Our family owned and run business has been operating since 1974. We want to preserve our community with small businesses, homes and rural areas.

Sincerely,

Jordan Gallego
John P. Roman



El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District
P.O. Box 2797 Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557

Ph: (575) 751.1700/Fax: (575) 751.1690
E-mail: valranchos@qwestoffice.net
#8 Miranda Canyon Road, Llano Quemado, NM

Board Members
Gabriel J. Romero, Chairman
F.R. Bob Romero, Vice Chairman
Delfino "Del" Torres, Secretary/Treasurer
Andrew Chavez, Board Member
Phillip Maestas, Board Member

November 12, 2020

Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association
c/o Hank Saxe
P.O. Box 15
Taos, New Mexico 87571

Dear Mr. Saxe:

Thank you to you and the other representatives of the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association for your efforts in establishing a Traditional Historic Community (THC) for the communities included in the EL Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District (the District) boundaries.

As you are aware, the El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District is dedicated to preserving the resources and character of the 5 communities it serves; Ranchos de Taos, Llano Quemado, La Cordillera, Los Cordovas and Talpa. We recognize the historical significance of these communities and recognize your efforts to establish a THC as a positive action toward preserving the character of these communities.

The District was created in 1979 and the geographical boundaries have been in place since that time. Since 1997 the District has worked diligently to obtain funding to build sanitary sewer infrastructure and water transmission lines. To date we have built over 25 miles of sewer main and over 5 miles of water main. We currently serve over 1000 sewer and water customers. The establishment of a THC is in line with our overall vision.

We issue this letter of support of your efforts in establishing a Traditional Historic Community using the well-established boundaries of the District as the boundaries for the Traditional Historic Community.

Again, thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors of the El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District

**Llano Quemado Community Center Board
Supports the Designation of
Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos as a Traditional Historic Community
by an Ordinance of the Taos County Commission**

March 8, 2022

The Llano Quemado Community Center Board, applauds and endorses the petition to the Taos County Commission for designation of the Ranchos Valley as a Traditional Historic Community. The unincorporated neighborhoods of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, La Cordillera, Talpa, and Los Cordovas would be collectively designated as "**Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**" under New Mexico law.

Upon approval by the Taos County Commission, the designation will protect our communities from annexation by the Town of Taos. The Town will no longer be able to initiate annexation of any territory within **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**. More than twenty-five percent of registered voters within the community boundary have signed a petition requesting The Traditional Historic Community (THC) designation thus meeting the New Mexico law requirement.

Everyone who resides in northern New Mexico understands that solutions to issue that arise in our communities are more effective when these solutions are developed locally. For hundreds of years the people from these communities have worked together to ensure the very existence of their inhabitants. A perfect example is the symbiotic relationship that has existed between large landowners and small land owners in the upkeep of the acequia systems in these communities. The large landowners usually have been the members of the acequia commissions while the smaller land owners historically provided the workers to help maintain the acequias.

We believe that people working together locally and supporting their community is the best way to ensure that our way of life and the beauty of **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos** continues. Honoring our traditions of local governance and land/water stewardship is the right path to ensure the future of our communities for generations to come.

We urge the Taos County Commission to designate the unincorporated neighborhoods of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, La Cordillera, Talpa, and Los Cordovas as a Traditional Historic Community to be known as "**Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**" as allowed under New Mexico law.


Andrew D Chavez, President

Board of Directors

Llano Quemado Community Center

**Llano Quemado Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association
Supports the Designation of
Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos as a Traditional Historic Community
by an Ordinance of the Taos County Commission**

June 1, 2021

The Llano Quemado Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (MDWCA), serving the domestic water needs of the Llano Quemado area, applauds, and endorses the petition to the Taos County Commission for designation of the Ranchos Valley as a Traditional Historic Community. The unincorporated neighborhoods of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, La Cordillera, Talpa, and Los Cordovas would be collectively designated as "**Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**" under New Mexico law.

Upon approval by the Taos County Commission, the designation will protect our communities from annexation by the Town of Taos. The Town will no longer be able to initiate annexation of any territory within **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**. The Traditional Historic Community (THC) designation requires twenty-five percent of registered voters within the community boundary to sign a petition requesting designation.

Everyone who resides in northern New Mexico understands the significance of the phrase, *Agua es vida* (Water is life) and why our forefathers coined the phrase, *Agua es la sangre de la tierra*. (Water is the blood of the earth). For centuries, our communities' culture, character, and beauty have been shaped by the availability and use of water.

Mutual Domestic Water Consumer Associations (MDWCAs) began to form in New Mexico in the early 1900s based on community need to provide safe and affordable water to local residents. These associations have significant responsibilities under the law, but the purpose that best serves residents is that local water consumers band together to collectively address their water needs.

We believe that water managed locally is the best way to ensure that our way of life and the beauty of **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos** continues. Honoring our traditions of local governance and land/water stewardship is the right path to ensure the future of our communities for generations to come.

We urge residents to sign the petition as an important means of ensuring our communities continue to govern themselves locally, while recognizing that for **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**, indeed, "*Agua es Vida*".

Board of Directors

Llano Quemado Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association

Llano Quemado MDWCA
P O Box 638
Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico 87557
Newsletter
March 7, 2021

Dear Member/Water User:

We are writing you this letter to inform you about the subject of "Traditional Historic Community designation" and how it may apply to our community of Llano Quemado.

You may have read in a recent issue of the Taos News that the Taos County Commission approved a request from the community of El Prado to be designated a Traditional Historic Community. El Prado was seeking this designation to protect the community from being annexed by the Town of Taos and being required to follow the requirements and regulations imposed by the Town.

El Prado sought this designation using a New Mexico Statute that allows for this designation. The statute originally only applied to certain counties in the state and not Taos County. In 2019 the statute was amended to apply to all New Mexico counties through legislation sponsored by Senator Roberto Gonzales and others and approved by the Governor. In order to be designated a Traditional Historic Community, a community must have at least 100 years of history as a community, demonstrated by a "distinctive character or traditional quality" and "structures and landmarks" that can be identified within the area.

As you may be aware the Town of Taos through the years has been extending its boundary in a southerly direction toward Ranchos de Taos and is now down to Mante's La Cocina. The Town has already expressed its desire to extend its boundary further unto State Highway 240.

There is currently an ongoing effort to have the communities of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, Talpa, La Cordillera, and Los Cordovas to join together as "Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos" and together ask the Taos County Commission to designate "Las Comunidades de El Valle de los Ranchos" a Traditional Historic Community. These communities clearly meet the requirements of the law to be designated as such. If approved, this designation would protect this communities from being annexed by the Town of Taos. This designation does not create any new restriction regarding the use of your land. The residents of "Las Comunidades de El Valle de los Ranchos" would continue to have a voice through County Government regarding land use planning as we do now.

One of the requirements in seeking the designation is a petition signed by 25% of the registered voters from Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, Talpa, La Cordillera, and Los Cordovas supporting this designation.

As your representatives on the Llano Quemado MDWCA Board we support the effort described above. We encourage you as members of our community to personally support "Las Comunidades de El Valle de los Ranchos" being designated a "Traditional Historic Community". In the near future we will be coming to you to ask you to sign the petition described above.

If you have any questions regarding the information presented above, please call Andrew Chavez at 575 613-3678.

Please stay safe. Don't forget to wear your face mask and maintain a safe distance from others when you are out in public and around others.

Sincerely,
Andrew D. Chavez, Board President



September 20, 2021

To Taos County Commissioners:

Old Spanish National Historic Trail (OSNHT) was added to the National Trails System by Congress in 2002. This trail celebrates the important role of trade between the Mexican territories of Nuevo Mexico and Alta California from 1829 to 1848. It followed ancient Native American footpaths, and in their trading tradition, helped to stitch the states it crossed (New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and California) into the fabric of a United States.

Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community is a vital historic link in the Old Spanish National Historic Trail corridor.

Numerous threads of the OSNHT weave their way through the area, and the historic Ranchos Church and Martinez Hacienda are vital points of interest in interpreting the trail. Comanche warriors made frequent use of these trails throughout the 1700s as they raided the area, then traded the same goods at Taos Pueblo. Ancient trails through Miranda Canyon from Picuris Pueblo to Taos Pueblo can still be retraced on foot or horseback, and still bear the traces of sheepherder camps with herder's names carved onto 100-year-old aspens. Numerous culturally modified Ponderosas bear the scars from the nomadic Ute healing rituals, and thousands of petroglyphs from Comanche, Ute, Apache and Pueblo Nations bear witness to the full use of the area by these First Nations. Pit houses, stone tools, pottery sherds, and lithic scatter abound along the trail at the base of Talpa ridge and along the Miranda Trail corridor.

Evidence of the Vargas army's 1692 Reconquista can still be found in Miranda Canyon, as well as the deep ruts made by Price's army in 1847 on its way to suppress the Taos Revolt. Taos Pueblos' sacred Ponce de Leon (named for Vargas) spring marks the area in Talpa where Vargas encamped. Traces of the many threads of the OSNHT can be found throughout Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos. Trappers and traders continued to use this northern route of OSNHT throughout the 1800s, as evidenced by the 1804 Martinez Hacienda.

Most of the adobe buildings in Ranchos, Llano Quemado, Talpa, Las Cordovas, Las Colonias, and Ranchitos are historic treasures dating from this period in history. Old Spanish National Historic Trail signs will be installed along Hwy 68 and along CR 240 later this fall (2021) to indicate this corridor of the trail.

Old Spanish Trail Association (OSTA) was organized in 1994 to "study, preserve, protect, interpret, educate, and promote respectful use of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail and closely related historic routes." The work of OSTA is jointly administered by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management. In light of our Mission, OSTA respectfully requests that the Taos County Commission designate Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos as a Traditional Historic Community in order to ensure its authentic historic value for future generations.

Respectfully submitted,

Celinda Reynolds Kaelln
New Mexico Director, Old Spanish Trail Association
celinda@att.net, 719-330-4663 (c)
630 Zuni St #19, Taos, New Mexico 87571

Ranchos De Taos
Mutual Domestic Water Users Association
P.O. Box 733
Ranchos De Taos, NM 87557

April 28, 2022

Re: Historical Designation

To Whom It May Concern:

The Ranchos De Taos Mutual Domestic Water Users Association is in favor of the historical designation of Ranchos De Taos and surrounding communities.

We are opposed to the annexation by the Town of Taos.

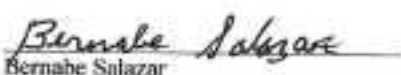
Miguel Pacheco
President



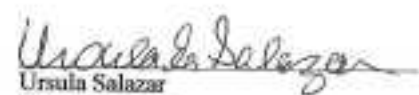
Albert Struck
Vice - President



Bernabe Salazar
Board Member



Ursula Salazar
Board Member



Bernabe P. Struck Jr.
Secretary, Treasurer



Talpa Community Center Assoc. Inc. & Public Library

HC 78 Box 10611 Rancho de Taos NM 87557
575-701-1014

February 14, 2022

Dear Taos County Commissioners:

We, the Talpa Community Center Board of Directors are writing you today to voice our support of the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association's campaign to establish the Las Comunidades del Valle de Los Ranchos as a Traditional Historic Community. Approval of the designation will not only protect our neighborhoods from annexation by the Town of Taos but it will markedly help sustain the history, culture, and water stewardship of our community for generations to come.

More than 25% of the region's voters signed petitions to establish the Traditional Historic Community designation. Now, with your vote of approval, we will finalize that effort and protect the region from future encroachment. I urge you to vote FOR the designation.

Sincerely,

Tommy Tafoya
President



Gene Sanchez
Vice President



Effie Romero
Treasurer



Cathy Vigil
Secretary



Luzita Trujillo
Board Member



talpacommunitycenter@taos.com
talpaas.lmrcfbot.com

Director: Effie F. Romero

**Talpa Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association
Supports the Designation of
Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos as a Traditional Historic Community
by an Ordinance of the Taos County Commission**

March 8, 2021

The Talpa Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (MDWCA), serving the domestic water needs of the Llano Quemado area, applauds and endorses the petition to the Taos County Commission for designation of the Ranchos Valley as a Traditional Historic Community. The unincorporated neighborhoods of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, La Cordillera, Talpa, and Los Cordovas would be collectively designated as "**Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**" under New Mexico law.

Upon approval by the Taos County Commission, the designation will protect our communities from annexation by the Town of Taos. The Town will no longer be able to initiate annexation of any territory within **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**. More than twenty-five percent of registered voters within the community boundary have signed a petition requesting The Traditional Historic Community (THC) designation thus meeting the New Mexico law requirement.

Everyone who resides in northern New Mexico understands the significance of the phrase, *Agua es vida* (Water is life) and why our forefathers coined the phrase, *Agua es la sangre de la tierra*. (Water is the blood of the earth). For centuries, our communities' culture, character, and beauty have been shaped by the availability and use of water.

Mutual Domestic Water Consumer Associations (MDWCAs) began to form in New Mexico in the early 1900s based on community need to provide safe and affordable water to local residents. These associations have significant responsibilities under the law, but the purpose that best serves residents is that local water consumers band together to collectively address their water needs.

We believe that water managed locally is the best way to ensure that our way of life and the beauty of **Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos** continues. Honoring our traditions of local governance and land/water stewardship is the right path to ensure the future of our communities for generations to come.

We urge the Taos County Commission to designate the unincorporated neighborhoods of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, La Cordillera, Talpa, and Los Cordovas as a Traditional Historic Community to be known as "**Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos**" as allowed under New Mexico law.



Del Torres, President

Board of Directors

Talpa Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association



El Valle de Los Ranchos
Water & Sanitation District

El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District
P.O. Box 2797 Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557

Ph: (575) 751.1700/Fax: (575) 751.1690
E-mail: vdtranchos@qwestoffice.net
#8 Miranda Canyon Road, Llano Quemado, NM

Board Members

F.R. Bob Romero, Chairman
Delfino "Del" Torres, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Chavez, Treasurer
Philip Mastas, Secretary
Gabriel J. Romero, Board Member

Dear Water/Sewer Customer:

We are writing you this letter to inform you about the subject of "Traditional Historic Community designation" and how it may apply to our service area.

You may have read in a recent issue of the Taos News that the Taos County Commission approved a request from the community of El Prado to be designated a Traditional Historic Community. El Prado was seeking this designation to protect the community from being annexed by the Town of Taos and being required to follow the requirements and regulations imposed by the Town.

El Prado sought this designation using a New Mexico Statute that allows for this designation. The statute originally only applied to certain counties in the state and not Taos County. In 2019 the statute was amended to apply to all New Mexico counties through legislation sponsored by Senator Roberto Gonzales and others and approved by the Governor. In order to be designated a Traditional Historic Community, a community must have at least 100 years of history as a community, demonstrated by a "distinctive character or traditional quality" and "structures and landmarks" that can be identified within the area.

As you may be aware the Town of Taos through the years has been extending its boundary in a southerly direction toward Ranchos de Taos and is now at Mante's Cocina. The Town has already expressed its desire to extend its boundary further unto State Highway 240.

There is currently an ongoing effort to have the communities of Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, Talpa, La Cordillera and Los Cordovas to join together as "Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos" and together ask the Taos County Commission to designate "Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos" a Traditional Historic Community. These communities clearly meet the requirements of the law to be designated as such. If approved, this designation would protect these communities from being annexed by the Town of Taos. This designation does not create any new restrictions regarding the use of your land. The residents of "Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos" would continue to have a voice through County Government regarding land use planning as we do now.

