

# Ensuring a Land Legacy for Future Generations

## Conservation Opportunities and Planning Tools for the Future of Your Land and Your Community

### foreword

"Ensuring a land legacy for future generations" describes the work we do at the Taos Land Trust. We recognize and honor the long history of local stewardship and a strong connection to the land and we work to continue that tradition of caring for the land for the benefit of everyone in the Taos area. The landscape we protect is both natural and cultural, sustaining the biodiversity and cultural diversity of our region for millennia. It's the heart of the distinctive beauty and the cultural traditions that make Northern New Mexico unique. Whether your ancestors have been here 10,000 years, 400 years or two weeks, our shared landscape of open and productive land is one of our most important assets and we all have a stake in protecting it.

Since 1988, Taos Land Trust has helped residents throughout Northern New Mexico protect their family lands through permanent conservation easements, partnered with other organizations to secure major public land acquisitions and worked with local

government on long-range land use planning. Through voluntary conservation easements with 29 landowners, we have permanently protected nearly 4,900 acres of wildlife habitat, productive rangeland and farms, riparian areas and scenic open space. In partnership with the Trust for Public Land we secured the public acquisition and protection of 2,581 acres of the Taos Valley Overlook and 14,344 acres of Ute Mountain. We continue to play a key role in the development of the Taos County Green Infrastructure Plan and other long-range plan-

**TAOS LAND TRUST'S** mission is to conserve land with scenic vistas, agricultural value, wildlife habitat or historic sites through direct preservation, conservation partnerships, education and land use planning for the benefit of the people, communities, cultures and natural systems of the Taos area.

ning initiatives. All this work is toward our goal of conserving an open and productive landscape as an important legacy for our children and grandchildren.

We cannot create that legacy in a vacuum, it has to be a collective community effort. To that end, Taos Land Trust sponsored these two full-day community forums to discuss a

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range of conservation issues and ideas. We shared information about creative approaches to preserving our land heritage and listened to the public's interests, concerns and priorities about land conservation. Evaluations and feedback from diverse participants at both forums--from traditional agricultural

landowners to mainstream conservationists--told us that the issues that most concern them are long-range conservation planning, the economic benefits of land conservation, public financing for conservation, watershed-based conservation, viable local agriculture and sustaining acequias and traditional communities. This feedback will continue to help us set our

course.

Many thanks to the McCune Charitable Foundation for financial support, and to Mike Tilley of Cultural Energy, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, County Extension Agent Rey Torres, the Town of Taos Convention Center and Doug Webb for various help with the forums. Thanks also to the Taos Soil & Water Conservation District for sponsoring the publication of these proceedings. Most importantly, thank you to all the presenters and to the citizens of the Taos area who continue to support land conservation and guide our work.



*Taos Land Trust Board of Directors and Staff, 2004*