

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HISTORY: CULTURAL RESOURCES

A CRADLE OF SETTLEMENT

For all the changes wrought by centuries of human habitation and environmental change, the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area retains a recognizable feeling and identity. Older ways of making a living continue to hold meaning and value. Communities dating to the 13th and 14th centuries continue to be inhabited today, while archeological sites document human occupation in the region as far back as 12,000 years.

This chapter presents a brief overview of the history and culture of the Heritage Area and provides an introduction to the long and fascinating unfolding of human activities here: the development of early agriculture, the complex architecture of the earliest inhabitants, the movement of peoples as a result of environmental and societal pressures, the arrival of new inhabitants, and the relations between all the varied groups moving across and into the landscape. Descendants of the Pueblo peoples retain much of their ancient lands, and continue to speak their respective native languages, and to practice native religions. Similarly, descendants of Spanish explorers (the *conquistadores*) and settlers retain their cultural practices, a strong religious identity, and a dialect of the Spanish language dating to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The Heritage Area is a place where many cultures have interacted over a very long time in a manner unique to the Southwest. Traditional housing made of sun-dried

adobe bricks, for instance, was introduced by the Spaniards following methods borrowed from the Moors. Pueblo people contributed their own methods of adobe and stone construction. Both now find expression in expensive homes in Santa Fe and Taos and in more humble abodes in historic area communities.

Cultural resources of the Heritage Area are extensive and varied. They include archeological sites, extensive petroglyph collections, historic Native and Hispanic villages and buildings, plazas, churches and cemeteries, farms and acequias, and cultural events and activities. At the Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo's San Gabriel archeological site, a Spanish mission church was built in 1598 – a generation before the Mayflower landed in Massachusetts; Santa Fe's Palace of Governors is the nation's oldest government building, dating to the founding of the City of Santa Fe in 1610.

Music, dance, ceremonies, fairs, and traditional arts and crafts, such as weaving, pottery, basketry, and carved and painted religious art, are found not only in local museums, but also at local arts markets that draw visitors from all over world. The historic and cultural continuity of the region is our inheritance and also our gift to the world. What makes the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area unique is that so much of its past is still alive and vital. The life ways and relationships of ancestors continue to echo in lives being lived today. The Northern Rio Grande National Heritage

Area intends to ensure that this distinctive nexus of cultures and landscapes is preserved and celebrated.

THE EARLIEST INHABITANTS (FROM 10,000 B.C.)

THE ANCESTRAL PUEBLOANS

At the end of the last ice age, some 12,000 years ago, small bands of hunter-gatherers roved the Southwest. The Clovis culture, earliest of these groups, is named in reference to the eastern New Mexican town that is near the place where distinctive spear points (made to hunt now-extinct mammoth, camel, and bison) were found. Archeological evidence found near Folsom, a town in northeast New Mexico, points to a slightly later Paleo-Indian group known as the Folsom culture. Such ancient, ephemeral hunting camp sites are rare. Thousands of years after the Clovis and Folsom cultures, after large animals died out, small groups of what most likely were extended families lived in the vicinity of the Heritage Area, gathering wild plants, hunting small game, and living in the dry caves of the Southwest. They left behind only a few clues about their mobile way of life.

Sometime around 500 B.C., just beyond the western edge of the Heritage Area, Southwestern people began to grow corn. Corn supplemented hunting and wild plant gathering. A bit later, squash and beans appeared. Prior to about 200 A.D., people relied primarily on hunting. They left their corn to grow in whatever moist spots they could find and followed after game. From these beginnings, the ancestors to the Pueblo peoples developed intensified

agriculture supporting larger and larger communities.

Between 200 and 700 A.D., an increasing number of people settled in villages, and planted more corn and crops. Villagers lived in small, semi-subterranean pit-houses. Archeological sites document the increased use of tools for grinding grains, as well as, use of more sophisticated stone projectile points, knives, scrapers, drills, and choppers, for specific tasks. Villagers made beautifully woven baskets, sandals, nets for hunting, and blankets of rabbit fur and cotton cloth. By 500 A. D. they were making pottery.

Despite the challenges of climate, including droughts and severe winters, the Southwest was a healthy environment in which to live. In time, people began to build above-ground, creating stone and adobe houses with a row of rooms, often for extended families. Villages grew larger in size, and farming more important.

The earliest structures in Pueblo Bonito, in Chaco Canyon, date to around 800 A.D. From this core of adobe buildings grew the sophisticated architecture of the Chaco pueblos, which date to the 11th and 12th centuries. The complex often is referred to as American's first apartment building. Chaco, considered a center of ritual and religion, trade and exchange, was not the only such complex, as the Ancestral Pueblo people flourished. The *Pueblo* name comes from 16th century Spanish settlers who recognized that the native people lived in towns, or *pueblos*. The word continues to be used to identify the native people and the places in which they live.

Like their tools, agriculture, and architecture, Pueblo societies were complex. Religion played an enormous role in their lives and communities. Relations, marred by competition for resources and warfare, were not always harmonious. People moved, to find more game and better land and soil for their fields, and because they faced opposition from different groups and communities.

New Mexico, and the Northern Rio Grande area in particular, experienced intense occupation in the 12th and 13th centuries. Villages were as small as 20 rooms and as large as 400 to 1,000 rooms. Villages had a central space – a *plaza* – and *kivas*, which were large, underground rooms, nearly always circular, associated with religious societies and ceremonies. Nearly 300 Ancestral Puebloan archeo-logical sites have been recorded in the vicinity of Taos, some dating as early as 1000 A.D.

Prolonged, severe drought in the 13th and 14th centuries caused people to abandon their homes and migrate to new areas, including the Rio Grande Valley, where they reorganized their world and learned to interact with foreign cultures. Some large villages were built along the Rio Grande itself and others in the Heritage Area’s Chama River valley, Taos area, and Galisteo Basin. Villages included Te’ewi, Tshirege, Puyé, Otowi, Old Picuris, Arroyo Hondo, Pindi, Pueblo Largo, San Cristobal, San Marcos, and Las Madres. [sidebar 1] Some of these villages were abandoned hundreds of years ago; 19 other pueblos – eight of them in the Heritage Area – continue to thrive on the same sites, or nearby land, of their 14th- and 15th-century ancestors. [sidebar 2]

Within the Heritage Area there exist six Tewa-speaking Pueblos – Ohkay Owingeh, Nambe, Pojoaque, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, and Tesuque; and two Tiwa-speaking Pueblos – Taos and Picurís. Both languages are a branch of the Tanoan language. Tewa traditions say ancestors emerged from a lake somewhere in southern Colorado, migrating south and establishing villages along the Rio Chama and its tributaries in Rio Arriba and Santa Fe counties. [sidebar 3] Tiwa Pueblos were situated to the northeast, in present-day Taos County, and located on the northern frontier in proximity to Plains tribes, including the Comanche, with whom they alternately fought and traded. Taos Pueblo was the site of annual trade fairs with the Plains Indians and, later on, with fur trappers. [sidebar 4]



Puyé Cliff Dwellings

PUEBLO SOCIETIES IN THE HERITAGE AREA

1. **The Puye Ruins** in Rio Arriba County preserves one of the largest of the prehistoric Indian settlements on the Pajarito Plateau. The settlement was established in the late 1200s or early 1300s and abandoned by about 1600. The ruins, on the ancestral site of Santa Clara Pueblo, show a variety of architectural forms and building techniques.
2. **Mesa Prieta** is an elongated mesa situated above the confluence of the Río Grande and the Río Chama and extending north from Ohkay Owingeh to the village of Embudo, covering 36 square miles. Most of the land is privately owned, but it contains as many as 50,000 petroglyphs and other archaeological features that provide a record of area history dating from the Archaic period hunter-gatherers and early Puebloans, and extending to the current period. The mesa is considered a sacred place. The rock art collection is a unique record of impressions by multiple cultures, including Native, Hispanic, and Anglo visitors. The **Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project** is a private non-profit community venture to record and preserve these stone images and the terrain and to provide education to visitors and local schools through tours, internships, and summer programs.
3. **Pueblos** are ancestral lands occupied for hundreds of years before the coming of the Spanish. Contemporary Pueblo people are descendants of the Ancestral Puebloans who lived throughout the Heritage Area. Each pueblo operates under its own government and establishes all rules and regulations for its own individual village. Tribal lands are open to the public at scheduled times for tours or attendance at feast days and dances.

Four of the six Tewa pueblos are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: Nambé, San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, and Tesuque. Visitors are invited to attend many ceremonies and religious events at the pueblos, such as the June **Feast Day at Santa Clara** and the January **Deer Dance at San Ildefonso**. On feast days, it is courteous to accept an invitation to enter a Pueblo home to eat.

The **Nambe Pueblo** was a primary cultural and religious center at the time of the arrival of Spanish colonists. The name means “People of the Round Earth.” **San Ildefonso Pueblo** is famous for its matte and polished black-on-black pottery popularized in the early 20th century by Maria and Julian Martinez. **Santa Clara Pueblo** offers tours of the prehistoric cliff dwellings of Puye, as well as sightseeing, fishing and camping in the nearby canyon. The **Tesuque Pueblo** (pronounced Teh-sue-kay) is one of the most traditional of the Tewa-speaking pueblos in observing ceremonies and preserving culture. Tesuque dances are known for the excellence of the costumes and the authenticity of the execution of dances and rituals.

Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo (formerly San Juan Pueblo) has a well-known art center, the **Oke Owingeh Arts & Crafts Cooperative**, where visitors may watch many of the artisans working in a variety of art forms. At the **Pojoaque Pueblo** (pronounced Po-hwa-kay), the **Poeh Museum** exhibits Pojoaque cultural history. In the nearby community of Pojoaque is the gallery of well-known pottery artist Roxanne Swentzell. At the annual **Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Arts & Crafts Show**, Indian artists themselves organize and operate the event.

4. Backed by mountains and facing a large plaza, **Taos Pueblo** is a National Historic Landmark and also a World Heritage Site. Taos has borrowed from Anglo- and Spanish-American cultures over centuries of contact, while retaining its cultural integrity and identity as a community. The pueblo provides daily guided tours for visitors. Its **San Geronimo Feast Day** in September features Buffalo, Comanche and Corn Dances, in addition to a trade fair, ceremonial foot races, and a pole climb. **Picurís Pueblo** (pronounced Pee-coo-reese) is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Picurís craftsmen produce pottery different from most Pueblo art; it is strictly utilitarian and without ornament.

THE ATHABASKANS: NAVAJO AND JICARILLA APACHE

By at least the 15th century, the Athabaskans arrived in the Southwest after migrating south from west-central Canada. Having similar linguistic characteristics, they comprise the Navajo and Apache groups, and include the Chiricahua, Lipan, Mescalero, Plains, Western, White Mountain, and Jicarilla. Today, the only group settled in the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area are the Jicarilla Apache.

The Jicarilla Apache

By the late 1600s, the Jicarilla (hik-a-REE-ya) Apache occupied a region extending from southeastern Colorado to the Pecos River Valley in New Mexico's Colfax County, just beyond the eastern boundary of the Heritage Area. Named by the Spanish for the small baskets or cups (*jicaras*) they made, the Jicarilla established adobe villages, farmed small, irrigated fields, and had frequent contact with the pueblos and Spanish settlements of northern New Mexico. The Jicarilla were principally a bison-hunting culture and retained many characteristics of Plains Indians, such as the use of tepees.

Beginning in 1851, the United States government made several unsuccessful attempts to establish a reservation for the Jicarilla in today's western Río Arriba and San Juan counties. In 1854, open warfare with the Jicarilla broke out after a series of raids on settlements along the lower Chama River. U.S. military forces and New Mexican militia brought the raiding to a halt, and agencies for the Jicarilla were established at Taos and Cimarron.

In 1874, the tribe entered into a treaty with the United States that established a reservation along the San Juan River in northwest New Mexico. President Rutherford B. Hayes abrogated this agreement in 1876, and ordered the Jicarilla to move onto the Mescalero reservation near Fort Stanton in southern New Mexico. Most of the Jicarilla, ignored the order and remained in northern New Mexico. Policies fluctuated often until 1887, when President Grover Cleveland issued an executive order setting aside the current reservation in Amargo, in western Río Arriba County.

The Jicarilla began moving back to Amargo from the various places they had gone. In the summer of 1987, the tribe re-enacted this trek as part of a centennial commemoration of the establishment of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation. [sidebar 5]

5. Today, the **Jicarilla Apache** govern themselves under a constitution. During past decades, the tribe has negotiated oil and gas leases, managed its timber and livestock resources, developed an elk preserve widely known for its trophy hunting, and opened a casino. The two distinct tribal subgroups, or bands, are the Llaneros (from the Spanish *llano*, meaning plains) and Olleros (from the Spanish *olla*, meaning storage jar). The Llaneros lived on the plains of northeastern New Mexico, while the Olleros were pottery makers who lived in the mountains. Today, they gather annually for "Go-Jii-Ya," which continues an ancient ceremonial relay race between the two bands. The nationally registered **Jicarilla Apache Historic District in Dulce** is home to the Culture Center and Jicarilla Arts & Crafts Museum.

The Navajo

The Navajo call themselves *Diné*, meaning "the people." They do not live in the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage

Area, but have had a considerable effect on the region. They joined with the Pueblo people during the period of struggle with the Spanish, retreating to hidden sites far from the settlers and sharing living quarters and defense. The Navajo adopted horses and sheep from the Spanish and became herders; under pressure as settlers continued to move into their area in the 18th century, they raided Spanish and Pueblo villages alike, creating a period of conflict toward the end of the century.

In 1846, the United States government made several unsuccessful attempts to stop the raids. In 1863, Gen. James S. Carleton implemented a “scorched earth” policy to defeat the Navajo, and in 1864 they were incarcerated in east-central New Mexico at Bosque Redondo, near Fort Sumner. In 1868 the Navajo signed a treaty with the U.S. government, which allowed them to return to their present homeland.

The Navajo’s way of life increasingly centered on the movement of their sheep herds to grazing areas in summer and in winter, though they also farmed; they traded with the Pueblos for food, exchanging meat and hides for corn and other produce. The Navajo are known for their weaving, which they traded far and wide from at least the 18th century, and their jewelry, which developed in the mid-19th century. Their reservation in the Four Corners area, one of the largest in the United States, comprises land in New Mexico, Arizona, and the edge of Utah. The reservation is west of the Heritage Area. [sidebar 6]

6. The **Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian** in Santa Fe houses collections that document Navajo art and culture and Southwestern Native American jewelry, both traditional and modern. The museum presents changing exhibitions of traditional and contemporary Native American arts.

SPANISH COLONIAL NEW MEXICO (1540-1680)

Spanish exploration of the American Southwest, including present-day New Mexico, began after stories of rich cities to the north fired imaginations in New Spain. The stories came from Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, who was shipwrecked off the coast of Texas in 1528 and spent eight years wandering as he tried to make his way back to Mexico. In 1539, Fray Marcos de Niza and his slave, Estevan, were the first to come north from the capital in Mexico City.

When the expedition approached what is now southern Arizona, Fray Marcos received reports from the advance scouting party led by Estevan that Cibola, one of seven magnificent cities, lay ahead.

Despite learning that Estevan had been killed, Fray Marcos rushed forward and encountered a settlement. Instead of Cibola, what he actually found was the ancestral Zuni pueblo of Hawikuh.

In 1540 Fray Marcos set out again, this time with 29-year old Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, who was chosen by the viceroy of New Spain to follow up on Fray Marcos’ “discovery.” As were all such Spanish colonial enterprises of the time, this expedition was privately financed. When the expedition arrived at the outskirts of the multi-storied, stone and adobe village of Hawikuh, the Spanish were met by Zuni warriors, intent on defending their homes. After a furious but uneven battle, mounted Spanish soldiers replenished their supplies from captured

Zuni storerooms and continued on their two-year quest, which took them into and beyond what today is the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area.

In the summer of 1541, Capt. Francisco de Barrionuevo of the Coronado party traveled north along the west side of the Río Grande to the Tewa villages of Yuque-Yunque, which they described as “two very beautiful pueblos which were on opposite sides of the river... In these two pueblos were found abundant provisions and beautiful glazed pottery of many decorations and shapes.” These were the pueblos that, 50 years later, the Spanish would settle and rename San Juan de Los Caballeros and San Gabriel.

Barrionuevo and his men proceeded farther north along the river until they reached a large pueblo the Spanish called Valladolid, after an important city in Spain; this was Taos Pueblo. “The river flowed through the center of it,” Barrionuevo noted, “and the river was spanned by wooden bridges built with very large and heavy square pine timbers.” The Pueblo has changed little in the past five centuries.

The Coronado expedition explored deep into the North American continent, but discovered that the fabled cities of gold were only a myth. In the winter of 1542, the disheartened and bankrupt adventurers returned to Mexico. Not only were they unsuccessful in their quest to find the Seven Cities of Cibola, but the expedition also failed miserably in its relations with the inhabitants of the region. The Spanish were heavy-handed in their demands for food and supplies, leading to numerous conflicts with the

Indians and the destruction of several Pueblos. The best known of these is Kuaua Pueblo, near the place where the expedition spent the winter of 1540-1541, now Coronado State Monument near Bernalillo.

SETTLEMENT OF NEW MEXICO BY JUAN DE OÑATE IN 1598

Spanish settlement into northern Mexico advanced slowly but steadily in the late 1500s. During the 1580s, several expeditions entered present New Mexico, including one led by Fray Bernardo Beltrán and Antonio de Espejo in 1582 that is said for the first time to officially use the term, *la Nueva Mexico*. Expedition reports alerted Spanish officials to the many potential Indian converts to Christianity and encouraged the subsequent conquest and colonization of this "new" Mexico.

In 1595, the Spanish government awarded a contract to settle New Mexico to Juan de Oñate, whose father, Don Cristóbal, earlier had helped Cortés conquer Mexico. Oñate’s contract specified in great detail the number of settlers, livestock, and other provisions and equipment he was to provide. In return, he was given titles that gave him civil and military authority over the colony. He also was to be the primary beneficiary of any riches that might be discovered.

