

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A FEASIBILITY STUDY BY THE STATE PARKS DIVISION OF THE ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT FOR A PROPOSED MESILLA VALLEY BOSQUE PARK.

WHEREAS, the southern Rio Grande valley is home to a large and rapidly growing human population concentrated around the Rio Grande and relying upon that river for recreation; and

WHEREAS, the need for recreation opportunities and facilities in the area has been recognized since the southern Rio Grande outdoor recreation master plan of 1984; and

WHEREAS, a potential site for the proposed park has been identified in Dona Ana county as lying on the west side of the Rio Grande between the Mesilla dam and the Mesilla bridge, including an area locally known as the "old refuge"; and

WHEREAS, a draft master plan for this project has been developed in cooperation with participating landowners, including the department of game and fish, the United States bureau of reclamation, the United States bureau of land management, the international boundary and water commission, the Elephant Butte irrigation district and several private landowners; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project location includes some of

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the last remaining native bosque vegetation in the region and offers unique opportunities to protect the diversity of native plants and animals in remaining riparian and aquatic habitats, restore the natural mosaic of riverside habitats, provide stimulating educational opportunities for local residents and create a new and exciting destination for visitors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state parks division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department be requested to study the feasibility of creating a Mesilla valley bosque park and to present a report of its findings to the legislative finance committee at its October 2002 meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be sent to the secretary of energy, minerals and natural resources.