

San Pedro Neighborhood Community Plan



*Prepared by Community Members of San Pedro
1997 – 2001*

*Adopted by the Santa Fe County Board of County Commissioners
Resolution No. 2001-5, 10 April 2001*

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VISION STATEMENT

The following Vision Statement serves as the basis for the goals and policies of the San Pedro Community Plan.

The residents and landowners of San Pedro value the scenic, rural qualities of our mountain community. We place special value on the following attributes of the neighborhood:

- *Quiet / peacefulness*
- *Low traffic*
- *Dark night skies*
- *Natural scenic beauty*
- *Clean air*
- *Abundance of wildlife and native flora*
- *Opportunities for solitude or isolation*
- *Open space*
- *Clean water*
- *Diversity of housing, income, culture, and ways of life*
- *Low population*

We seek to regulate development and structure growth in ways that preserve our unique environment, while at the same time respecting the rights of the individual.

We value our sense of community, honor the history and heritage of the community, respect diversity, and desire to have a low impact on the environment.



Overview of San Pedro with South Mountain in background

PART I. INTRODUCTION

A Brief History of San Pedro

The San Pedro Mountains (also known as the Tuerto Mountains) were probably named after the 17th century Franciscan mission at the Tiwa Pueblo of Paa-ko (circa 1300-1670), located about ten miles southwest of the San Pedro neighborhood. Chipped stone tools including some that are at least 4,000 years old, 14th century Pueblo Indian potsherds and historic era Apache and Plains Indian campsites found in the woods and mountains provide ample evidence of indigenous native use of the area for hunting and food gathering. The first Spanish explorers may have passed through the area as early as 1540. In 1581, mineral prospectors with the Chamuscado-Rodriguez expedition were probably in the area but no significant mining occurred in the San Pedros before a gold strike in 1828.

In 1839, the Mexican government awarded the San Pedro Land Grant to families in the area. The grant was intended to provide a buffer protecting the main settlements along the Rio Grande from raids by Plains Indians. By this time, there were two mining camps in the area. Only one camp remains today, the Real de San Francisco whose name was changed to “Golden” in approximately 1880. Mining in the area continued at various levels until the late 1900s. The best known mine, the San Pedro, has a long, and often colorful history. Around 1910, there was a large smelter there, though little trace of it remains today. Early in the 20th century, Golden was reduced to little more than a ghost town and the San Pedro Land Grant was largely dispersed. The San Pedro cemetery remains as one of the few visible and active heritages of the land grant community.

Most of what is now the San Pedro Neighborhood was rural ranch land until the 1960s. Following a period of severe drought in the 1950s, local ranchers began selling off property. Most lots were platted into 10 to 40 acre parcels at the time of sale. This practice ended with the adoption of the 1981 Santa Fe County Land Development Code which required higher minimum lot sizes. Many of the purchasers were investing in "retirement lots" and intended to build and live on their land. The number of residents increased slowly through the 1970s and 1980s, and there was a marked increase in residential development in the 1990s. However, with the exception of power lines, roads, and a firehouse, there is little in the way of community infrastructure. Santa Fe County constructed the firehouse on locally donated land in 1995, but virtually all other facilities - unpaved roads, power and telephone lines, wells and waste disposal – have been privately developed and paid for by residents. As of 2000, no formal demographic studies of the neighborhood have been done, yet observations by community members suggest that many residents prefer to work where they live, earning what they can with small home businesses. Such home businesses are common and a number of retirees also make the area their home while other residents work in Albuquerque or Santa Fe. Residents of the San Pedro Neighborhood prefer the area's rural isolation and tranquility of the San Pedro Neighborhood.

This section composed by San Pedro community members.

PART II. SAN PEDRO PLANNING EFFORT

What is Planning?

Planning is based upon a vision for a community's future. Formal community planning occurs when a community identifies a common set of concerns and issues, and then develops goals and policies to address those concerns. The planning process incorporates community members' opinions and must reflect the character and be appropriate to the community in which it is done.

History of the San Pedro Planning Effort

Contemporary Communities such as San Pedro are authorized to develop local land use plans by the Board of County Commissioners, as outlined in the Santa Fe County Growth Management Plan (1999) and Article XIII of the Land Development Code. Contemporary communities are areas defined by rapid growth and a predominant development pattern shaped by land division plat needs, not by the social and functional needs of residents. Eligible participants in a planning process include residents, business owners and property owners in a defined community area. Since San Pedro is an unincorporated community, one means for the community to have a voice about its future is through the development of a locally designed community plan.

In January 1999, San Pedro community members requested authorization from the Board of County Commissioners to initiate a plan for the San Pedro Community Planning Area. The intent of developing this plan is to define a rural development pattern appropriate to the unique character and resources of the San Pedro area. Issues that were identified to be addressed through a plan included how future development would affect water resources, commercial uses, transportation and mining activity. Community members from San Pedro began conducting a planning process in 1998 and have identified policies that will guide growth into the future. There have been 30 community meetings, three community surveys and several newsletters mailed to property owners, business owners and residents. These public outreach efforts focused on soliciting opinions about San Pedro's existing conditions as well as to generate community level direction on how future growth should be directed.

Status of the San Pedro Community Plan

The San Pedro Community Plan addresses the concerns of residents and outlines how community members would like to direct future changes in the area. Upon adoption by the Board of County Commissioners, the Plan will become an amendment to the Growth Management Plan and future developments within the Contemporary Community Boundary will adhere to the adopted policies. Proposed programs and projects will be considered for funding through County programs such as the Infrastructure Capital Improvements Program (ICIP). Following adoption, ordinances will be designed to support implementation of the Plan's goals, objectives and action statements.

PART III. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

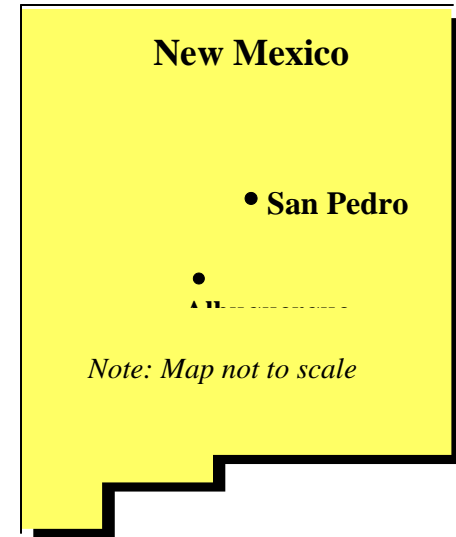
Location and Topography

The San Pedro Community Plan Area lies in southwest quadrant of Santa Fe County and is 35 miles from Santa Fe and 35 miles from Albuquerque. The San Pedro Planning Area is primarily located in an eastward-sloping valley bounded on the north by the San Pedro Mountains, on the east by the Estancia Valley flatlands, on the south by South Mountain, and on the west by a low ridge separating the valley from the Sandia Basin. When entering San Pedro from the west, one must climb Heartbreak Hill, an unusually steep and winding hill said to have been named by bicyclists. After cresting the hill, the valley slopes gently to the east until it merges with the flatlands of the Estancia Basin. The only entry to the valley is via State Road 344, the mountains to the north and south being too rugged to have through-roads over them.