After three years of preparation, an enormous caravan of nearly 200 soldier-colonists, many with wives and families, nine Franciscan priests, several hundred Mexican Indian servants and allies, and thousands of head of livestock left, in January of 1598, for northern Mexico. The expedition advanced slowly and, in April

1598, paused near present-day Ciudad Juárez, where Oñate took formal possession of the province in the name of King Philip of Spain. On July 11, an advance party of the expedition arrived at the Tewa village of Ohkay Owingeh, near the confluence of the Río Grande and the Río Chama in the Heritage Area. Renaming the village San Juan de Los Caballeros, here they established the first Spanish capital and Christian church in New Mexico. Oñate's chronicles suggest that the Spanish expanded the ditches and irrigation systems the natives of Ohkay Owingeh utilized for the irrigation of their own fields.

After a few months, the Spanish relocated their settlement to the west bank of the Río Grande at the village of Yunque, renamed San Gabriel. Here they built another church, whose archeological remnants were excavated in 1960 by Dr. Florence Ellis of the University of New

Mexico. [sidebar 7] The settlement served as the capital of New Mexico until the new *villa* (royal town) of Santa Fe was established 20 miles to the south; the seat of government moved there in 1610. Santa Fe celebrated its 400th anniversary as the capital of New México in 2010.

[sidebar 8]

THE PUEBLO REVOLT OF 1680

During the next several decades, a thin string of Spanish settlements were

established along the Río Grande. Still, nearly a century after the colony was established, there were fewer than 3,000 Spanish inhabitants in the entire province. The 1600s presented a series of challenges to Spanish rule, most derived from Spanish intolerance of Pueblo religious practices and a persistent abuse of Indian labor. The Spanish clergy, charged by the king to convert Indians to Christianity, systematically destroyed Pueblo kivas and suppressed dances and other ceremonial practices important to the Pueblos.

Several Pueblo resistance uprisings proved unsuccessful. The situation reached a critical point in the 1670s when increased Apache raids and drought devastated crops and led to the starvation deaths of hundreds, if not thousands, of Pueblo people.

The crisis peaked in 1675, when 47 *caciques*, Pueblo spiritual leaders, were arrested and taken to Santa Fe to face charges

of practicing sorcery and plotting rebellion. Four were executed; the others were whipped, then released. Among those released was Popay (also known as Popé), a Tewa from San Juan Pueblo. Popay spent five years following his release traveling among the pueblos and organizing an uprising. From a base of operations at Taos, Popay and his confederates laid out a plan that depended upon the unprecedented cooperation and participation of all of New Mexico's Pueblos. At a prearranged

7. The ruins of **San Gabriel de Yunque-Ouinge** are a National Historic Landmark marking the site of the first Spanish-built capital of New Mexico. The capital was moved to Santa Fe in 1610. A replica of this church, constructed entirely of adobe, serves as a visitor center in the plaza of Española some six miles to the south of Ohkay Owingeh.

8. The **Santa Fe Plaza**, a National Historic Landmark, continues as the social and economic center of the city, which was established in the winter of 1609-1610. Traders and travelers knew the Plaza as the terminus of the Santa Fe Trail

signal, each Pueblo was to destroy its mission church and kill the resident priest and neighboring Spanish settlers. Once the outlying Spanish settlements were destroyed, the Pueblo forces were to converge on the isolated capital of Santa Fe. Runners were dispatched to all the Pueblos carrying cords tied with knots signifying the number of days remaining until the appointed day to rise in unison – the day the last knot was untied.

The attacks began on the morning of August 10, 1680, from the northern Tiwa Pueblo of Taos to the Tewa villages near Santa Fe. Spanish settlers able to escape the initial onslaught made their way to the relative safety of Santa Fe's fortified seat of government – today's Palace of the Governors. [sidebar 9] Meanwhile, more than a thousand additional survivors managed to gather at Isleta Pueblo, 70 miles south of Santa Fe. Within five days, thousands of Pueblo warriors had converged on Santa Fe, but were unable to dislodge the Spanish until they cut off the water supply – an irrigation ditch running through the sprawling compound.

After two days without water, Governor Antonio de Otermín led a column of at least a thousand refugees from the capital. They joined Lt. Governor Alonso García and the refugees from Isleta Pueblo and slowly retreated to El Paso del Norte, the southernmost settlement in the province, near present-day Ciudad Juárez. There, approximately 2,000 Spanish refugees spent the winter.

Wrongly assuming that the Pueblos would welcome the Spanish back to aid against Apache raids, Otermín quickly made plans for a reconquest, but his expedition was

forced to retreat. As they again left, the Spanish burned the Pueblo of Isleta and took with them nearly 400 of its inhabitants, who were resettled at what is today's Ysleta del Sur near El Paso, Texas.

By all appearances the revolt had succeeded. During the revolt, an estimated 600 colonists and 21 Franciscan priests were killed, and churches and Spanish settlements destroyed. Popay and the other Pueblo leaders began a systematic eradication of all signs of Christianity. But, many other Spanish introductions, such as iron tools, sheep, cattle, and fruit trees, had by then become an integral part of Pueblo life.

9. The Palace of Governors, on the Plaza in downtown Santa Fe, was erected from 1610 to 1612 as the fortress of the royal presidio of Santa Fe and is the oldest public building built by European settlers in the continental United States. It served as the residence of the Spanish, Mexican, and American governors of New Mexico until 1907. Architecturally, the structure combined Pueblo Indian and Spanish methods of construction and design, producing a new type of building that was widely used throughout the Southwest. The Palace of Governors is a National Historic Landmark.

THE RECONQUEST AND RESETTLEMENT OF NEW MEXICO (1692-1821)

In 1690, Diego de Vargas Zapata Luján Ponce de Leon was appointed governor of New Mexico and assigned the task of reconquering the province. With a modest force of fewer than 200 soldiers and three friars, De Vargas left El Paso del Norte in August of 1692. When the group arrived in Santa Fe, they found the old Spanish

capital fortified and its inhabitants defiant. Through a mix of diplomacy, soft words, and with threat of siege, De Vargas won over the Indians, and unfurled the Spanish banner over Santa Fe. He continued his tour through the entire province. By year's end, most of New Mexico's Pueblos were officially restored to the Spanish empire.

[[sidebar 10](#)]

10. Don Diego De Vargas' reoccupation of Santa Fe is commemorated every year in **la Fiesta de Santa Fe**, first held in 1712 by proclamation of Gov. Marquez de La Peñuela. During the fiesta, arts and crafts and food booths fill the Plaza, and the music of Mexican *mariachis* plays throughout the city. The religious orientation of the commemoration is observed in celebration of Mass and other liturgical events including a candlelight procession to the Cross of the Martyrs, and veneration of the 29-inch, wood-carved Marian statute, *La Conquistadora*, which was rescued from the burning parish church as the Spanish fled Santa Fe during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. The festival includes a reenactment of de Vargas's return to the city, and is initiated with burning of *Zozobra* ("Old Man Gloom"), the 50-foot-tall marionette.

Any jubilation, however, was short-lived. In 1693, de Vargas returned to begin the re-colonization of New Mexico with 70 families, 18 Franciscan friars, a number of soldiers, and Tlaxcalan (Mexican Indian) allies. But many Pueblo people had second thoughts since the previous year. The returning colonists found Santa Fe once again fortified. After two weeks of futile negotiations, de Vargas took Santa Fe by force in a fierce, two-day battle. He then summarily executed 70 Pueblo defenders and sentenced several hundred men, women, and children to 10 years of servitude.

Most of the Pueblos continued to resist. In the summer of 1696, twenty-six Spaniards, including five missionaries, were killed during a general rebellion, often called the Second Pueblo Revolt. For the next several years, almost continual warfare disrupted life in New Mexico. Many pueblos were abandoned, and some inhabitants fled to the mountains, seeking refuge among the Hopi, Navajo, and Apache. As more Spanish families arrived in Santa Fe, missions were re-established, and Spanish settlements grew. By century's end, the Reconquest was virtually complete.

An important part of the Reconquest was the Franciscan effort to re-establish Catholic missions. The friars' labors included new parish churches and chapels in the dozens of communities that developed throughout the province as New Mexico's frontier expanded and the population grew. The "crown jewels" of the Heritage Area's churches were built during this period of expansion. El Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Santa Fe, La Iglesia de Santa Cruz de la Cañada in Santa Cruz, San Francisco de Asís in Ranchos de Taos, El Santuario de Chimayó in Chimayó, and San José de Gracia in Las Trampas remain in active use. [[sidebar 11](#)]



San José de Gracias - Las Trampas Church

11. El Santuario de Chimayo, San Francisco de Asís, and San Jose de Gracia are National Historic Landmarks. **El Santuario De Chimayó** was completed in 1816. The small adobe church is notable for its original decorations, including numerous superb religious paintings. **San Francisco de Asís Mission Church** was constructed between 1772 and 1816. With its massive, white-stucco adobe walls, it is a large and excellent example of a Spanish Colonial church. **San Jose De Gracia Church** was erected between 1760 and 1776. Well-preserved, its interior decorations include paintings on carved wooden *reredos* and sidewalls, and under the balcony.

