

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH AND THE ENERGY,
MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT TO STUDY SUSTAINABLE
ALTERNATIVE FUNDING MEASURES IN ORDER TO PROTECT NEW MEXICO'S
UNIQUE LANDSCAPES, OPEN SPACES, RECREATION AREAS AND WILDLIFE
HABITATS.

WHEREAS, wildlife-associated recreation creates annual
expenditures of more than one billion dollars (\$1,000,000,000)
a year in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, conservation funding for protection and
maintenance of New Mexico's outdoor recreation areas, land,
water and wildlife is inadequate to meet current and future
needs; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is home to the fourth largest number
of plant and animal species in the United States, with ninety
species of plants and animals that do not exist anywhere else
in the world; and

WHEREAS, one hundred twenty-two species of animals in
the state are at risk of extinction, and twenty-two species
have been extirpated from the state altogether; and

WHEREAS, preventing the loss of further species is in
the best interest of the state's future conservation efforts,
economic vitality and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the alteration and development of New Mexico's

natural areas to accommodate the state's rapidly growing population have contributed to the fragmentation and destruction of wildlife habitat, the degradation of water resources, the loss of agricultural lands and outdoor recreation space, the destruction of cultural and historic sites and the diminishment of wetlands and native bosque forests; and

WHEREAS, the potential development of New Mexico's remaining natural areas and escalation of land values require governmental efforts to restore, enhance or acquire lands and riparian areas to preserve the state's invaluable quality of life; and

WHEREAS, river bosques, arroyos, agricultural lands, wildlife habitat and historical and cultural sites are part of the state's heritage and should be preserved as a legacy for the next generation; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico residents strongly support the protection of the state's unique landscapes, open spaces, recreation areas and wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, access to public lands supports a broad range of outdoor recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, neglect of the state's land, water and wildlife will hinder the state's economy and its ability to attract desirable industries; and

WHEREAS, the constitution of New Mexico declares that

the protection of the state's beautiful and healthful environment is of fundamental importance to the public interest and that the legislature shall provide protection for the air, water and other natural resources; and

WHEREAS, a broadly supported and broadly contributed citizen-based funding source for conserving wildlife habitats and for maintaining and developing open spaces and outdoor recreation areas throughout New Mexico is of utmost value;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of game and fish and the energy, minerals and natural resources department be requested to conduct a study to investigate sustainable alternative funding measures to protect New Mexico's unique landscapes, open spaces, recreation areas and wildlife habitats; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this study be completed no later than December 31, 2004; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the department of game and fish and the energy, minerals and natural resources department.