Flora

Approaching the valley from the east, the grasslands of the Estancia Basin abruptly give way to a piñon-juniper woodland, which dominates the valley. While the piñon-juniper is dominant, there are also stands of Ponderosa pine, especially on the north-facing slopes and in some canyon bottoms where the soil contains more moisture. Scattered throughout is scrub oak and other shrubs, a number of cactus species, various grasses, and a large number of forbs. These forbs are often rather nondescript during the dryer portions of the year, but when the summer rains occur, they bloom and can produce colorful flowers.

An important aspect of the piñon-juniper woodlands is that many years of grazing and fire suppression has resulted in a much denser forest than in pre-settlement days. The unaltered or natural condition is typified by grasslands with relatively few large trees. Open areas are maintained by periodic cool fires, which thin out many of the younger trees and rejuvenate the grasses. Currently, many areas are dominated by large numbers of stunted trees with an understory of oak brush. Many residents have worked to thin trees, especially near structures, in order to mitigate the high risk of fire resulting from the dense forest cover.



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Fauna

San Pedro is blessed with a wide variety and abundance of wildlife. Deer, rabbits, squirrels, skunks, porcupines, raccoons, mice, pocket gophers, snakes, lizards, bats, and the often-heard coyote are common in the area. A survey conducted in July of 1992, documented 32 species of birds, with a likelihood that, on a year-long basis, there are over 50 species that either live in or seasonally pass through the area (see: *Survey of Vegetation and Wildlife at San Pedro Mine Property, Santa Fe County, New Mexico* by Metric Corp., Albuquerque, NM). Along with the many bird species, some of the more dramatic local wildlife includes bears, bobcats, foxes, and mountain lions.

Geology

The San Pedro Mountains and South Mountain are interesting due to the area's highly variable geological structure and composition. The long history of mining in the area is due to the mountains' many intrusive structures which are highly mineralized. Substances that have historically been mined locally include gold, silver, copper, garnet, asbestos, manganese, and silica.

Hydrology

San Pedro is located at the fringe of the Estancia Basin and in the mountains. Very little water is located in either of these areas. Water availability is irregular, with wells ranging from less than 200 feet deep to 700-foot dry holes. While the geology of the mountains is well understood with regard to minerals, the geology of the valley, with regard to water, is not.

“Precipitation is the source for all groundwater beneath the area, which lies stored in more porous and permeable geologic units. The mountains capture the most rain and snow falling in the area, and a fraction of the total seeps to the water table to recharge groundwater, gradually seeping downhill and out of the Planning Area. Occasional arroyo flows, the largest being in Canada de las Narrias, lose water through the streambed to recharge the water table. The range condition, including the water-holding quality of the soil and vegetation, influences potential recharge, runoff and erosion. Regionally the range condition is typically poor due to historic human activity, which commonly increases runoff and decreases soil moisture.

“Most groundwater flows beneath and parallel to the terrain, towards the central Estancia Basin. The water table is encountered from tens to hundreds of feet below the ground surface. Pumping in the basin to the southeast is believed to be lowering the water table regionally, probably including the San Pedro area. Examination of a sample of well drillers' reports to the State Engineer reveals that groundwater is encountered under a variety of conditions in the area...both fair and poor water-yielding areas are suggested.

“During historic mining and smelting, a significant amount of groundwater was pumped from groundwater storage. Since mining has ceased, some water table recovery towards the pre-development condition is expected. The water quality tested in the abandoned mines does not appear to be polluted.

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“In recent years, San Pedro has experienced substantial residential development relying on domestic wells. Where outside landscaping and stock watering has been modest, it is likely that average well water use is less than one-half acre foot per year (162,900 gallons). Modern residential construction, water fixtures, and appliances help conserve water, and county-wide residential use is expected to be less than one-third acre foot (around 97,700 gallons). Because most groundwater is derived from storage in the aquifer, wells may experience falling water levels and decreased yield over time. Wells drilled too shallowly into the aquifer, or which rely on shallow fractures, may go dry as the water table falls. Also, many reported well production problems are mechanical or age-related and may not be hydrologic at all.”

*Excerpt taken from “Overview of the Water Resources in the San Pedro Community Planning Area”(1999)
Prepared by Jack Frost, Santa Fe County Hydrologist (1997-1999)*



San Pedro on right, looking towards Estancia Basin

PART IV. COMMUNITY PLAN SURVEYS

Methodology

During the course of the community planning process, two major surveys were mailed to all landowners in San Pedro, based on the most current data available from the County Assessor's Office. The first survey was conducted in October of 1998, and the second in November of 1999.

The first survey was designed to provide the Planning Committee with a general idea of community attitudes and to provide direction on the issues that should be addressed in the Plan. After almost a year of work, a few issues emerged on which the Planning Committee was either divided or needed more concrete direction from community members. The second survey was conducted to help illuminate certain issues. The survey results, together with community input gathered during a town hall meeting in January 2000, formed the basis for the policies developed in this plan.

Analysis of Survey Results

The two community surveys included over 135 responses which formed the guiding principles of the Plan. Community response to both surveys demonstrated the following:

- The community supported the planning effort
- The community agreed that San Pedro should remain rural, quiet and peaceful
- Mining should not be allowed
- Home businesses should be supported and the definition expanded
- Large "commercial" businesses were not supported
- Highway 344 and Heartbreak Hill should not be widened but include improvements for safety, such as guardrails

Results from both surveys demonstrated support for the planning process while also outlining important values and opinions of growth and development. These values and opinions have served as guides for the Planning Committee in developing the policies contained within this Plan.

PART V. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Background:

The San Pedro Community Planning Area is in the Homestead Hydrologic zone which requires a minimum lot size of 160 acres. Under the County's Land Development Code, 1 dwelling unit is allowed per every 160 acres. Density can be increased a maximum of 4 times if an adequate 100 year supply of water is proven on site by a hydrogeological test or through a County approved Reconnaissance Water Availability Assessment and if water conservation covenants are duly applied. The water covenants are applied to limit domestic water use up to one-quarter of an acre foot of water per year per dwelling (.25 a/f/y equals approximately 81,450 gallons). Additionally, development at higher densities of up to 2.5 acres per lot is allowed if enough water is proven to be available. The Code is based, in part, on assuring that dry lots (parcels without water available through an on-site well or water system) are not created. For instance, the County would not allow someone to divide a 5 acre parcel into 2.5 acre parcels if the water supply relied on hauling water from another area. Imported water could be used if a large community water system were established, and property owners could propose hooking up to the system as part of their development plan.