Today, the Catholic Church remains strong in New Mexico. During decades of the 18th and 19th centuries when there were few priests, the lay brotherhood, known as *penitentes*, or The Pious Fraternity of Our Lord Jesus of Nazareth, helped to keep the faith alive. Penitente rituals were held in *moradas*, fraternity houses. La Morada de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe, near Taos, is representative of these houses. Built in a traditional adobe style and fully completed by 1834, the *morada*, David Fernandez writes, “was the center of nearly all the Hermanos’ activities in the area for many decades.” [sidebar 12]

12. **La Morada de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe**, east of Taos on U.S. 64, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Taos holds title to the *morada*. The *Penitentes* were a secret society that flourished in northern New Mexico. *Los Hermanos Penitentes* are active in many communities in the Heritage Area. Although still a secret society, their fundamental principles are to provide assistance to their communities.

In pueblos today, the Mass incorporates elements of Pueblo language and ceremonials into the Roman Catholic liturgy. It is not unusual to attend a Mass during which readings are spoken in Keres, hymns sung in Tewa, or an eagle dance performed as an offertory; in the Cathedral Basilica of Santa Fe, Native lectors will read passages in Tewa on special occasions.

As a result of the suppression of Jewish faith during the 1600s during the Spanish Inquisition, many Jews became *conversos* (converts) and many of the new waves of Hispanic settlers brought their Jewish rituals and traditions, now kept alive in hidden ways. Indeed, among many Hispanic families in New Mexico, Jewish ritual traditions are established in an unknown cultural reference formed centuries ago.

Religious identity and attendance continues today among the various cultures. In Santa Fe there are two synagogues in addition to the numerous Catholic parishes. Other religions also have a place in the Heritage Area. Protestant missionaries came to New Mexico over the Santa Fe Trail to work among American Indians. A Presbyterian church, the only one in the Territory of New Mexico, was built in Santa Fe in 1867. There is a mosque, Dar-al Islam, at Abiquiu and a Buddhist *stupa* in Santa Fe.

THE LAND-GRANT SYSTEM: EXPANSION OF SETTLEMENT FOLLOWING THE RECONQUEST

Changed relationships between the Spanish and the Pueblos characterized the 1700s. Both realized they needed to

cooperate to defend themselves against the many raiding tribes. The Spanish abolished abusive Indian labor practices and instituted land grants, which included Indian groups and helped to ensure that Pueblos retained their land base.

Three principal types of land grants were made in New Mexico: to Pueblos, to communities, and to private individuals as rewards for service to the Crown. Dozens of private land grants were distributed within the Heritage Area during the 1700s and early 1800s, but the most prominent type of grant was the community grant, made to groups who agreed to establish a communal settlement and cultivate the land.

Community grants were a significant factor in the expansion of the northern Rio Grande region in the 18th and 19th centuries. Generally, each individual in the group was allotted a plot of irrigable land for cultivation. These allotments were narrow strips (“long lots”) abutting the community’s *acequia madre*, or mother ditch, so that each lot had access to irrigation. [sidebar 13] This pattern of fields and irrigation systems, which defined the landscape of every land-grant community within the Heritage Area, is still visible today in the Los Ojos, Tierra Amarilla, La Puente, and Los Brazos historic districts in northern Rio Arriba County. [sidebar 14]

The remaining land not allotted to individuals was reserved for the common use and benefit of all the settlers. Collectively, they could use this land to pasture and water livestock, gather firewood, cut timber for building their homes, hunt, and conduct activities

necessary for subsistence. Under Spanish and Mexican law, the common lands could not be sold away from the community. However, after the American occupation of 1846 and the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, U.S. law encouraged the sale of millions of acres of community land.

13. **Acequias** are gravity-flow, communal irrigation ditches that date to the Spanish entry into New Mexico in 1598. By diverting water from rivers and streams to irrigate agricultural fields and pastures, acequias shape the landscape, and community life and regional identity. **La Cienega Acequia** on the property of **El Rancho de las Golondrinas**, 12 miles southeast of Santa Fe, is one of the best-preserved acequia systems in New Mexico. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it dates to the era of Spanish colonial settlement. The acequia remains in operation along relatively unchanged alignments and contains several traditional water control devices such as dams, checks, and flumes. **El Rancho de las Golondrinas** is a living history museum dedicated to the history, heritage and culture of 18th and 19th century New Mexico. Original colonial buildings on the site date from the early 1700s. Also still in operation is the **Acequia Madre** on the east side of Santa Fe. Community members gather every year to clean the seven-mile-long acequia, which for centuries watered fields of vegetables, wheat and large orchards. Now, surrounded on both sides by houses and business, it waters “fruit trees, gardens, flowers and yards.”

14. The historic districts of **Los Ojos, Tierra Amarilla, La Puente, and Los Brazos**, known for their distinct blend of Victorian and traditional adobe architecture, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as significant representations of early Hispanic settlement, as are the La Puente and Tierra Amarilla community ditches. The Tierra Amarilla Land Grant, situated along the Rio Chama, dates to 1832, and permanent settlement in the area took hold in the early 1860s.

IMPACT OF EUROPEAN MATERIAL CULTURE AND AGRICULTURE

Land grants expanded and consolidated the frontier, resulting in more growing space for crops, providing grazing for livestock, firewood, timber for building homes and corrals, as well as game for hunting. Sheep and goats provided meat and wool that was spun and woven into cloth and blankets for personal use, sold for cash, or traded for goods. A few cattle provided milk, meat, and hides. Most communities also had *ciboleros*, men who traveled to the eastern plains every fall to hunt buffalo. Wagons loaded with jerked and dried buffalo meat and thousands of tanned buffalo hides helped many communities survive what were often severe and lean winters.

In 1803, Gov. Fernando de Chacón submitted one of the earliest reports on economic conditions in New Mexico, in which he described agriculture, industry, arts, commerce, and economic conditions. He pointed out that most of the region's population, which he estimated at almost 36,000, lived along the banks of the Rio Grande. He reported that farmers planted wheat, corn, barley, and a variety of vegetables, but tended to produce only what they needed for subsistence. In contrast, Chacón reported, the Pueblos developed ***“large fields which they cultivate in common, taking into account the needs of widows, orphans, the sick, those employed elsewhere or absent; in this manner and by saving the harvest from one year to the next, they never feel the effects of hunger. In addition they apply themselves to the cultivation of orchards, planting fruit trees and vines.”***

Twenty-six years later the Mexican census gave a snapshot of life in northern New Mexico. Describing the village of Santo Tomás Apostol de Abiquiú (now Abiquiú) and its surrounding inhabitants, the census placed the population at 3,611 and mentioned that residents cultivated wheat, corn, legumes, chile, and onions, and that hunters went northeast to hunt buffalo and trade with Indians. Most important, however, was the wool industry. Residents joined the annual caravan of traders and herders, the strings of pack mules carrying trade items and herds of oxen and sheep, all going south to Mexico City down *El Camino Real*, the royal road. The sheep ranchers from Abiquiú took great quantities of raw wool to trade for mercantile goods. [sidebar15]

Another report, dated 1840, from the area stretching from the Santa Clara Pueblo north up the Española Valley, gives some detail of the extent of agriculture and the impact of crops introduced by the Spanish. Barley, wheat, and garbanzo beans (*abas*), all introduced from Europe, were planted in March while native corn was planted in April. The harvests ran from July through October. Wheat and corn were the most abundant and important of these crops; others included peas, lentils, garlic, onions, and melons, (all European imports), as well as chile and *punche*, the native tobacco. Orchards of apricots, peaches, apples, and plums also were introduced from Europe. Men dug ditches for irrigating the fields, planted, harvested, worked with wool and wove blankets, while women ground corn and wheat, made stockings and spun wool. The report states that the region did not have much in the manner of precious metals or minerals.

15. Wool and the weaving arts continue to be an important aspect of the Heritage Area. At the **Taos Wool Festival**, held every October, juried vendors display their wool fiber, yarns, and artistic creations. Food vendors feature lamb delicacies and goat cheeses. Shearing, spinning, and dyeing demonstrations are part of the festivities, as are sheep, alpacas, goats, and angora rabbits.

The village of Los Ojos is home to **Tierra Wools**, which includes a showroom where visitors can watch weavers spin, dye yard and create works of art. The enterprise, including a retail store carrying local wool, offers workshops in spinning, hand dyeing, and hand weaving, as well as guest accommodations.

Weaving galleries are numerous. Among the most noted are **Centinela Traditional Arts** and **Ortega's Weaving**, both in Chimayó, and both continuing traditional and authentic Río Grande Style (Chimayó style) weaving. The **Española Valley Fiber Arts Center** preserves and promotes the rich textile heritage of northern New Mexico. The center teaches traditional techniques, hosts lectures, tours and demonstrations, and makes materials available to local artists.



Velarde farming community

SPANISH AND PUEBLO RELATIONS WITH THE PLAINS TRIBES

Raids from Indian tribes outside the area had a devastating effect on settlement during the Spanish period. The Ute and

Jicarilla Apache came from the north and raided farms and herds of Pueblos and settlers. From the east, raiders from the Plains tribes, including the Comanche, had been raiding Pueblo fields long before the Spanish arrived. And increasingly, Navajo bands came from the west.

In the spring of 1748, ongoing raiding prompted the settlers of Santa Rosa, Ojo Caliente and Pueblo Quemado (present-day Córdova) to petition the government, successfully, for permission to abandon their homes and move back to more populated communities along the lower Río Chama and Río Grande. Two years later, at the command of Governor Tomás Vélez Cachupín, a small squad of soldiers escorted a handful of settlers back to Santa Rosa to re-establish the settlement. To better defend villages from Indian attack, churches and houses were built around a plaza, but only the hardest settlers stayed on.

