

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE FORESTRY DIVISION OF THE ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, IN COOPERATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH, TO SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATERSHED RESTORATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE RIO GRANDE CUTTHROAT TROUT.

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout was adopted as the New Mexico state fish in 1955; and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout was the first North American trout encountered by European explorers in 1541, when Francisco Vazquez de Coronado's army bivouacked at the confluence of Glorieta creek and the Pecos river, and it is of historical and cultural value; and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout is native to the cold mountain streams and lakes of northern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout is a dark olive color with sparsely scattered black spots and derives its name from the red streaks under its throat; and

WHEREAS, although the Rio Grande cutthroat trout is only six to eight inches long, anglers like the fish for its fighting spirit; and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout provides unique sport fishing to New Mexico residents and out-of-state tourists and is of economic value to the state; and

WHEREAS, more than one hundred sixty thousand New Mexico resident and non-resident anglers spend two hundred sixty-eight million dollars (\$268,000,000) a year on fishing-related activities, according to a study conducted by the department of game and fish; and

WHEREAS, all of the stocked Rio Grande cutthroat trout come from the seven springs hatchery in Jemez Springs, which raises nothing but genetically diverse, pure-strain fish for restoration and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the department of game and fish and its partners have enhanced or restored Rio Grande cutthroat trout in one hundred twenty-seven streams that are open to public fishing, and Rio Grande cutthroat trout now occupy about seven hundred miles of stream habitat; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico residents, government officials and agency professionals have worked diligently to avoid the need to list the Rio Grande cutthroat trout under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973; and

WHEREAS, highly functioning watersheds offer Rio Grande cutthroat trout the greatest chance of thriving and surviving in the wilderness; and

WHEREAS, highly functioning watersheds provide important benefits to acequias, livestock growers and drinking water security;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the forestry division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department and the department of game and fish be requested to support opportunities to restore watersheds in which Rio Grande cutthroat trout are found or those to which Rio Grande cutthroat trout may be established; and

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