In 2000, there were approximately 100 existing residences in the San Pedro Community Planning Area. Based on County Assessor's data, there are approximately 370 parcels in the Planning Area and many of these are legal lots of record but do not conform with the Code requirements for minimum lot size listed above. These small parcels range in size from 1 to 20 acres, which would allow for much denser development. If the 270 vacant lots were developed, San Pedro would be changed from a quiet rural area to a more dense and suburban setting. New subdivisions would increase the total number of existing lots and facilitate development into the area much more rapidly. The Community Plan's vision statement calls for maintaining a rural, low-density community as a primary goal. Thus, this section outlines polices that will direct development in a manner that does not promote urban style development in the Planning Area.

Two documents have recently been produced which discuss water availability in San Pedro Planning Area. In "Overview of the Water Resources in the San Pedro Community Planning Area" (1999), former County Hydrologist Jack Frost notes that water availability is highly variable due to the mixed geology of the area. Additionally, he states that mining activities have historically removed a significant amount of groundwater from aquifer storage but that it is possible that the water levels may be recovering since the cessation of mining. Another impact to the area's water supply noted is the current mining of groundwater from the Estancia Basin which may result in lowering of the water table that supplies San Pedro residents. Finally, Frost's study also notes that historic mining and smelting activities have impacted water quality in some areas.

Due to the highly variable and complex geology of the San Pedro area, it is imperative that on-site hydrogeological studies be conducted whenever a property is to be subdivided. While Reconnaissance Water Availability Assessment studies may be acceptable for other parts of the County, adequate water supply is extremely difficult to determine in the Planning Area. Thus, community members feel that only full hydrogeological reports with an on-site pumping test should be accepted to accurately determine water resource availability.

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Importing water from outside the Planning Area is another option for enabling new, higher density development. Yet, if water is imported from the Estancia Basin it could result in drawdown of San Pedro's existing water supply. Additionally, importing water is only economically feasible if development occurs on a large scale with high densities. This type of high-density development would require an increased number of lots within the Planning Area. Higher density development is contrary to the vision of a rural community outlined in this Plan.

Goals:

1. Maintain rural nature of the mountain community.
2. Support low population density and preservation of open space.
3. Protect water quality and quantity.
4. Support development patterns and density that results in conservative water use.
5. Support a diversity of housing and income levels.

Actions:

- A. Residential structures cannot exceed 24 feet in height. Residential structures on 15% or greater slopes cannot exceed 15 feet in height.
- B. 40 acres will be the target minimum lot size in the Planning Area. However, lots may be divided below 40 acres if they meet the following conditions:
 - Applications for division of parcels below 40 acres must include a full hydrogeological report with a 48 hour aquifer pumping test to demonstrate availability of a 100 year supply of water. Hydrogeological reconnaissance reports will not be accepted as proof of water supply.
 - No later than one year after the adoption of this plan, the County Hydrologist will establish a clearly defined recharge estimation process which is appropriate for the San Pedro area. At such time, any necessary amendments to the Community Plan and subsequent Ordinance(s) will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners.
 - All hydrogeologic studies shall be reviewed and approved by the County Hydrologist.
 - All other county code requirements including without limit, roads, drainage, fire protection, liquid waste, terrain management, shall be met as part of the land division application.
- C. On any subdivision or land division, the applicant shall post notice of filing of a development permit prominently on the land, building, or other structure subject to the application, as well as in a prominent and clearly visible place on the public road nearest to the proposed development.

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D. All hydrogeological reports shall assess the impact of the new well on neighboring wells and this information shall be made available to the owners of the neighboring wells. Applicant shall provide a summary of findings of the hydrogeological report to all adjacent property owners by certified mail. A letter by the applicant stating that the report has been sent to adjacent landowners shall be submitted to the Land Use Department. Those interested in reading the entire report may review a copy at the County Land Use Department office or pay a fee and have it mailed to them.

Chart 1: Existing number of lots based on minimum acreage for the San Pedro Planning Area

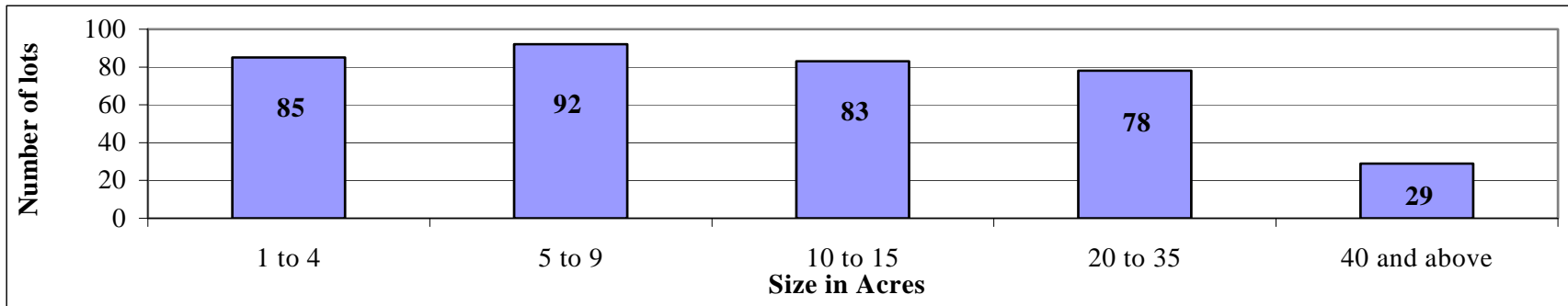
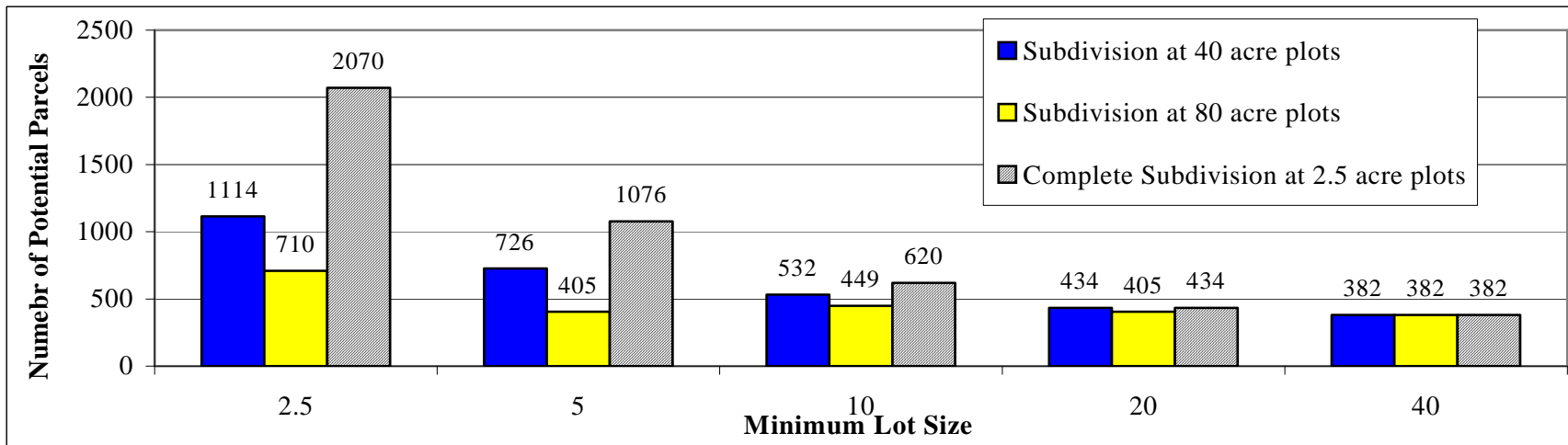