One of the requirements in seeking the designation is a petition signed by 25% of the registered voters from Llano Quemado, Ranchos de Taos, Talpa, La Cordillera and Los Cordovas supporting this designation.

As your representatives on the El Valle de Los Ranchos Water and Sanitation Board, we support the effort described above. We encourage you as members of our service area to personally support "Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos" being designated a "Traditional Historic Community". In the near future we will be coming to you to ask you to sign the petition described above.

If you have any questions regarding the information presented above, please call Melene Montano at 575 751-1700 or one of your Board Members.

Please stay safe. Don't forget to wear your face mask and maintain a safe distance from others when you are out in public and around others.

Sincerely,

F. R. Romero Board Chairman

Appendix V Maps & Plats

Exhibit A – Cristoval de la Serna Grant, Walker

Exhibit B –Gijosa Grant, Easley

Exhibit C – Gijosa Grant, Turley

Exhibit D - Overlay of Gijosa Grant & Serna Grant Plats

Exhibit E - State Highways 68, 518, & 240 superimposed on Gijosa Grant Survey

Exhibit F - State Highways 68, 518, 240, & 585 superimposed on Serna Grant Survey

Exhibit G – Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Population Center

Exhibit H – Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Northern Population Center

Exhibit I – Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Southern Population Center

Exhibit J – Satellite Imagery of Vegetation Coverage

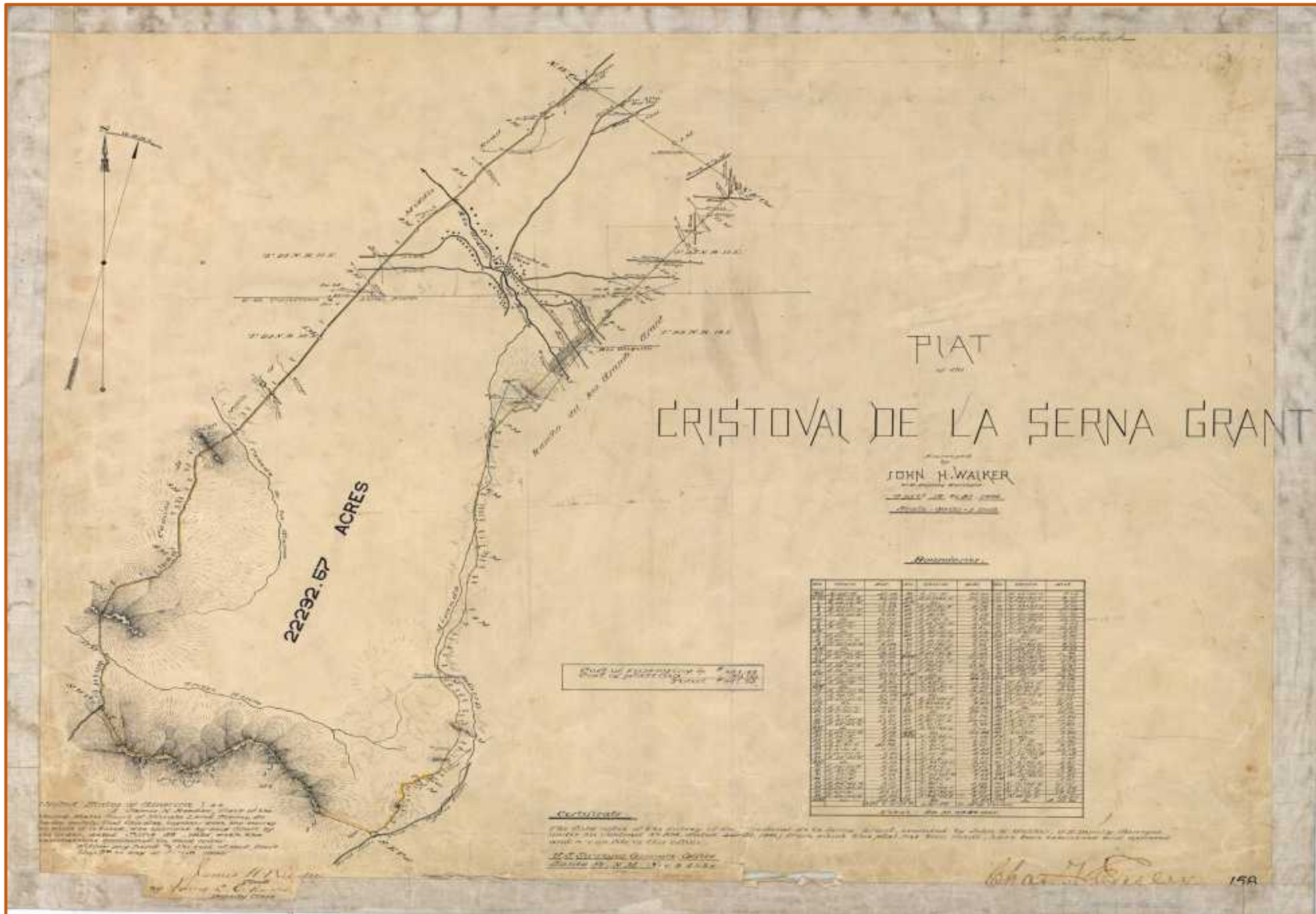
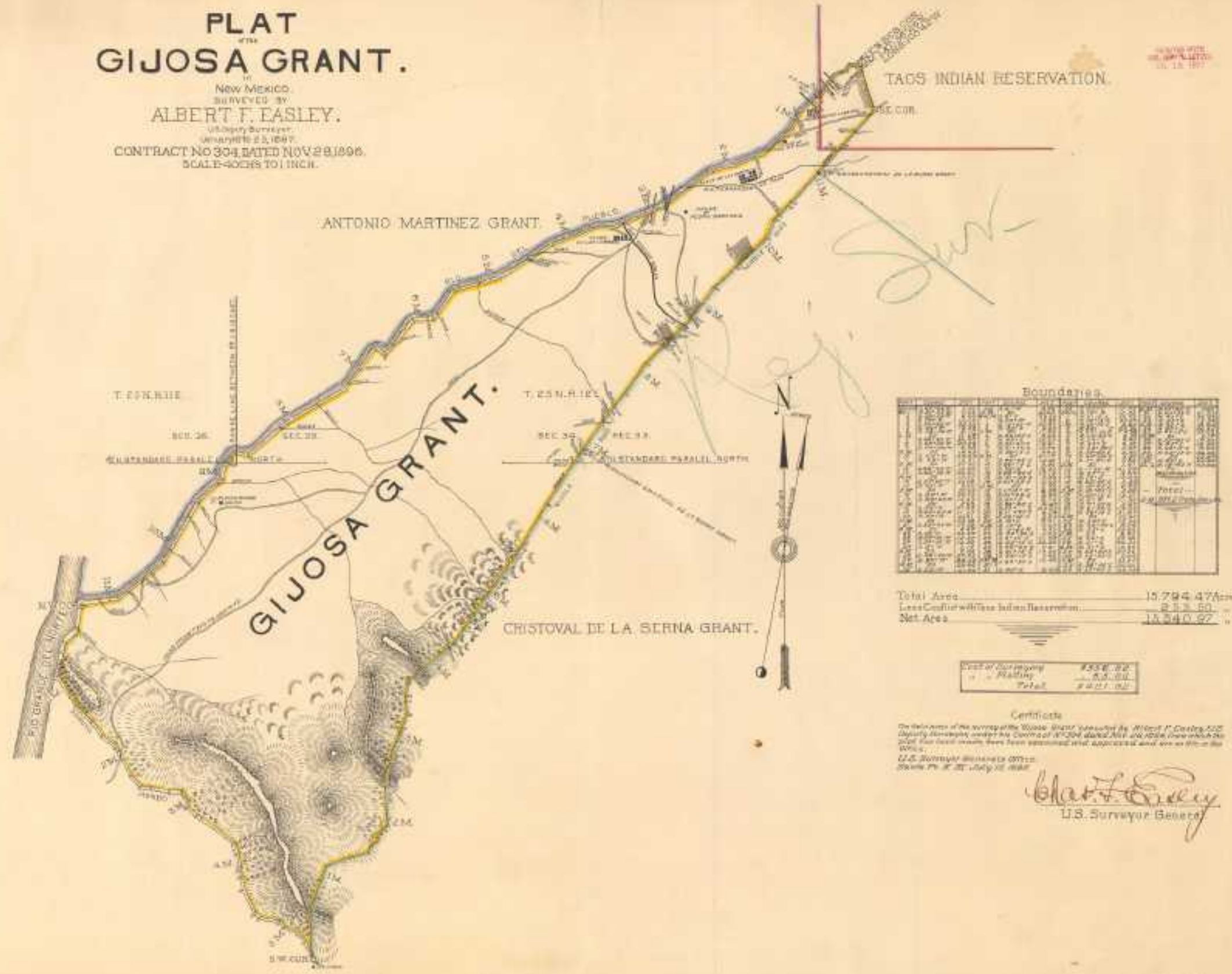