In the Taos region, settlement also was slow and late. Formal resettlement after the Reconquest began in 1715 with the Cristóbal de la Serna grant. Thirty years later, the 1744 report of Fray Juan Miguel de Menchero listed only 10 families of Españoles at the “ranchos de Taos.” Continued raiding, and in particular a Comanche raid in 1760, prompted many Spanish settlers to abandon their ranches and move into the relative protection of the Pueblo of Taos.

Responses to raids varied. Official reports usually include information about what was taken, whether anyone was killed, injured, or kidnapped, and whether a pursuit was organized and what it accomplished. Pursuit usually was futile,

but occasionally raiders were caught and livestock and captives recovered. In 1768, Gov. Fermín de Mendinueta reported that a small garrison of presidio troops, along with settlers and some allied Utes, repulsed an attack by 24 Comanches who raided Ojo Caliente in Taos County. After the Comanches charged the plaza and killed a settler, the group gave chase, killed some Comanches and took two prisoners. The following month, intent on revenge, 500 Comanches led by Chief Cuerno Verde (Green Horn) staged a failed attack on Ojo Caliente. Cuerno Verde led his people until 1779, when he was killed and the Comanches decisively defeated by Spanish forces. Today, villagers in Heritage Area towns such as Alcalde commemorate this battle by mounting horses and staging a play. In 1786, New Mexico signed formal peace treaties with the Comanche and Ute.

By the 1790s, new communities moved into land grants at Cieneguilla and Río Grande del Rancho, and, in 1796, the Don Fernando de Taos land grant led to establishment of what today is the town of Taos. [sidebar 16]

16. Taos, named for Don Fernando de Taos, was established between 1780 and 1800, its fortified plaza ringed by low adobe buildings. The town grew beyond its original defensive walls and became an important center for trade on the Santa Fe Trail. Taos continued to expand in the mid- to late-19th century when artists settled in and around the plaza, spurring a cultural revival. Today, aspects of each of Taos' periods of history are evident in the Downtown Historic District, where Spanish Colonial Style residences stand side by side with Territorial, Mission Revival, and Pueblo Revival style houses.

THE MEXICAN PERIOD (1821-1846)

MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE AND OPENING OF THE SANTA FE TRAIL

When Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, it brought to a close more than two centuries of Spanish rule and made New Mexico a part of the Mexican Republic. The change of government had little initial effect on New Mexico except in one important way – it terminated Spanish policies that restricted contact and trade with foreigners. Instead, Mexican rule encouraged open trade with the outside, especially with foreigners from the emerging United States of America. Mexico's independence ushered in a new era of commerce, once again changing the course of New Mexico's history.

Beginning in 1821, the 1,200-mile-long Santa Fe Trail, from St. Louis to Santa Fe, became an important international trade route that fostered the exchange of goods between the United States and Mexico. Santa Fe developed into a bustling trade center, with caravans continuing south to Chihuahua along *El Camino Real*, or west to California along the Old Spanish Trail. [sidebar 17] During this period, fur traders – many of French-Canadian descent, as reflected in local surnames such as Robidoux, LeFevre, Ledoux, and Jeantet – came to New Mexico, as did merchants of various nationalities. The young Mexican government had its own concerns and internal conflicts, however, and could not allocate much attention or many resources to this frontier province.

17. The **Santa Fe National Historic Trail** is significant in a number of historical contexts. From 1821 to 1846 it was an international trade route that fostered an exchange of goods – and cultures – among Hispanic, Indian, and American people. With the end of the Mexican War in 1848, the trail played a critical role in the westward expansion of the United States and eventually developed into the first major transportation route between the eastern United States and the American Southwest. The National Park Service administers the trail through a network of partners, including local governments, tribes, and private entities.

The **Old Spanish National Historic Trail** was a commercial trade route first used in 1829 by the Mexican trader Antonio Armijo, who carried blankets and serapes to trade in California for horses and mules. Over the next 20 years, Mexican and American traders continued to ply variants of the route that Armijo pioneered, frequently trading with Indians along the way. The Old Spanish Trail crosses six states – New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and California – and is managed by the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management.

El Camino Real – meaning the Royal Road or King’s Highway – led north from Mexico City. It was the oldest highway to the north, having been extended by segments throughout the 16th century. Administered today by the National Park Service, **El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail** extends from El Paso, Texas, through Santa Fe to Ohkay Owingeh in Española.

THE REVOLT OF 1837 IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

In 1835, the Mexican government dispatched Albino Pérez to New Mexico to assume the governorship. In 1836, he was officially required to institute the new

Mexican Constitution, which made New Mexico a department of the Republic. The Constitution replaced centuries-old Spanish systems of community-level governments with a departmental *Junta*, or advisory council.

By the time of Pérez’s governorship, trade along the Santa Fe Trail was well-established and tariffs imposed on American merchants constituted the revenue the Mexican government relied on to support its military garrison, or *presidio*, in Santa Fe and also to finance operations of the government. Pérez also was required to impose a direct tax. This tax was opposed by virtually all New Mexicans, who had for centuries been granted exemptions from direct taxes in return for bearing the expense – in money and lives – of defending the northern frontier. Nor did the newer *Americanos* have any fondness for paying taxes.

The situation came to a boil in the summer of 1837. New Mexico was besieged by tribal raiders, but the Mexican government was in turmoil and unable to help. New taxes were threatened, municipalities had been stripped of their authority, and tensions with the Americans were high. A “Revolutionary Proclamation” was issued at Santa Cruz de la Cañada near present-day Española. This proclamation declared the citizens’ opposition to the plan to turn New Mexico into a department and made it clear that those who supported the plan were not welcome in New Mexico. The “Revolt of 1837” had begun.

Governor Pérez and a small force left Santa Fe and marched to Santa Cruz. They encountered a large force of rebels just

south of present-day Española. After a short, fierce battle, his small force was overwhelmed, and Pérez and a few of his men retreated to Santa Fe. But there was no longer any support or refuge at the capital, and they fled south toward the *Río Abajo*. That night, the besieged governor and at least eight of his supporters were overtaken at various points along the road south of Santa Fe and killed. Four months later, the influential merchants and rich landowners of the *Río Abajo*, led by Manuel Armijo, raised their own army in opposition to the rebels; in January 1838 a squadron of dragoons from Mexico arrived at Santa Fe and the short-lived Revolt of 1837 came to a bloody end.

THE U.S.–MEXICAN WAR AND OCCUPATION OF NEW MEXICO

A quarter-century of Mexican rule in New Mexico ended in 1846. On May 13, 1846, the United States Congress declared war on Mexico, and, three months later, Gen. Stephen Watts Kearny and his Army of the West marched along the Santa Fe Trail into New Mexico's undefended northern frontier. Manuel Armijo, now governor, declared his intention to confront the American army at Apache Canyon, east of the capital, but fled. Kearny entered Santa Fe and took possession of New Mexico on August 18 without firing a shot.

On September 22, 1846, Kearny instituted the Kearny Code, a mix of military and civilian authority under which New Mexico was to be governed. Kearny appointed Taos merchant Charles Bent as the first civil governor of New Mexico and Donaciano Vigil as territorial secretary. For the next several months, while war raged in central Mexico, all seemed quiet in New

Mexico.

UNITED STATES TERRITORIAL PERIOD (1846-1912)

At the time of the occupation, Mexico and the United States were at war, and New Mexicans were still citizens of the Republic of Mexico. While the Americans were busy organizing a new government in the ancient capital of Santa Fe, quiet plans were being hatched to rid New Mexico of its latest conquerors.

REVOLT OF 1847

By the end of 1846, rumors of an impending uprising were serious enough to prompt Governor Bent to order the arrest of several suspected "leaders and prime movers" of this covert opposition. These actions, however, did not quell the mounting unrest and, on January 19, 1847, Bent was killed in Taos, as were several other officials at other locations. [sidebar 18] By the following day, more than a thousand insurrectionists were reported advancing toward Santa Fe, intent on recapturing New Mexico from *los Americanos*.

To challenge the New Mexico rebels, nearly 400 American troops and a company of volunteers led by Col. Sterling Price marched north from Santa Fe. In a series of battles at Santa Cruz and Embudo, they defeated the rebels. By February 1, the New Mexicans had retreated to the Pueblo of Taos, where they fortified their positions and braced for more fighting. A fierce two-day battle ensued in which the Americans succeeded in breaching the walls of the pueblo

church. They routed the New Mexicans and crushed the Revolt of 1847.

A military court was convened at the village of Don Fernando, just south of the Taos Pueblo, to try several dozen men captured following the battle at the pueblo and their leaders, **Tomás Romero** and **Pablo Montoya**. Romero was shot and killed by a guard, leaving Montoya to stand alone at the trial. Pablo Montoya was hanged on the village plaza for his "rebellious conduct" against the United States, as were at least 15 other men. Later that summer, six more men were hanged at Santa Fe. A report of these final executions notes the sad tolling of all the church bells in Santa Fe in mourning as the men were hanged. It was a harrowing end to another tragic period in New Mexico history. In all, more than two dozen Hispanic and Indian men were hanged for their resistance to the conquest of New Mexico by U.S. forces.