Chart 2: Comparison of Potential Subdivision Effects in San Pedro Planning Area



Note: Data for Charts 1 and 2 from Santa Fe County Assessor’s Office, 2000.

PART VI. LIGHTING

Background:

San Pedro community member responses in the community surveys demonstrate a strong desire to preserve the natural beauty of the night sky. One aspect of San Pedro's rural community character is clear dark skies in the evenings. County regulations currently allow some types of unshielded lighting, pole lighting with height restrictions, and illuminated signs. The Plan recommends more stringent lighting regulations for San Pedro to protect the dark skies and natural light of the moon, stars, and planets.

Goal:

1. Preserve and protect the darkness of the night sky.

Actions:

- A. All outdoor lighting shall be shielded.
- B. Poles with lights cannot exceed 24 foot in height or one and one-half (1.5) times the height of the tallest structure on the property, whichever is lower.
- C. All outdoor lights must have operable motion-sensing devices and must be properly maintained. Lights that cannot be fitted with motion-sensing devices, such as ornamental lights, must be extinguished when not in use.
- D. New or replacement security lights and floodlights are discouraged. If such lights are used, they must have operable motion-sensing devices and shall be fully shielded.
- E. No illuminated signs.

PART VII. VISIBILITY

Background:

San Pedro community members value the scenic beauty, open spaces, and rural character of their mountain community. Survey results show that residents strongly support preserving unobstructed views of the mountains and surrounding areas.

Currently, most buildings in San Pedro are one or two story houses that blend with the rural character and natural colors of the area. Most houses are set back far enough from New Mexico State Highway 344 so that they are relatively unnoticeable from the road. Most existing homes are built and sited in such a way that they are not visible unless viewed from a high ridgetop overlooking the valley.

Goal:

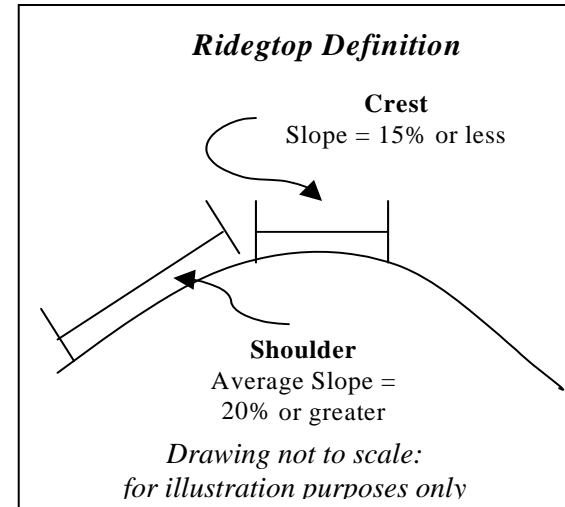
1. Keep the rural and scenic nature of the community by maintaining unobstructed views.

Actions:

- A. No structures shall be permitted on ridgetops or crests. The Ridgetop Map (see map in Section IVX.) identifies potential ridgetop areas in the Planning Area. Residential dwelling units shall be permitted on ridgetops only if the entire property is classified as a ridgetop and the landowner would have no alternative buildable site on the property. In such cases, all County design standards for building on slopes and ridgetops shall apply.
- B. Cellular towers and commercial antennas shall not exceed 24-foot in height. Cellular towers and antennas shall be restricted by certain design standards such as screening, and color requirements. Recommended colors include gray to blend into the sky and brown/green to blend into the woodland landscape. Any future County cellular tower regulations shall supercede those outlined in this Plan.
- C. Windmills and wind turbines shall not exceed 24-foot in height.
- D. All residences and accessory structures shall be a neutral or a darker shade of color that blends into the natural surroundings such as the natural foliage or natural earth tones of the soils. A 'light reflective value' (LRV) of 40 or less shall be used for roofs.

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- E. In order to preserve the unobstructed horizons in San Pedro, no portion of a structure shall be visible above the ridgetop when viewed from the centerline of the nearest public road at the spot on the road nearest to the proposed structure.
1. A ridge or ridgetop shall be defined as a long, narrow land form with slope less than fifteen percent (15%) that includes the prominently visible portion of a hill or mountain that sits above an area having an average slope greater than twenty percent (20%) on one or more sides.
 2. A ridgetop will be the area measured horizontally from the shoulder across the crest to the parallel shoulder.
 3. Where a ridgetop measures more than three hundred feet (300') from shoulder to shoulder (a mesa), the ridge top standards and requirements for architecture and buffers shall apply within one hundred and fifty feet (150') of the shoulder of the ridge.
 4. A ridge formation which does not contain a buildable area of at least one thousand and two hundred (1,200) square feet will not be classed as part of the buildable area for purposes of construction of a primary residential structure.



PART VIII. HOME BUSINESS

Background:

San Pedro is quiet and peaceful with relatively low traffic within the community. Survey results demonstrated that San Pedro community members value the existing quiet, peaceful nature of the area. One of the primary intents of this Plan is to ensure that the San Pedro Community Planning Area remains a rural, residential community while also providing the opportunity for residents to live and work in their homes.

Working out of one's home is encouraged, provided that businesses and their traffic do not adversely affect or interfere with the peace and quiet of the community environs. Within the Planning Area, there are currently many small businesses which serve the needs of the community and are basically unnoticeable because they are part of the residence. Examples include woodworking, automotive repair, welding, arts and crafts, bookkeeping, and massage. All of these existing home businesses are small and unobtrusive. The vision of San Pedro as a quiet residential community supports opportunities for small-scale business by providing for the establishment of home businesses.