Exhibit A
Plat of the CRISTOVAL DE LA SERNA GRANT
 John H. Walker, U.S. Deputy Surveyor, 1894

PLAT OF THE GIJOSA GRANT.

New Mexico.
SURVEYED BY
ALBERT F. EASLEY.
U.S. Deputy Surveyor.
January 25, 1897.
CONTRACT NO 304, DATED NOV 28, 1896.
SCALE 40000 TO 1 INCH.

REPLACES
NO. 25 PLAT
OF 1897



107

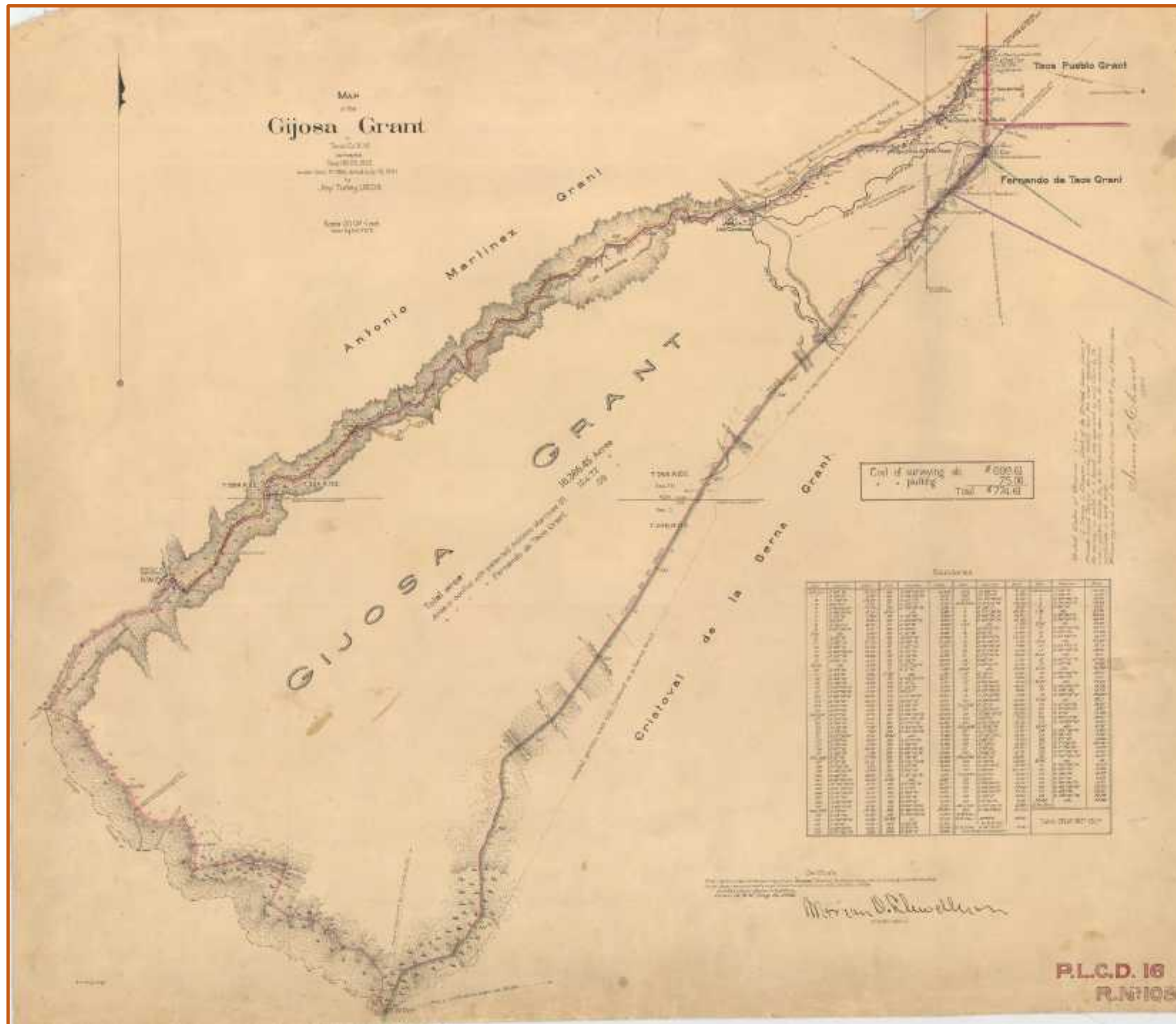
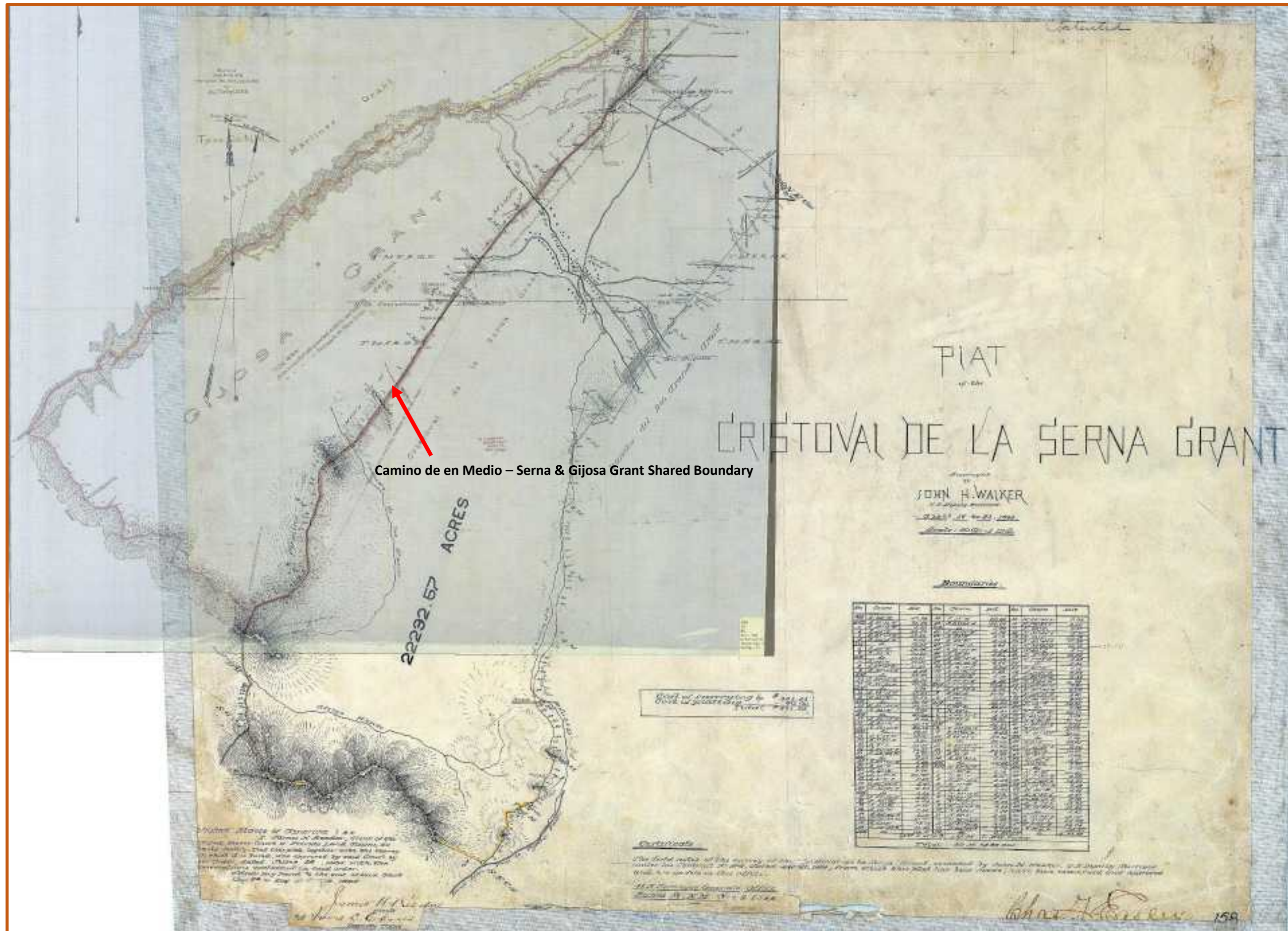


