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HOUSE MEMORIAL 9

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

Jane E. Powdrell-Culbert

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TO CONVENE A
TASK FORCE TO STUDY WAYS TO PREVENT THE BUILDUP OF TRASH IN
ARROYOS.

WHEREAS, the arroyos of New Mexico function as natural
drainage systems, carrying storm water runoff from mountains
and mesas to rivers; and

WHEREAS, natural arroyos are rich in plant life, which
attracts native wildlife in search of food and shelter; and

WHEREAS, arroyos in urban areas are the primary tool used
by flood control authorities to manage storm water drainage and
runoff; and

WHEREAS, in highly developed urban areas, many arroyos
have been straightened and lined with concrete to prevent
erosion and to control flash flooding; and

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1 WHEREAS, both types of arroyos are often augmented with
2 walking paths and trails, which enhance neighborhoods and local
3 parks; and

4 WHEREAS, both the functional value and the aesthetic value
5 of arroyos are under threat due to an accumulation of trash;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the accumulation of trash and litter in arroyos
8 is detrimental to the environment, is unsightly and leads to
9 costly clean-up efforts; and

10 WHEREAS, in addition to intentional littering, trash finds
11 its way to arroyos as a result of poorly secured trash and
12 recycling debris, tossed cigarette butts and the thoughtless
13 disposal of a multitude of personal items; and

14 WHEREAS, trash and litter harm the environment in a number
15 of ways, including by serving as a breeding ground for disease-
16 causing rodents and insects, contaminating water supplies and
17 threatening natural vegetation and wildlife; and

18 WHEREAS, floating materials, such as plastic bottles,
19 cups, plastic bags and other debris, must be screened out of
20 the runoff from arroyos before the water can be discharged into
21 a river; and

22 WHEREAS, it is important to maintain the functional
23 purpose of arroyos, preserve the natural beauty and
24 recreational opportunities provided by arroyos that are free of
25 trash and save New Mexico's cities, counties and municipalities

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1 the expense of removing litter and trash from arroyos;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the mid-region
4 council of governments be requested to convene a task force to
5 study ways to prevent the buildup of trash in arroyos; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include
7 representatives from city, county and municipal flood control
8 boards, the department of environment and the environmental
9 improvement board and others with experience and knowledge
10 regarding arroyos and city planning; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that findings and recommendations
12 from the study be presented to the appropriate interim
13 committee by October 2011; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the mid-region council of governments, the
16 secretary of environment, the chair of the environmental
17 improvement board, the New Mexico association of counties and
18 the New Mexico municipal league.