Goals:

1. Support home businesses that generate low traffic.
2. Maintain San Pedro as a primarily residential community.

Actions:

- A. No commercial nodes allowed in the Planning Area.
- B. Home businesses shall be allowed anywhere within the Planning Area. Home Business shall be defined as a Home Occupation under the existing Land Development Code as well as small-scale commercial uses tailored toward community needs such as small office, automotive repair, galleries, jewelry manufacturing, private daycare, arts and crafts, massage, wood working establishment and veterinary business. A list of permissible uses will be developed as part of the ordinance for the Plan. All Home Businesses shall meet the criteria established in the Plan.
- C. The proprietor of a home business must reside on site.

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- D. The business should be primarily unobtrusive and have minimal impact on people living near it or on the community in general. The business should be incidental and subordinate to the residential use.
- E. Notice of home business applications shall be posted prominently on the most visible and accessible part of the property from a public roadway, building or other structure, which is the subject of the application. If no part of the property or structure is visible from a public roadway, the notice shall be posted on the nearest visible site on a public roadway such as a common driveway or mailboxes along the public road. A laminated copy of the site plan showing existing and proposed development shall be firmly attached to the poster. Upon final decision on the application, the applicant shall remove the sign within seven (7) days. Provided the criteria established in the Plan are met for Home Business, the applicant shall follow the administrative process for approval for a permit.
- F. Eliminate the current Santa Fe Land Development Code limitation on the percentage of one's home that can be devoted to the home occupation.
- G. A home business and related activities shall cover a maximum of one thousand and five hundred (1500) square feet of the residence and/or accessory structures.
- H. A maximum of three (3) persons, other than family members residing on the premises, shall be regularly engaged in the work at the site of the home business.
- I. Adequate parking for employees and customers must be provided on site. The intent of this action is to ensure that parking will not overflow onto the roads or a adjacent property. One parking space must be provided per employee.
- J. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) screening is required to screen parking areas from all adjacent properties. Screening may consist of landscaping, a solid wall such as stone or stucco, and/or a fence such as coyote or cedar. If natural screening is used, it must be trees and shrubs native to this area.
- K. All outdoor lighting requirements described in the lighting section of the Plan shall apply to home businesses.
- L. A maximum of one unlit sign measuring 6 square feet shall be permitted per home business. The sign may not be more than six feet (6') above the ground and must be affixed to residence or a fence/other structure adjacent to the driveway that is visible from the road.
- M. Overall noise levels shall not exceed general neighborhood noise levels or interfere with residential peace and quiet. The community will work with the County Land Use Department to develop noise standards (based on an average acceptable decibel level) for the San Pedro Neighborhood.
- N. Home businesses may use up to one-quarter (.25) acre foot of water per year (approximately 81,400 gallons) for business related activities. Business water uses shall be calculated separately from residential uses, unless the property on which a home business is located has existing water use covenants applied. In such cases, the home business will not be allowed to use more than the amount of water restricted by such covenants.

PART IX. MINING

Background:

Results from the community surveys and public comments from town hall meetings demonstrate overwhelming support for the restriction of mining within the Planning Area. In one community survey, 93% of residents and property owners agreed that mining should be prohibited while 7% of residents and property owners felt that it should be an allowed use or had no opinion. Mining activity can increase air and noise pollution, increase truck traffic and could potentially contaminate water quality in the area. Many residents stated that mining activities within a quiet, residential community is an inappropriate and incompatible land use for the Planning Area.

Goals:

1. Protect air quality, quiet environs and water quality in the community.
2. Protect the safety of roads and residents.
3. Minimize truck traffic.
4. Minimize the impacts of mining on public lands in and surrounding the Planning Area.

Actions:

- A. No mining of any type shall be allowed, including but not limited to gravel mining and other types of mining.
- B. The community will work with the County and other public agencies to develop management plans to minimize impacts of mining on public lands in and surrounding the Planning Area.

PART X. WATER AND ENVIRONMENT

Background:

Members of the community intrinsically link the values expressed by the San Pedro Neighborhood Vision Statement to the availability of clean water. In order to protect and conserve water resources and the natural environment, the Plan proposes a variety of methods to enhance aquifer resources and to preserve topsoil.

Additionally, community members identify the protection of the area's wildlife, vegetation and other natural resources as important aspects that make San Pedro a special place. The Plan recommends providing information to new and current residents about the unique environmental qualities of the area and the natural environment's vulnerability to destruction or degradation.

Goals:

1. Protect and conserve water resources and the natural environment, including local wildlife and native plants.
2. Educate residents about various methods available for aquifer recharge and topsoil enhancement.

Actions:

- A. Community members will develop educational materials on water conservation methods and environmental protection measures that will be distributed to residents within one year of the Plan's adoption.
- B. Educational materials about water issues to be prepared by community volunteers will include:
 - 1) Explanation of the need for water resource conservation and management;
 - 2) Descriptions and illustrations of procedures to slow down storm-water run-off;
 - 3) Utilization of drip/soak technology for gardens;
 - 4) Split-system waste discharge technology for wastewater;
 - 5) Describe that all new private roads and driveways must conform to existing County requirements for landscape contours and be maintained to limit erosion, and;
 - 6) Utilization of water catchment technologies including but not limited to tree wells and cisterns.

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- C. Community members will coordinate with the Planning Division and other appropriate County departments to assist in distributing these educational materials.
- D. Community members will coordinate with various County departments to periodically conduct public programs in the community regarding water, waste management, fire suppression, wildlife management and other environmental issues.
- E. Community members will coordinate with the Soil and Water Conservation District, the State Engineer's Office, the Water Quality Bureau of the New Mexico Environment Department, and any other relevant agencies to develop and fund a program to ensure that all abandoned wells and drill holes in the Planning Area are securely capped.



View of Planning Area looking toward the Estancia Basin

PART XI. WASTEWATER

Background:

The New Mexico Environment Department and the Santa Fe County Land Development Code regulate liquid waste disposal systems. Based on concerns about water quality and of the complex topography and geology of the area, the Plan recommends several additional guidelines to protect water quality.

The Plan also supports the implementation of alternative wastewater treatment systems such as but not limited to wetlands, composting toilets, gray water reuse, and split-systems. Additionally, as the water supply and geology in the area is highly variable, larger minimum lot sizes may also serve to prevent contamination of adjacent wells from septic systems and other contaminants. See Section V for more information on minimum lot sizes.