Exhibit C
Map of the GIJOSA GRANT
Jay Turley, U.S.D.S., 1901



This overlay demonstrates the accuracy and the agreement of the grant surveys on their shared boundary at Camino del Medio.

Exhibit D
Composite of Gijosa Grant Map
And Serna Grant Plat

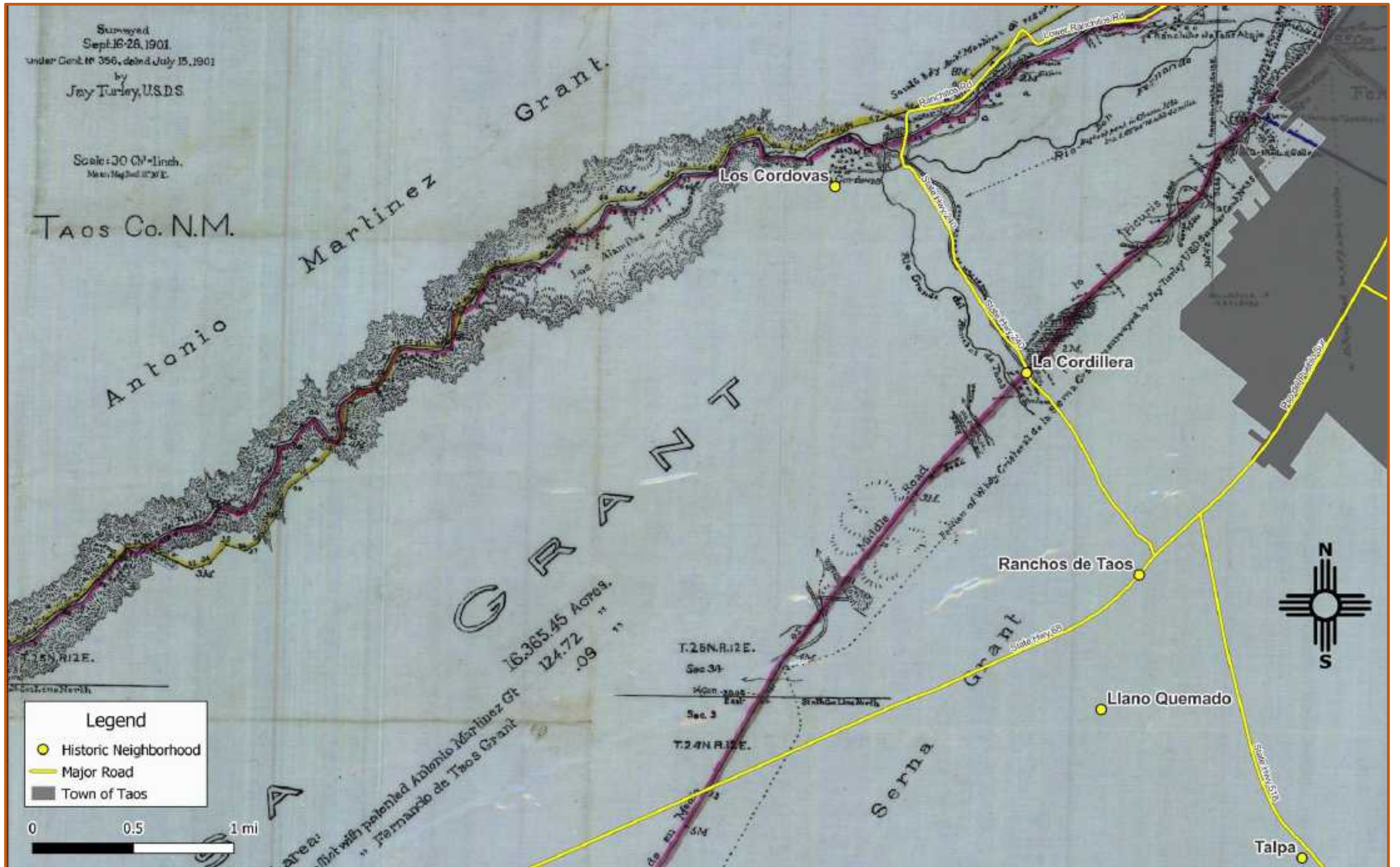


Exhibit E

State Highways 68, 518, & 240 superimposed on Gijosa Grant Survey



Exhibit F
 State Highways 68, 518, 240, & 585
 superimposed on Serna Grant Survey