18. Gov. Charles Bent was killed at his adobe home at 117 Bent St. in Taos. The house, now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a museum open to the public.

TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO 1848

On February 2, 1848, the **Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Limits and Settlement**, commonly referred to as the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo** (after the village in Mexico where the treaty was signed), brought a formal end to the war between Mexico and the United States. It not only ended the war, but also changed the maps of Mexico and the entire American Southwest. Under the principal provisions of the treaty, the United States paid

Mexico \$15 million and assumed several million dollars of claims brought by U.S. citizens against Mexico. In exchange, Mexico ceded to the United States nearly half of its territory – all of its holdings north of the Río Grande and west to California. On September 9, 1850, New Mexico was recognized officially as a territory of the United States.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNTIES AND DISTRICT COURTS

Kearny's Code of 1846 organized "circuit," or district courts, for seven loosely defined counties – including Rio Arriba, Santa Fe and Taos counties – based on the political subdivisions or *partidas* designated by the earlier Mexican government. The boundaries of Río Arriba and Taos counties formed two long, adjacent strips, running east-west and extending from the border of Texas to California. The narrow boundaries were shortened substantially in 1863 when Arizona was created as a separate territory. The 1880 legislature created a north-south boundary that ceded all of western Taos County to Río Arriba County.

THE CIVIL WAR IN NEW MEXICO

New Mexico played a small but significant role in the Civil War. Early in the conflict, the Confederacy set its sights on the Santa Fe Trail to gain access to the gold fields of Colorado and the ports and gold fields of California. In February 1862, Confederate forces from Texas marched up the Río Grande to take the towns of Albuquerque and Santa Fe and, most importantly, the military supply depot at Fort Union in neighboring San Miguel County. They then planned to move on to the gold fields

of Colorado. Along the way, they battled Union troops, captured the towns of Socorro and Albuquerque and the abandoned capital of Santa Fe; for more than two weeks the Confederate flag flew over the ancient Palace of the Governors.

A pivotal battle, the “Gettysburg of the West,” at Glorieta Pass began on March 26, 1862. A Union force comprising Fort Union regulars, and volunteers from New Mexico and Colorado, first confronted the Confederate Army (Texas volunteers) at Apache Canyon, east of Santa Fe. After three days of fighting in the region, Union raiders destroyed the nearly unguarded Confederate supply train, forcing the Texans to retreat, ending the Confederate threat to the West. [sidebar 19]

19. The site of this Civil War battle, 10 miles southeast of Santa Fe, has been designed as **Glorieta Pass Battlefield National Historic Landmark**. The site is preserved as part of Pecos National Historical Park, which also includes Pecos Pueblo and Spanish mission ruins, the ruts of the Santa Fe Trail, and the Forked Lighting Ranch. National Park Service rangers conduct van tour of locations relevant to the Battle of Glorieta Pass, including Camp Lewis, Kozlowski's stage stop, Apache Canyon, Canoncito and Pigeon's Ranch.

ARRIVAL OF THE RAILROAD

In the mid-1800s, two technologies – the telegraph and the railroad – brought changes as broad as those resulting from the Spanish introduction of new crops and animals. Telegraphic communications were established in Santa Fe on July 8, 1868. Rail lines followed. By 1877, two competing companies, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) and

the Denver and Rio Grande Railway (D&RG), started to build railway lines into New Mexico. The railroad made travel easy and brought increasing numbers of tourists to the northern Rio Grande, especially to visit archaeological sites and pueblos. Equally important, the railroads moved goods and freight cheaply for wool and sheep, two important local products.

The AT&SF Railway

On February 14, 1880, Santa Fe’s principal newspaper, *The New Mexican*, reported the arrival of the first Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe locomotive in Santa Fe. Rail service continued, more or less, for the next 100 years. In 1996, the AT&SF merged with the Burlington Northern Railroad, now operating as the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway. Some of the freight and passenger operations of the AT&SF were taken up in 1992 by the Santa Fe Southern Railway. The old AT&SF depot near downtown Santa Fe, a state register-listed building, took on additional life in 2006 when a commuter service, the “Rail Runner,” run by the State of New Mexico, began operations between Santa Fe and Belen, just south of Albuquerque.

The D&RG Railway

The Denver and Rio Grande built tracks west from Walsenburg, Colorado. Its narrow-gauge tracks (36 inches wide as opposed to the standard 56½ inches) were better suited to navigate the steep slopes and squeeze through the narrow canyons of Rocky Mountain ranges. The D&RG ran its narrow-gauge line over La Veta Pass – at an elevation of 9,242 feet – and across the San Luis Valley to Antonito, Colorado.

Two D&RG routes diverged at Antonito and created the principal railroads in northern New Mexico. The “Chili Line,” so-called after the native grown chile crop of the Española Valley and the colorful *ristras* (strings of chile pods) that draped the homes of valley residents, went between Antonito and Santa Fe. The other line, the D&RG West, now known as the Cumbres and Toltec, went southwest over Cumbres Pass into the town of Chama, New Mexico, and then on to Durango, Colorado.



Red Chile Ristras

The Chili Line

On December 31, 1880, the Chili Line arrived at the site where the new town of Española was established. To complete the trip to Santa Fe, train passengers boarded a stagecoach. In 1887, through the efforts of another railway company (the Texas, Santa Fe & Northern), the rail line was extended to Santa Fe. On its way

north from Santa Fe, the train carried passengers, mixed freight, and mail through Española and past the farms and orchards of the northern Río Grande Valley. The Chili Line stopped at Embudo Station, then continued on to Antonito, where connections could be made to destinations throughout the United States. In Santa Fe, excursion trains were popular with tourists who rode to the neighboring pueblos, especially on pueblo feast days. But most of all, the Chili Line served as northern New Mexico’s link to southern Colorado and the important commercial and banking center of Denver.

The Chili Line operated daily for three decades, but lacking revenue, made its final run from Santa Fe to Antonito on the morning of September 1, 1941. Within a week, the company began scrapping the line. Today, traces of the track are visible along New Mexico 68 between Velarde and Pilar.

The Cumbres and Toltec (D&RG San Juan Extension)

Simultaneously with construction of the Chili Line, the Denver and Rio Grande Railway began laying track westward, over Cumbres Pass (elevation 10,015 feet) to Durango, Colorado. Known as the San Juan Extension, the line reached Chama, New Mexico, in early 1881, then went across the Continental Divide to Durango. Within a few years, the mining and timber towns of Monero and Lumberton, as well as Dulce, were well-established stations. The San Juan Extension served Rio Arriba County for nearly a century, moving people and two major products, timber and sheep. At one time, there were so many sheep camps in the area that Chama

shipped more wool and lambs than anywhere else in the country.

By the 1930s, competition from the expanding operation of freight trucks and passenger buses cut into the rail business. The final run from Chama to Alamosa, Colorado, was made on January 31, 1951. From the late 1950s through the fall of 1966, special excursion trains ran from Antonito over Cumbres Pass to Silverton, Colorado. [sidebar 20]



Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad

20. A dedicated group of railroad enthusiasts and preservationists formed the D&RG Narrow Gauge Railway Preservation Association, which campaigned successfully to save part of the 1,000-mile narrow gauge network. In 1970, New Mexico and Colorado appropriated funds to purchase rail lines, narrow gauge engines, and equipment. Today, the 64-mile **Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad (C&TSRR)** makes daily runs, from late spring through late fall, between Chama, New Mexico, and Antonito, Colorado. It is New Mexico's last remnant of the railroad that changed the history of the Heritage Area.

TIMBER OPERATIONS IN THE TIERRA AMARILLA LAND GRANT 1880-1924

The massive forests of northern New Mexico, particularly those in Rio Arriba County, impressed travelers and entrepreneurs, alike. In 1832, forests covered almost the entire Tierra Amarilla Land Grant made by the Mexican government to Manuel Martínez, his sons, and several dozen settlers from the Abiquiú region. Following the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, adjudication of the grant resulted in land sales to private interests. By 1880, attorney Thomas D. Catron, whose name often is associated with politicians and land speculators, held most of the vast land grant. By 1886, with the presence of the railroad making the timber easily accessible, Catron lost no time in exploiting the forests.

He drew in companies to expand timber operations and, by the early 1890s, at least a dozen mills were making inroads into timber tracts west of Chama. Spur lines were built to the county seat at Tierra Amarilla and south from Lumberton into forests in the Gallinas Mountains. The company town of El Vado and its sawmill began operations in 1904, and for several years timber was cut along rail lines and spurs beyond Dulce Lake. By the mid-1920s, the stands of virgin timber on the Jicarilla Apache Reservation had been clear-cut, and a mill and the rail line shut down. Operations at El Vado also closed as towns disappeared as quickly as the forests. The region's intensive logging industry and the railroads associated with it was short-lived.

THE ADJUDICATION OF SPANISH AND MEXICAN LAND GRANTS

In addition to Pueblo-owned lands, which are based on land grants made to Pueblos following the Reconquest of 1692, there were at least 90 Spanish and Mexican grants made within the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area between 1695 and the 1840s. Of these, fewer than 10 still retain the formal status of community land grants. The city of Santa Fe, for example, still functions within the municipal character of a community land grant, and the Pueblo of Abiquiú in Río Arriba County still retains ownership of and manages a significant portion of its original common lands. In addition, a portion of the Sangre de Cristo grant in Taos County retains much of its original acreage as a private land grant operating as a livestock association.

