

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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RESOLUTION No. 2019-056

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE CORRIDORS IN THE UPPER RIO GRANDE BASIN

WHEREAS, in **Mora County**, New Mexico wildlife resources are fundamental to our history, culture and identity; and

WHEREAS, for centuries wildlife has been intertwined with the cultural fabric of the Upper Rio Grande and has been integral in supporting thriving civilizations and our interaction with wildlife has fostered the creation of important cultural traditions which continue to be passed down today; and

WHEREAS, wildlife species can move considerable distances to meet their daily, seasonal and ecological needs and their movement often crosses multiple jurisdictional boundaries, including federal, state, tribal and private lands; and

WHEREAS, public lands and waters provide vital habitat for hundreds of wildlife species which also include important corridors for wildlife to safely move and migrate across larger landscapes; and

WHEREAS, fragmentation such as, roads, fences, development and other human-created and natural barriers are increasingly making it more difficult for wildlife species to migrate safely across landscapes; and

WHEREAS, land managers from the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests have a role in identifying and addressing the importance of the National Forest in establishing connectivity for wildlife to safely move and migrate across forest lands; and

WHEREAS, Special Management Areas such as the proposed Caja del Rio Wildlife and Cultural Interpretive Management Area in the Santa Fe National Forest is an area of profound cultural and historical significance and is critical to the wildlife habitat and connectivity; and

WHEREAS, Special Management Areas, such as the proposed Valle Vidal Management Area in the Carson National Forest promotes, protect and prioritizes habitat connectivity and is an important migration corridor for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and wintering/calving elk herds; and

WHEREAS, there exists a need and opportunity to foster increased collaboration among state, federal and tribal natural resource managers to promote and protect landscape connectivity; and

WHEREAS, recent polling in New Mexico shows widespread support for the protection of wildlife corridors in the state; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Mora County expresses support for and urges Congress to act swiftly to enact the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act in order to mitigate connectivity issues by establishing a grants program to support habitat connectivity for migrating wildlife species; and:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Mora County expresses support for the National Forest Service to adopt and establish special management areas that provide wildlife with habitat connectivity, and that balances traditional land use values with wildlife and habitat connectivity needs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the entire New Mexico Congressional Delegation to show support for the protection of wildlife corridors in the Upper Rio Grande Basin.

THIS RESOLUTION IS PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS 23rd day of October, 2019.

By the Mora County Commission:


Lionor F. Maestas, Chair


Veronica M. Serna, Vice Chair


Alfonso J. Griego, Member




Carlos J. Arellano, County Clerk