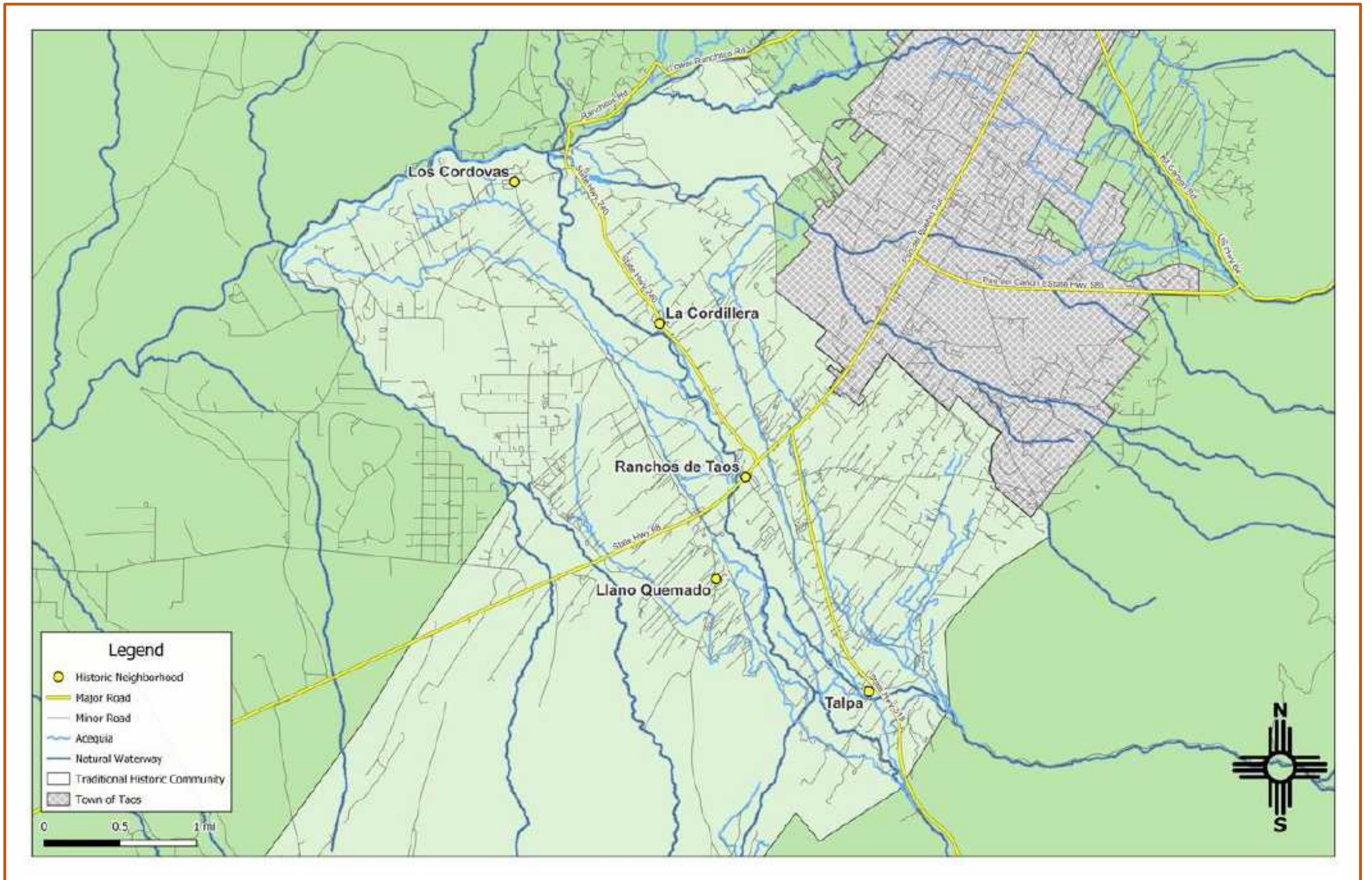


Exhibit G
Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos
Population Center

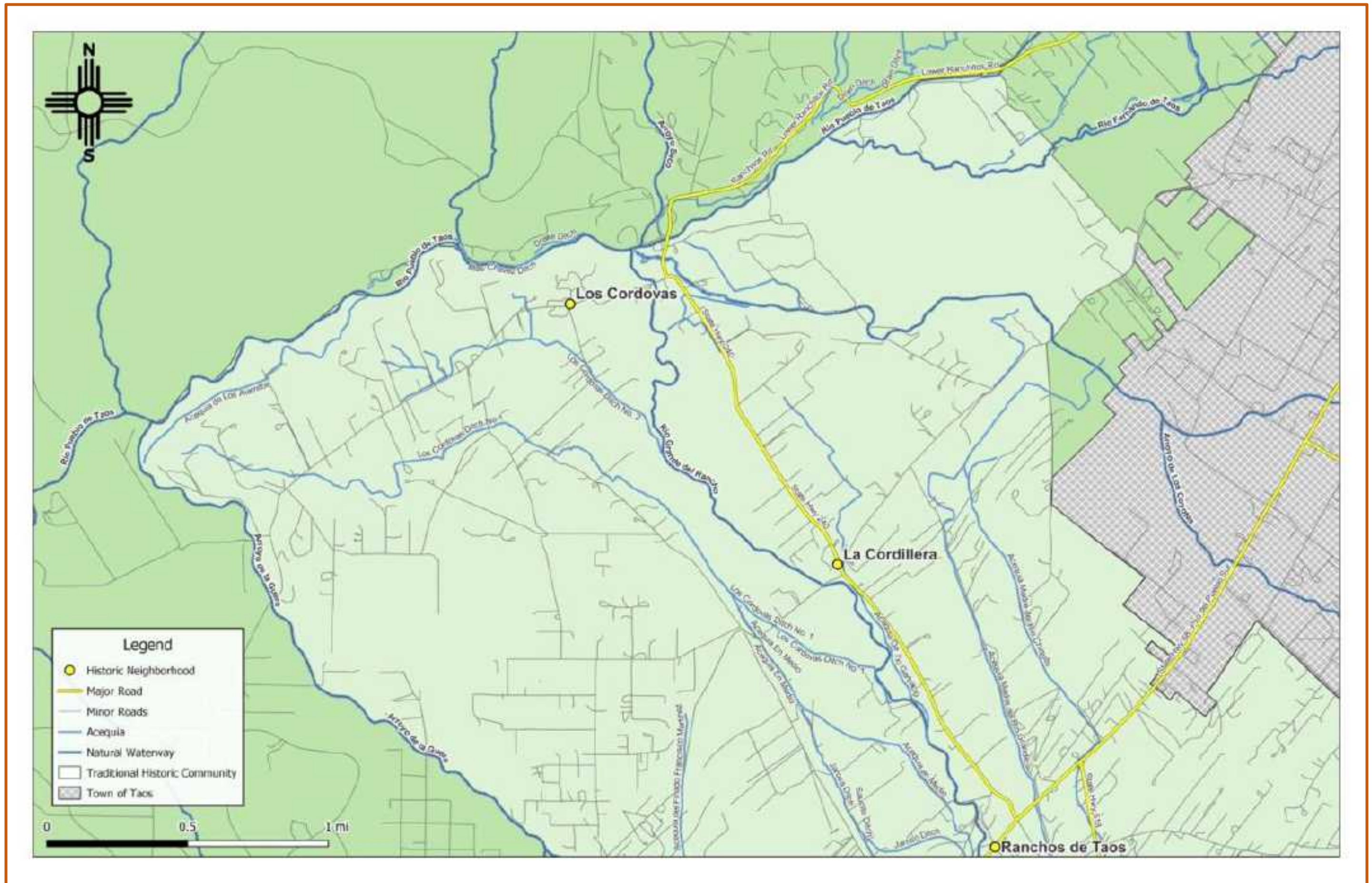


Exhibit H
Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos
Northern Population Center

