

22-acre area included in conservation easement



A 22-acre tract of land has been added to a conservation easement near Taos. COURTESY PHOTO

Newly protected land

The New Mexican

Skiers and other nature lovers traveling to the Taos ski area will continue to be rewarded — in perpetuity — by a beautiful, traditional landscape as the result of a new conservation easement.

A 22-acre tract of irrigated farmland across from the post office in Arroyo Seco, 7 miles from Taos, has been permanently protected from development.

The new conservation easement is

the final phase of a plan by the landowner to permanently retire the development rights on 65 contiguous acres of some of the most valuable land in Taos. The owner began working on the project with the Taos Land Trust in 2000.

In addition to the farmland, Tract C includes a marshy wetlands area that provides habitat for songbirds and other migratory waterfowl.

“Surrendering the development

rights in perpetuity was a momentous thing for this person and her family [and ensures that] the place will stay like it is forever,” said Ernie Atencio, executive director of the Taos Land Trust.

Atencio noted that such donors are driven to protect a land legacy for the future, but many are also making financial sacrifices. “They’re not in the 1 percent; they’re part of the 99 percent,” he said.