Goal:

1. Protect water quality.

Actions:

- A. All new liquid waste treatment systems shall be setback a minimum of two-hundred feet (200') from any existing or planned water supply or well. This will not apply to existing, legally recognized lots that are smaller than 2.5 acres.
- B. Septic systems that utilize alternative wastewater treatment techniques such as but not limited to wetlands, composting toilets, and gray water reuse “split-system” (“gray water-black water”) technology shall be permitted, providing that they meet all New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) regulations.
- C. Community members will coordinate with the Planning Division and all other relevant County departments to inform applicants for new development of various liquid waste treatment systems such as gray water-black water technology, wetland treatment, and sand filters. This will include but is not limited to providing literature on request about these types of technology.
- D. All septic systems shall be pumped and filled with sand, earth or similar non-hazardous fill material when abandoned.

PART XII. FIRE PROTECTION

Background:

Most of the San Pedro Neighborhood is located in a dense piñon-juniper woodland and forest which is considered an “urban/wild lands interface area” that is susceptible to wildfire danger during periods of drought. Fire prevention is identified as a key aspect of community safety and protection of the local environment. The San Pedro Community Plan recommends that area residents, especially new residents, receive educational materials regarding the dangers of local forest fires and practical methods to help them mitigate fire danger.

Fire protection and emergency medical services for the Planning Area are provided by the Edgewood Fire District, which is a unit of the Santa Fe County Fire Department. Edgewood Fire Station 3 is centrally located in the San Pedro neighborhood along Highway 344 and the station also serves as a meeting place for the San Pedro community. The Planning Area may also qualify as a special district under the proposed Urban-Wildland Interface Ordinance, if adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Goals:

1. Educate residents about fire protection measures and requirements.

Actions:

- A. Community members will coordinate with County Planning Division and Fire Department, State Forestry Division, and the USFS to conduct periodic neighborhood meetings in the Planning Area to provide educational seminars and materials to residents about fire protection measures.
- B. Community volunteers will distribute educational and County code materials regarding fire requirements to residents within one year of the adoption of this Plan.
- C. Community members will coordinate with the Santa Fe County Fire Department, Land Use Department and the State Forestry Division for technical support and to assist in distributing available literature on fire protection in urban-wild land interface areas.
- D. Community members will coordinate with the Land Use Department to ensure that fire protection and ordinance requirement materials are distributed to applicants as part of the development permit application process.



PART XIII. ROADS AND TRAILS

- **Highway 344, Heartbreak Hill, and County Roads**

In the Plan’s Vision Statement, the community of San Pedro expresses a strong desire to preserve its scenic, rural character. One of the important community attributes expressed is maintaining “low traffic” as part of the rural character. Keeping traffic volume low along State and County roads within the Planning Area is integral to preserving the highly valued rural, quiet and scenic qualities of San Pedro.

The construction and maintenance of New Mexico State Highway 344 (including “Heartbreak Hill”) is under the authority of the State Highway Department and all designated County Roads are under the authority of the Santa Fe County Public Works Department. In recent years, community members have expressed deep concern about reckless driving and the increased density and speed of traffic along New Mexico State Highway 344. These conditions are triggered in part by a growing number of people from the Edgewood area who use the road as a commuter artery to Santa Fe. Enforcement of existing laws and speed limits has not adequately addressed safety issues resulting from worsening traffic conditions in the Planning Area. Another problem that has raised serious safety concerns for motorists using New Mexico State Highway 344 is an increase in the number of semi-trucks that use Heartbreak Hill, including gravel haulers. Community members report that these trucks often cross the yellow median lines, using both lanes which creates dangerous conditions for other road users. Concerns have also been raised about school buses in the area having to cope with truck traffic, speeding motorists, and increased traffic density.



Goals:

Heartbreak Hill marks the eastern entrance to the San Pedro Neighborhood

1. Maintain safe roadways for all community members and uses.
2. Meaningful community involvement in the planning of New Mexico State Highway 344 and Heartbreak Hill.
3. Maintain appropriate scale of all roads within the Planning Area. Roads should be small and support the rural character of the area.



View of San Pedro Neighborhood, entering from the East

Actions:

- A. Community members will coordinate with Planning Division and the State Highway Transportation Department to include community representation in planning any modifications to posted speed limits, weight limits or redesigns of New Mexico State Highway 344 and Heartbreak Hill. The community will also work with these agencies to develop traffic calming techniques on New Mexico State Highway 344 and Heartbreak Hill, where and if feasible.
- B. The Plan recommends that the current speed be lowered and that load limits not be changed between the base of Heartbreak Hill and milepost 13, and that Heartbreak Hill not be modified in any major way.
- C. Community members will coordinate with Planning Division, the State Police and the Sheriff's Department to better control speeding and other traffic violations.

• **Private Roads**

The San Pedro Vision Statement recognizes the intrinsic value of the natural scenic beauty, abundance of wildlife and native flora, and clean well water that characterize the community. These resources are influenced by the steep mountainous terrain, arid conditions, and seasonal precipitation patterns that characterize the San Pedro Planning Area. Preservation of all of these resources is a main objective of the Plan.

There is a delicate balance to maintaining these resources and erosion is a persistent problem that is exacerbated by poorly maintained roads and by roads constructed without regard for the contour of the landscape and existing water-flow patterns. The erosion effects of water run-off from such roads can be far-reaching and costly.

All roads in the community are regulated by the Land Development Code which requires that construction of private roads requires a development permit from the County Land Use Department to ensure that they conform to County design specifications, including terrain management principles. To some degree, the rectangular grid system used for most platted lots in the neighborhood encourages private road construction to ignore landscape contours because the grid patterns are not consistent with the natural landscape features. As most lots in the area are girdled by twenty-five foot (25') easements, two adjoining lots will often have fifty (50') feet of easement available for road construction. This allows for some level of flexibility to create contour-sensitive designs so that all roads need not be straight as an arrow.

San Pedro Community Plan – Adopted via Resolution 2001-51 on 10 April 2001

Goals:

1. Roads should be designed, built, and maintained at a scale appropriate for the community.
2. Private road design should follow terrain management principles.
3. Reclamation of abandoned roads.

Actions:

- A. The Plan requires that all roads in the Community Planning Area, including private roads, be designed, contoured, and maintained to prevent erosion.
- B. The community will coordinate with the Planning Division and the Code Enforcement Division to develop educational materials which will inform landowners of the County requirement to obtain a development permit for private road construction and the various regulations and policies outlining terrain management. This will aid in terrain management concerns and address erosion and drainage concerns.
- C. The Plan recommends that when road permit application are made, Land Use Department personnel inform applicants of the erosion potential in the neighborhood and the importance of terrain management and contour-sensitive road design. Applicants should also be informed of the importance of preventing erosion along abandoned roads. Simple methods to control erosion should be suggested, such as using rocks and/or straw bale check dams in run-off channels to divert or slow down water flow. *See Action A above.*
- D. The community will coordinate with the Planning Division and the Land Use Department to investigate methods for implementing a program to reclaim abandoned roads.
- E. The Plan requires that all new roads incorporate meandering in their design when a 50 foot easement is available.
- F. All roads should be designed and built to County Land Development Code standards including density tests, verifying depth of base course and drainage bar ditches.