Most of the federal and state land within this region, however, was assembled from community land grants whose claims were rejected by the U.S. surveyor general and the 1891 Court of Private Land Claims. Community land grants also lost a significant portion of their land when their community property was individualized, often through errors in adjudication or fraud. Individual heirs were separated from their portion of the grant lands by various means. The 600,000-acre Tierra Amarilla land grant is one of the best examples of the latter.

The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo established a process by which Mexican citizens residing in the ceded territories could gain U.S. citizenship. Mexico attempted to provide a section in the treaty that would protect the property

rights of its former citizens, but it was rejected by the U.S. Senate out of misplaced concern that it also would confirm invalid property claims. In 1854, Congress appointed a surveyor general for New Mexico to investigate the validity of claims to land grants made by the Spanish and Mexican governments and to make recommendations to Congress. If Congress confirmed a claim, a survey was ordered, and eventually, a patent, or title, to the property was issued. Between 1854 and 1891, 180 land grant claims were investigated. Of these, 135 were transmitted to Congress, but only 46, plus 18 Pueblo grants, were confirmed. Congress created the Court of Private Land Claims, which reviewed an additional 282 claims, but approved only 82. The process has been widely criticized by generations of Heritage Area residents and is a source of contention to this day.

HOMESTEADING WITHIN THE NRGNHA

As the same time that community grant lands were being redistributed, the Homestead Act of 1862 made public lands available to settlers at low prices. Other acts followed, expanding the availability of public lands for homesteading. A study of land-use patterns in north-central New Mexico found more than 9,000 homestead applications in a region that included Rio Arriba, Santa Fe, Taos, and Sandoval counties. Approximately half of the homesteads, totaling almost 1.2 million acres, were patented when the applicants completed the required residency and usage requirements. Slightly more than half of the patented entries were issued to Spanish-surnamed individuals.

Homesteading played a major role in the settlement of western Rio Arriba County. Lindrith and other small communities were established in this region by large numbers of homesteaders in the early 20th century. Many homesteaders moved on to seek better opportunities elsewhere, but those who endured benefitted from oil and gas fields discovered in the late 1940s and 1950s. Farmer/ranchers also planted crops to attract elk and deer to their property, generating income from private hunts.

Homesteading also was important to the settlement of southern Santa Fe County, especially in the early 20th century, when settlers from Texas and Oklahoma came to take up dry-land bean farming. Stanley, for example, was established along a railroad siding and prospered until agriculture declined in the area. In Taos County, the town of Carson developed in the midst of homesteads dating to around 1910. Within two decades, however, the town was abandoned when drought in the 1930s exacerbated the difficulties of dry-land farming. Today, Carson exists on the map but consists mainly of a post office, which serves the livestock ranches that developed after the farmers left the area.



Irrigated Field Santa Cruz

Homesteading illustrates several themes advanced by the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area: the challenges of land and climate, the successful strategies and continuing traditions of the original Pueblo farmers, and the persistence of the early settlers and their own traditional labor intensive methods. [sidebar 21]

21. At Northern New Mexico College, ¡Sostenga! **The Center for Sustainable Food, Agriculture, and Environment** seeks to preserve and enhance the natural heritage of northern New Mexico through hands-on learning and economic development. As a center for collaboration and research, ¡Sostenga! seeks to foster sustainable living. The Northern Rio Grande’s living heritage is visible in places such as Chimayo, where chile farmers still irrigate with communal ditches and are renowned for their **native green and red chiles**. “In autumn, Deborah Madison writes in *Saveur* magazine, “the scents of apples and of piñon smoke, from fires used to roast the chiles, saturate the air.” Other **traditional, favorite foods** in New Mexico include *Bizcochitos* (sugar, anise, and cinnamon cookies) and *Pastelitos* (fruit pies cut into little rectangles). The Bizcochito is the “Official State Cookie of New Mexico.”

MINING AND ENERGY PRODUCTION IN THE HERITAGE AREA

Native Americans, Spanish colonial settlers, and Americans all have mined for various products in Rio Arriba, Santa Fe, and Taos counties. Pre-Columbian mining, though slight, focused on turquoise, obsidian, mica, and, especially, clay for pottery, for which the Pueblos are justly famous. Spanish Colonial settlers mined for lead, coal, silver, gold, copper, and iron. American miners, taking advantage of rail transport and technology, have

produced lead, silver, gold, turquoise, copper, iron, garnets, mica, pumice, perlite, humates, coal, and molybdenum.

Rio Arriba County

In the early 1870s, numerous strikes of high-grade gold ores were made in the Bromide-Hopewell District, in the northern part of the county, including the town of Good Hope, now known as Hopewell. Other operations at mines with colorful names such as the Red Jacket, Dixie Queen, and Whale produced gold, copper, and silver ores, but were played out by 1920. There was a short-lived gold placer operation at Rinconada near the Río Grande Gorge.

Small-scale mining of high-quality mica used principally for window panes was done in the Petaca region south of Tres Piedras, mostly in the late 1800s. These mines were near ancient Pueblo and Jicarilla Apache sources of micaceous pottery clay, used for centuries to produce pottery with a unique, glittery appearance that is still made and much-prized today.

Recently, mining has been overshadowed by the large-scale development of oil and gas fields in western Rio Arriba County, mostly on Bureau of Land Management land. Discovered in the 1920s, it was not until the 1950s that the demand for petroleum products fundamentally changed the economy of the area from farming and ranching to energy production. Oil field jobs pay local residents well and help sustain local communities. Southern Santa Fe County also has experienced the discovery of oil and gas reserves.

Santa Fe County

For over 1,500 years Native Americans mined turquoise, the official state gem, in the Cerrillos hills in southern Santa Fe County. In the state-registered Los Cerrillos Mining District, one can still see evidence of the mining operations from Spanish Colonial and American times. Generally speaking, the Pueblos had had free access to the ancient mines of this valued resource even during Spanish Colonial times. Indeed, the Pueblos had been forced to labor in other mines by the Spanish at various underground workings in the area. In the 20th century, however, attempts by residents of nearby pueblos to enter the American-controlled turquoise mines culminated in the 1911 arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment of four men from Cochiti Pueblo.

Silver, gold, and coal have played an important role in the development of southern Santa Fe County, which is divided into five mining districts: Cerrillos, Glorieta, La Bajada, Old Placers, and New Placers. The Glorieta and La Bajada mining districts saw only small-scale mining, although it had a short-lived resurgence during the uranium craze of the 1950s. In 1828, gold was discovered in the Ortiz Mountains at Old Placers, where the Sierra del Oro mine was operated between the 1820s and the 1940s. Larger discoveries took place at New Placers; the San Pedro mines near Golden were highly productive from the 1890s through the early 1900s.

Zinc, copper, and coal have been mined for nearly two centuries in the Cerillos district. Coal has been mined in the region since the 1830s to fuel small-scale ore smelters, and large-scale coal mining at Madrid, a National Historic District,

supplied fuel for the railroads after 1880 and for the state register-listed coke ovens at Waldo, which in turn fueled the Cerrillos ore smelters that operated periodically until the 1950s. [sidebar 22]

22. Madrid, Cerrillos and Golden all are on the Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway. Madrid, which boomed in its heyday as it supplied coal for the railroad, is today a distinctive artist's community and home to the Old Coal Mine Museum. In Cerrillos is the Turquoise Mining Museum and Mount Chalchihuitl Turquoise Mine, the largest known pre-Columbian turquoise mine in North America.

Taos County

Pre-Columbian mining in Taos County centered on clay sources for micaceous and other pottery still made at Picurís and Taos pueblos and sought after today by collectors. Placer mining for gold began in the 1860s and continued sporadically up to the 1890s in the vicinity of Red River, Twining, and Questa. The region is dotted with numerous mining sites and indications of small-scale stamp mills. Additional placer mining took place at Copper Hill east of Embudo and northwest of the Pueblo of Picurís from about 1900 to 1925. Generally, mining in Taos County produced only low-yield ores not economical for production.

Beginning in the 1920s, mining in Taos County centered on molybdenum mines near Questa. Molybdenum, because it resists corrosion, is used to strengthen steel, widely utilized in armor plating and for filaments in light bulbs and other electrical circuitry. Molycorp (now owned by Chevron) began large scale open-pit operations at Questa in the 1960s and

until recently has been the largest private employer in the county.

STATEHOOD (1912 TO PRESENT)

Many New Mexicans supported statehood almost as soon as the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican War. In 1850, the first state constitution was approved overwhelmingly by a vote of 8,371 to 39, but this early statehood effort was nullified by the federal government. The territory was not well-known in the nation, and there was even opposition to its name, New Mexico. The alternatives “Navajo” and “Lincoln” were suggested. A generation later, in 1866, New Mexico held another statehood convention that accomplished nothing. Subsequent efforts were rejected by voters in 1872 and 1889.