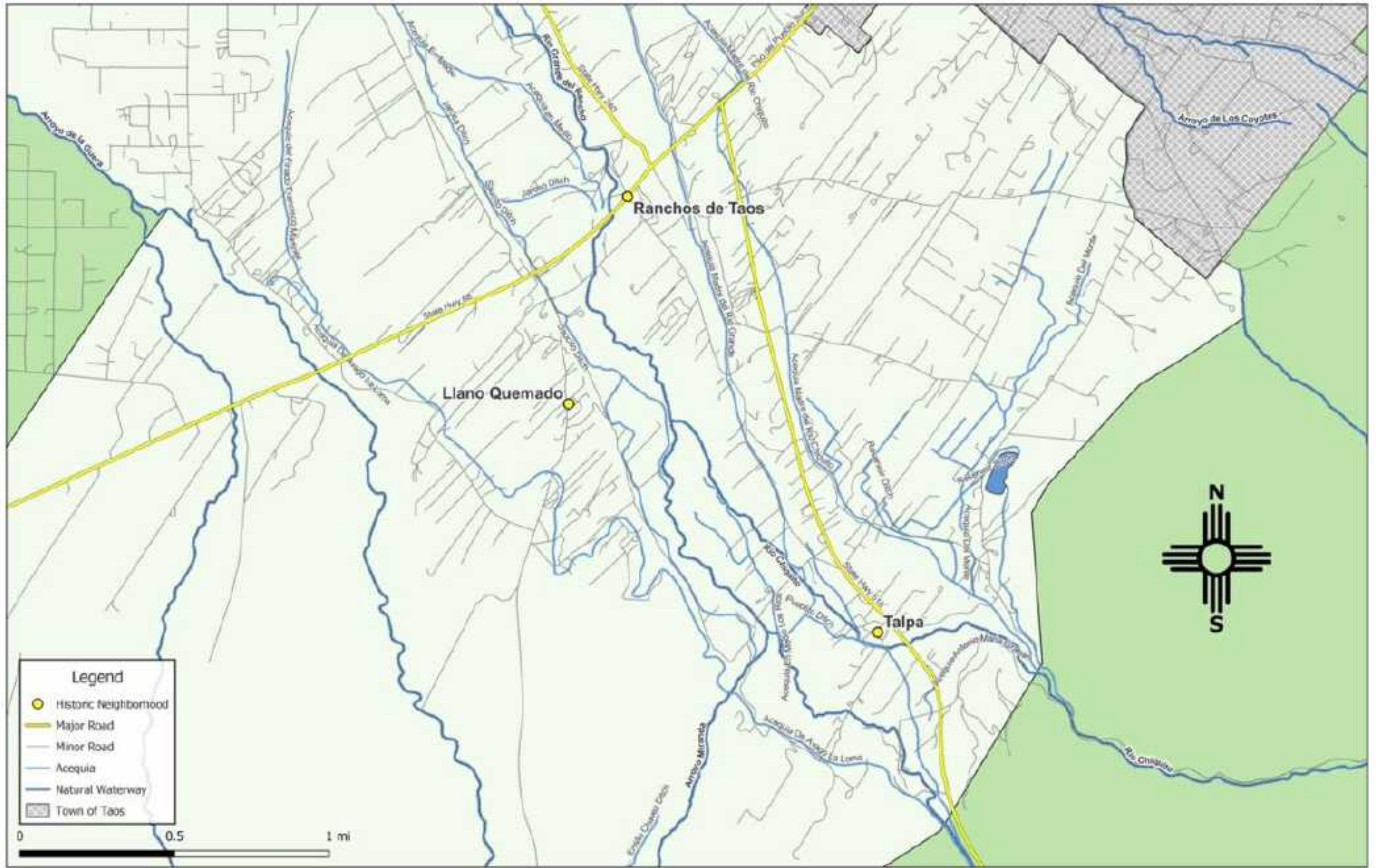


Exhibit I
Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos
Southern Population Center

Enhanced Satellite Imagery showing comparative vegetation coverage between Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos and the Town of Taos. The dark areas show the densest foliage and generally indicate irrigated land and natural water courses. Reflective rooftops and pavement show as white in this image.



ESA Sentinel-2 L2A.
Imagery: July 5, 2021 NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index)

Las Comunidades del Valle
de los Ranchos

Exhibit J

Satellite Imagery of Vegetation Coverage
Town of Taos/Las Comunidades del Valle

Appendix VI Photo Gallery



**Rio Grande del Rancho between Talpa & Llano Quemado
Summer, 2021**
Photo: Jackie Kolbenschlag



**Opening Rio Chiquito diversion to Talpa Reservoir / Deposito
John MacArthur, Commissioner, Acequia del Monte del Rio Chiquito
and Darryl Maestas, Commissioner, Acequia Madre del Rio Chiquito
April 15, 2022**
Photo: Cynthia Patterson



Talpa Reservoir / Deposito, September 2, 2021
Photo: Hank Saxe



Acequia Abajo la Loma, Summer, 2021
Photo: Jackie Kolbenschlag



Maestas Road, Talpa

Photo: Mary E.T. Collier, Courtesy Collier Family Collection



Llano Quemado Corral and House, April 1936

Photo: Arthur Rothstein



Swather, Los Córdovas Alfalfa Field, August 2021

Photo: Hank Saxe



A Day's Work Done, Talpa, 2021

L. to R. Bill Loundy; Francisco, Darryl & Julie Maestas

Photo: Jackie Kolbenschlag



Alfalfa Field, Torres Road, Talpa, June 2021

Photo: Hank Saxe



Paul's Bar, formerly owned by Paul Casias, on the High Road to Taos near the intersection of Highway 68, Paseo del Pueblo Sur, Ranchos de Taos
 Photo: Jackie Kolbenschlag



Los Córdovas Torreón
 Photo: Unknown



Old Martina's Hall, Ranchos de Taos
 Photo: Hank Saxe



Caretakers House- Ranchos de Taos Plaza, August 1936
 Vigas dated to 1774-75. This house may have been built into the defensive wall of the Plaza.
 Photo: Frederick D. Nichols



Caretakers House- Ranchos de Taos Plaza, January 1943
 Photo: John Collier, Jr.

Talpa Morada and Camposanto – 1947 & 2021



Photo: Mary E.T. Collier c. 1947, Courtesy Collier Family Collection



Photo: Hank Saxe, 2021



**Replastering San Francisco de Asis, Ranchos de Taos Plaza, 1957-59?
Replastering Lunch Break, 2021**

Top Photo: Attributed to Mildred Tolbert

Bottom Photo: Hank Saxe



San Francisco de Asis Morada and Camposanto, Ranchos de Taos, 2021
Photos: Jackie Kolbenschlag



San Juan de los Lagos, Talpa
Photo Left: John Collier, Jr., 1943
Photo Below: Jackie Kolbenschlag, 2021



San Francisco de Asis Mass
Photo: John Collier, Jr.



San Francisco de Asis, Nativity
Photo: John Collier, Jr.

Appendix VII Timeline

Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association & Traditional Historic Community

1995- New Mexico Statute 3-7-1.1- Traditional historic community; qualifications; annexation restrictions are passed into law. Under the original language of the statute only Santa Fe County is qualified to declare traditional historic communities.

The Board of Commissioners of Santa Fe County declares three traditional historic communities, by ordinance: The Village of Agua Fria, on September 12, 1995; The Village of Tesuque, on May 26, 1998; and La Cienega and La Cieneguilla, on May 9, 2000.

May 18, 2004- Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association incorporates and registers with the Taos County Planning Department. The association becomes actively involved with the County in discussions about land use planning.

January 27, 2008- A meeting organized by the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association includes discussion that the Ranchos Valley neighborhood associations remain distinct but also create an “El Valle de los Ranchos Council of Neighborhoods” that could jointly present issues to the County planners.

May 18, 2008- State Representative Roberto “Bobby” Gonzales proposes legislation that could protect the neighborhoods of the Ranchos Valley from municipal annexation. He pledges to get assistance from state legislative services to examine the traditional historic community statute to see how it can be amended to apply to Taos County.

2013- Town of Taos proposes annexation of State Highway 64 through El Prado. El Prado residents organize to oppose annexation and talks begin between residents of El Prado, Cañon, and Ranchos de Taos about seeking traditional historic community designation for the communities.

July 13, 2013- Taos County Commissioner Gabriel Romero discusses his interest in assisting the Ranchos Valley to obtain traditional historic community designation. The area under consideration includes the neighborhoods of La Cordillera, Llano Quemado, Los Córdovas, Ranchos de Taos, and Talpa.

October 2013- Taos County Commissioner Romero, representatives of the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association, and other Ranchos Valley residents meet with Agua Fria Village Council to learn about their experience with their traditional historic community designation.

2015-2017- Representative Bobby Gonzales twice brings changes to the traditional historic community statute to the NM State Legislature which would qualify Taos County for inclusion. The legislation passes but Governor Martinez pocket vetoes it.

2019- Representative Bobby Gonzales presents a new bill, HB 74/A, “An act Relating to Traditional Historic Communities; Revising Qualifications” which extends the traditional historic community statute to apply to all counties in the state of New Mexico. The bill is included in the “Rocket Docket” a group of bills signed into law by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, going into effect July 1, 2019.

January 2019- Members of the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association meet with Taos County Planning Department Staff, County Manager Leandro Cordova, and Commissioner Gabriel Romero. Commissioner Romero asks the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association to take the lead in pursuing traditional historic community designation for the Ranchos Valley.