• Trails and Corridors

Among the important assets valued by San Pedro area residents are the open spaces and opportunities for peace and solitude that characterize the rural community. BLM property north of San Pedro is the largest tract of publicly owned and undeveloped open space area and forms a mountainous green belt within the community. A trail system would support community values by enhancing access to the BLM area.

The San Pedro Neighborhood Plan recommends developing a trail system for pedestrian and horseback traffic as outlined in the 1999 Santa Fe County General Plan (pp.17-18). The Growth Management Plan specifically refers to areas such as the San Pedro neighborhood which are characterized by large (20-acre or greater), individually owned lots that are either undeveloped or are limited by zoning regulations to only a single household. Without formal access agreements, such lots may block direct access to publicly owned land so that the only legal access alternative is for individuals to negotiate with land owners for permission to cross their land.

San Pedro Community Plan – Adopted via Resolution 2001-51 on 10 April 2001

Goals:

1. Explore community interest in developing a voluntary trails system for the neighborhood.
2. Maintain public access to BLM lands.
3. Identify wildlife corridors.

Actions:

- A. The community will coordinate with the County Open Space Program to develop a survey to evaluate local support for trails within one year of adoption of the San Pedro Community Plan. The community, with County support, should conduct the survey. The survey should ask community members to identify existing informal trails and significant tracts in the Planning Area that could be nominated for inclusion in the County's Open Space Program. Survey questions should include:
 - Is there a strong community interest in having marked, dedicated trails to public land open spaces?
 - If so, what kind of traffic should be allowed to co-mingle on any one dedicated trail (pedestrian, horseback, bicycle, and off-pavement-motorized vehicle)?
 - If there is a clear desire to limit co-mingling, how many different types of trails is the community willing to support (pedestrian, horseback, bicycle, and off-pavement-motorized vehicle)?
 - What degree of commitment exists at the community level for voluntary trail building and regular maintenance?
- B. The community will coordinate with the County Open Space Program to work with willing landowners of large lots to negotiate donation(s) of narrow easements for trails or wildlife corridors. This will include exploration of possible tax benefits for landowners willing to donate easements.
- C. The community will coordinate with the County Open Space Program for assistance in trail design, signage, and other kinds of technical guidance.
- D. The community will coordinate with the County Open Space Program to work with willing landowners in developing and maintaining public access to BLM lands.
- E. The community will coordinate with the County Open Space Program and other appropriate agencies to develop a wildlife corridor study that includes inventory of wildlife in the area.

PART IVX. MAPS OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

- A. San Pedro Community Planning Area – Existing Land Use Map**
- B. San Pedro Community Planning Area - Ridgetop Map**
- C. San Pedro Community Planning Area - Boundary Map**

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARIES

A. SAN PEDRO COMMUNITY SURVEY ONE:

Table 1: Issues to Address in Community Plan

Should we do a community plan?				Should the Plan consider issues such as lights, noise, dust, power poles, mine noise, and animal control?			
Yes	No	Other	Total	Yes	No	Other	Total
74	3	13	90	80	5	8	93
82%	3%	14%		86%	5%	9%	
Should the Plan deal with water conservation issues, such as promoting state studies?				Should the Plan address mining issues?			
Yes	No	Other	Total	Yes	No	Other	Total
76	14	3	93	81	8	4	93
82%	15%	3%		87%	9%	4%	

Table 2: Design Standards

	Yes	No	Other	Total
Do you favor design standards for residential uses?	44	34	15	93
	47%	37%	16%	
Should there be design standards for commercial uses?	65	13	15	93
	70%	14%	16%	

Table 3: Lot Size, Planning Area Boundary and Regulation

What should be the minimum lot size for subdivisions?					How do you feel about land use regulations?																																		
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Keep at 40 acres</th> <th>Smaller</th> <th>Larger</th> <th>Other</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>57</td> <td>26</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td>91</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>63%</i></td> <td><i>29%</i></td> <td><i>7%</i></td> <td><i>2%</i></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Keep at 40 acres	Smaller	Larger	Other	Total	57	26	6	2	91	<i>63%</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>2%</i>		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>None needed</th> <th>Strict regulation needed</th> <th>Mildly strict but flexible regulation needed</th> <th>Other</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>18</td> <td>65</td> <td>2</td> <td>92</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>8%</i></td> <td><i>20%</i></td> <td><i>71%</i></td> <td><i>2%</i></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					None needed	Strict regulation needed	Mildly strict but flexible regulation needed	Other	Total	7	18	65	2	92	<i>8%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>2%</i>	
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Table 4: Road Issues:

	Yes	No	Other	Total	Do you prefer side roads be gravel or paved?			
Are you concerned about roads in San Pedro?	63 <i>68%</i>	20 <i>22%</i>	10 <i>11%</i>	93	50 <i>54%</i>	19 <i>20%</i>	24 <i>26%</i>	93
Is maintenance of county roads an issue?	68 <i>73%</i>	7 <i>8%</i>	18 <i>19%</i>	93				
Is maintenance of bridges an issue?	65 <i>70%</i>	7 <i>8%</i>	21 <i>23%</i>	93				
Is widening of 344 an issue?	26 <i>28%</i>	54 <i>58%</i>	13 <i>14%</i>	93				

San Pedro Community Plan – Adopted via Resolution 2001-51 on 10 April 2001

Table 5: Commercial Development

	Yes	No	Other	Total		Scattered	Only Along 344	No response	Total
Do you support commercial uses?	39 42%	35 38%	19 20%	93	Where should commercial uses be located?	24 26%	43 46%	26 28%	93
If so, what types?									
Large scale?	12 20%	37 63%	10 17%	59					
Small scale	37 63%	7 12%	15 25%	59					
Other (like a B&B)	39 66%	2 3%	18 31%	59					

B. SAN PEDRO COMMUNITY SURVEY TWO:

Do you agree with the vision statement?				Should we try to keep 344 as is (not widened or straightened)?			
Yes	No	Other	Total	Yes	No	Other	Total
44	0	1	45	41	4		45
98%	0%	2%		91%	9%	0%	
Should we allow 'commercial use' businesses ?				Should we keep Heartbreak Hill as is?			
Yes	No	Other	Total	Yes	No	Other	Total
9	36		45	36	9		45
20%	80%	0%		80%	20%	0%	
Should mining be banned?							
Yes	No	Other	Total				
41	3	1	45				
91%	7%	2%					