By 1909, however, public sentiment clearly had turned, and statehood was proposed for both New Mexico and Arizona. Congress authorized New Mexico to prepare a state constitution, and that summer 100 elected delegates hammered out a document, which was approved by voters on January 21, 1911. A year later, at 1:35 p.m. on January 6, 1912, President William H. Taft signed the proclamation that made New Mexico the 47th state. After signing his name, Taft reportedly turned to the New Mexico delegation and declared, “Well, it is all over; I am glad to give you life.” Then he smiled and added, “I hope you will be healthy.”

WORLD WAR I, THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND NEW DEAL

World War I had a significant impact on the Heritage Area. The demand for wool for military uniforms and blankets expanded the sheep industry, already an important part of the local economy. More poignantly, the military engagement involved hundreds of young men from cities, towns, villages, and pueblos within and outside the Heritage Area. Local newspapers reported elaborate send-offs, crowds of well-wishers, patriotic speeches, brass bands, and American flags, a clear demonstration that New Mexicans were anxious to prove the worthiness of their four-year-old state. In the San José Catholic Church in Los Ojos, a plaque commemorates the names of the local men who served their country in World War I and in whose honor the parish installed magnificent altars. A small gold star adorns the names of two young men who did not make it home.

During the Great Depression, the many residents in the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area with small land holdings and livestock managed a little better than other people in the state and nation. New Deal work programs such as the Works Progress Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps provided wage opportunities for many people. These jobs programs improved infrastructure such as bridges, culverts, water-control features, trails, and buildings in national and state parks. Workers constructed numerous schools and other public buildings, artists drew murals in post offices and courthouses, and writers and photographers also created. [sidebar 23]

New Deal programs did little, however, to solve long-term problems. The 1935 Tewa Basin Study surveyed economic conditions in a significant portion of the three-county Heritage Area. While most families had some land, the study emphasized that most possessed only a few acres, which proved barely adequate for subsistence farming and often required heads of household to seek out-of-state wage labor. Those who owned a few head of livestock often encountered problems finding sufficient grazing on public lands, resulting in severe overgrazing near mountain communities and degradation of the already limited arable lands.

23. The Community Center in Chama, the El Rito Public Library, and the **National Park Service Region III Headquarters Building** in Santa Fe are among New Deal projects in the Heritage Area. The National Park Service building, designated a National Historic Landmark, is a masterpiece of Spanish-Pueblo Revival architecture. It is the largest known adobe office building in the United States and contains an outstanding art collection, ranging from items done by members of Santa Fe's art colony in the 1930s to Pueblo pottery and Navajo rugs.

New Deal programs helped only in the short term. Programs aimed at addressing the region's economic problems were not started until 1937, well after the Depression had set in. Then, programs ended abruptly when the United States entered World War II in December 1941.

WORLD WAR II AND LOS ALAMOS

World War II brought lasting change to northern New Mexico, especially the Española Valley. As it gained momentum, albeit in secret, the Manhattan Project provided many new jobs to residents in

pueblos and villages surrounding the newly established community of Los Alamos. Even if most of the jobs were in clerical and service positions, the wages enabled many small farmers to retain and operate their marginal holdings and, in many cases, provided the capital to improve and enlarge their farms. After World War II, expanded operations of the nuclear laboratories created more jobs for residents of the Heritage Area. Today, Los Alamos National Laboratory (though outside the three-county area) is the largest employer in the Española Valley.

In the rest of the three-county region that is the National Heritage Area, employment and economic opportunities continue to be sparse. Growth in government employment and tourism has benefited many residents of the City of Santa Fe. Indeed the City is ranked nationally as one of the leading arts centers, and for a few artists the arts have provided a path to economic self-sufficiency. For many in the rural areas of the Heritage Area, income levels and employment are low, and many continue to struggle with day-to-day living. Unfortunately, the hardest hit have been the descendants of the Native and Hispanic settlers that have existed in this region and that have created its color.

[sidebar 24]



24. The **Spanish and Indian Markets** are two of the most popular cultural events within the Heritage Area, drawing visitors from all over the world. Every year, artists showcase and sell their work before a jury of their peers. Spanish Market is held every July in Santa Fe. The market fills booths around the plaza and surrounding streets. Artwork includes pottery of all kinds, as well as other traditional crafts such as Colcha embroidery, hand-loomed blankets and rugs, *santos* (paintings of saints and the holy family), and *bultos* (wood carvings of saints, figures, and scenes from the Scripture). The market also has a section for contemporary art and a strong program for youth. **Indian Market** is held every August. Native American artists from all the Southwest tribes and pueblos, as well as from other areas, show their work and also enter it in a juried event. A wide variety of arts are shown, including pottery, weavings, carvings, paintings, baskets, and kachinas. Contemporary entries include clothing designed by American Indians. Also noteworthy is the annual **Española Valley Arts Festival** in nearby Española.

A good place to sample foods grown in northern New Mexico is the **Santa Fe Farmers' Market**, considered one of the Top 10 Farmers' Markets in the country. Also popular is the **Espanola Farmers' Market** and the annual **Santa Fe Wine and Chile Fiesta**.

RISE OF THE LAND GRANT MOVEMENT AND TIERRA AMARILLA COURTHOUSE RAID OF 1967

As early as 1919, a group known as *la mano negra*, "the black hand," was cutting fences and burning haystacks within the Tierra Amarilla land grant in protest of new landowners who were blocking access to traditional common grazing lands. In 1940, state police were

dispatched to Tierra Amarilla. The investigating officer found strong public sentiment in support of protest actions.

Sporadic outbreaks of fence cutting and haystack burning continued through the 1950s. Publicly, land-grant groups aired their grievances against the grazing policies of the U.S. Forest Service and tried unsuccessfully to pressure state and federal governments to take action on what they felt was the unjust adjudication of their land. Some six generations after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, several land grant groups organized as the Federal Alliance of Land Grants (*Alianza*). In the early 1960s, the group came under the leadership of Reies López Tijerina, who advocated force to regain lost lands.

On June 5, 1967, a small group of armed *Alianza* members arrived at the Río Arriba County Courthouse at Tierra Amarilla intent on making a citizen's arrest of the district attorney. He was not there, but *Alianza* took wounded officers hostage. Hundreds of law enforcement officers and New Mexico National Guard troops descended on northern New Mexico. The raid, subsequent manhunt, capture, and trials of *Alianza* members and their fiery leader focused national attention on the century-old issue of land grants in northern New Mexico and the passionate sentiments that held that an injustice had been done.

A generation later, this issue again came to the forefront. In 1988, Amador Flores disputed an Arizona development company's ownership of property from the Tierra Amarilla land grant. When the company sought to evict Flores from land he claimed belonged to his family, Flores

threw the court injunction into a campfire while television cameras rolled. After a year of armed occupation, a negotiated settlement was reached, and 200 acres of the disputed property were deeded to Flores along with a substantial settlement, acreage that since has been deeded back to the local Tierra Amarilla land-grant organization.

Issues related to land grants continue. Over the years, imprecise surveys and vague descriptions of property resulted in public lands being included in private land transactions (and vice-versa), creating clouded titles that often hurt individual landowners. In some cases, property on which families had lived for generations was found to lie partially or entirely within the new federal land. To help solve some of these problems, "Color-of-Title Act" legislation was enacted in 1928 that allowed residents to acquire title to federal land under certain conditions. In the 1970s, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) implemented the Río Grande Occupancy Resolution Program, which began systematically to research land-title records to determine which tracts of federal land overlapped private land claims. It has been a slow and tortuous project.

In 2004, a General Accounting Office (GAO) report found that the surveyor generals assigned to New Mexico in the 19th century often lacked the legal skills and financial resources to properly review grant claims. The report also stated that the claims process was confusing and burdensome to claimants. Still, the report concluded that the U.S. government did "not violate any fiduciary duty" to non-Pueblo community grantees under

provisions of the treaty. Land-grant heirs and organizations dispute the GAO findings and continue to claim that the U.S. government did not assess the validity of their land grants in a fair and equitable manner.

CONCLUSION

Thousands of years of human habitation and interaction have left an indelible mark on the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, a place where older ways of life continue to hold meaning and value. Farming and irrigation techniques first used by indigenous people are applied today for their ecological sustainability. And just as the interplay of land and water governed the placement of Indian villages, Spanish communities, and American military forts years ago, so they continue to determine the placement of housing subdivisions, and the roads and bridges of the modern world.

Now, the water to sustain growth comes from underground, and there is continuing concern that it will someday not be enough. Land itself has become scarce, as it is now a commodity to be acquired only at market rates. Younger generations seek economic relief by moving away, or give up and seek diversion in drugs and other activities. In many respects, the economic attachment to the land is lost to most in the population. But it remains in their hearts, if only as a fading memory.

The wave of change that may bring opportunity for relief from economic disparity is the technological revolution that has brought instant connection and communication, and ability to disseminate information on a global scale.

Many in the world will find the attractions of the place that is the Heritage Area as compelling. Many will seek to experience the historical narrative, the continuing cultural presence from a time past, and the very special contribution that the people of this place can make to connections with space and time.

For those who are the descendents of the earliest settlers, be they the native peoples, the Spanish colonizers, or the American immigrants, the struggle continues to find linkages to the past, through reclaiming of lands, through resurgence of familial languages, or through remembrance of traditions and relationships to the places and people of this enchanted land.



Mountain Community