April 2020- Members of the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association correspond with the Santa Fe County Planning Department to gather information about their process for designating traditional historic communities. Based on the history and experience of the Santa Fe County traditional historic communities, Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association members proceed with plans to seek traditional historic community designation. Simultaneously El Prado proceeds with their application for traditional historic community designation.

September 2020- El Prado submits traditional historic community application to the Taos County Planning Department for review prior to presenting before the Taos County Commission.

Oct 14, 2020- Members of the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association meet with the board of El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District to present information about traditional historic community designation.

Nov. 12, 2020- El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District issues letter of support for traditional historic community designation and endorses use of El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District boundaries.

January 7, 2021- Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association presents findings on the three previously established traditional historic community designations in New Mexico in a work study session with Taos County Commissioners and administrators, El Prado traditional historic community proponents, and attorneys.

January 19, 2021- The Taos County Commission unanimously approves Taos County Ordinance 2020-5 declaring the Community of El Prado, Taos County, New Mexico a Traditional Historic Community.

February 2021- Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association begins community outreach and planning of a petition drive for traditional historic community designation.

April 1, 2021- Taos News runs front page article, above the fold: “Ranchos de Taos ‘Historic community’ designation sought”. The article begins: “Ranchos de Taos is taking the first steps to have the area designated as a Traditional Historic Community. Much like El Prado’s efforts last year-which paid off in January- Ranchos de Taos and the surrounding neighborhoods (Llano Quemado, Talpa, La Cordillera, and Los Córdovas) hope the push for Traditional Historic Community (THC) designation will help to protect and preserve the culture of the area and prevent them from being annexed into the town. The effort is being spearheaded by the Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association, who have just started the initial efforts of getting the word out to local residents.”

May 24, 2021- Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association board members determine date and plans for launch of petition drive and public relations campaign

June 2021- The Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association is granted 501(c)(3) status.

June 18, 2021- First signatures are obtained on “PETITION REQUESTING THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF TAOS COUNTY, NEW MEXICO TO ADOPT AN ORDINANCE DECLARING LAS COMUNIDADES DEL VALLE DE LOS RANCHOS (LAS CORDILLERA, LLANO QUEMADO, LOS CORDOVAS, RANCHOS DE TAOS, TALPA) A TRADITIONAL HISTORIC COMMUNITY

August 20, 2021- Petitions are submitted to Taos County Clerk’s office.

September 8, 2021- Taos County Clerk Valerie Rael Montoya issues a letter “Re: Petition Declaring Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos a Traditional Historic Community” confirming that signatures on the petitions have been reviewed and verified, meeting the requirement of 25% of total registered voters. Purpose of letter is “for reference to schedule a meeting to request approval, at a future Taos County Board of Commissioners Meeting.”

September 23, 2021- Taos News publishes article “Ranchos takes next step toward historic designation” discussing the process following completion of the petition drive.

October 11, 2021- Taos County Planning Director Edward Vigil informs Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association that he requires qualifications of each of the five neighborhoods of the proposed Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community to be documented separately, rather than writing a single set of qualifying documentation for the community as a whole.

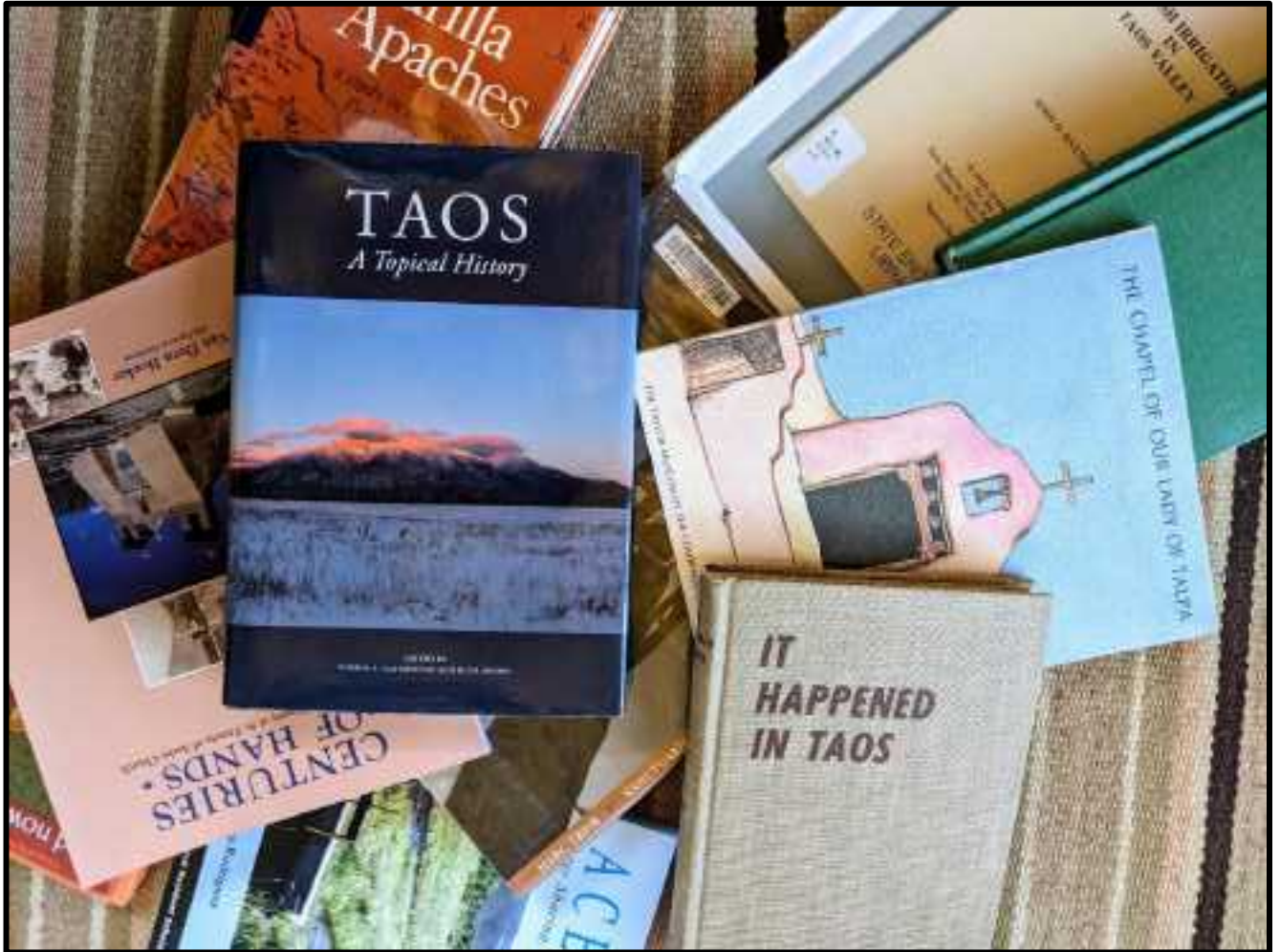
March 30, 2022- Edward Vigil retires as Taos County Planning Department Director. A successor has not been named.

April 5, 2022- A meeting is held at the Taos County offices to discuss concerns over boundary descriptions for the traditional historic community designation. Attendees include Taos County Attorney Randy Autio, Planning Department staff, and Ranchos de Taos Neighborhood Association officers. Parties will cooperate to create a boundary description that considers split parcels. Language in final documents may also address federal and tribal lands within the boundaries of the proposed traditional historic community designation.

August 8, 2022- Draft application for Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos is delivered to the Taos County Planning Department for review prior to submission to the Taos County Commission.

December 6, 2022- Taos County Commission approves Resolution to publish notice of hearing for Ordinance to designate Las Comunidades del Valle de los Ranchos Traditional Historic Community.

Appendix VIII Bibliography



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