APPENDIX 2: POTENTIAL SUBDIVISION OF LAND IN SAN PEDRO

Table 1: Existing Lot Sizes in the San Pedro Planning Area, 2000

Size Range	Lot Size (Acres)	Number of Lots	Total Number of Lots
1 to 4 acre lots	1	33	85
	2.5	15	
	3	24	
	4	13	
5 to 9 acre lots	5	81	92
	6	3	
	7	6	
	8	1	
	9	1	
10 to 15 acre lots	10	80	83
	13	1	
	15	2	
20 to 35 acre lots	20	59	78
	25	9	
	30	8	
	35	2	
80 acre and larger	40	19	29
	60	4	
	70	1	
	80	1	
	100	1	
	160	1	
	230	1	
	300	1	
TOTAL			367

Note: Data for Table 1 from Santa Fe County Assessor's Office, 2000

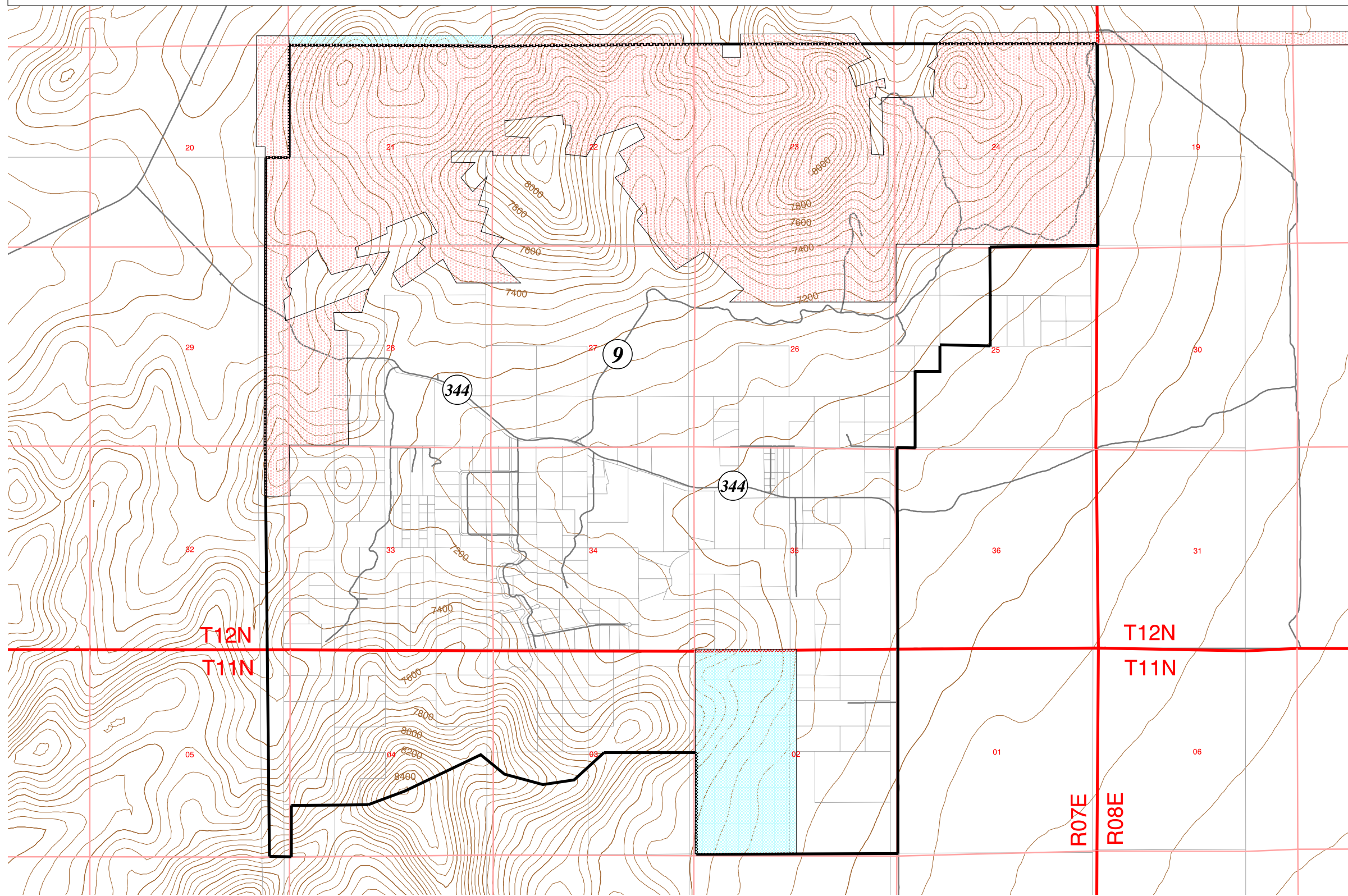
San Pedro Community Plan – Adopted via Resolution 2001-51 on 10 April 2001

Table 2: Potential Subdivision of Land in the San Pedro Planning Area, 2000


Existing			Large Parcels (40 acres or more) Divided					Large Parcels (80 acres or more) Divided					Complete Division of All Parcels at 2.5 acre plots				
Parcel Size Range	Lot Size (Acres)	Number of Lots	40	20	10	5	2.5	40	20	10	5	2.5	40	20	10	5	2.5
1 to 4	1	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
	2.5	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
	3	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	4	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Total lots		85															
5 to 9	5	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	162
	6	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	6
	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	12
	8	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
	9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
Total lots		92															
10 to 15	10	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	160	320
	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	5
	15	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	12
Total lots		83															
20 to 35	20	59	59	59	59	59	59	59	59	59	59	59	59	59	118	236	472
	25	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	18	45	90
	30	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	24	48	96
	35	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	14	28
Total lots		78															
40 up	40	19	19	38	76	152	304	19	19	19	19	19	19	38	76	152	304
	60	4	4	12	24	48	96	4	4	4	4	4	4	12	24	48	96
	70	1	1	3	7	14	28	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	7	14	28
	80	1	2	4	8	16	32	2	4	8	16	32	2	4	8	16	32
	100	1	2	5	10	20	40	2	5	10	20	40	2	5	10	20	40
	160	1	4	8	16	32	64	4	8	16	32	64	4	8	16	32	64
	230	1	5	11	23	46	92	5	11	23	46	92	5	11	23	46	92
	300	1	7	15	30	60	120	7	15	30	60	120	7	15	30	60	120
Total lots		29															
TOTALS		367	382	434	532	726	1114	382	405	449	536	710	382	434	620	1076	2070

Note: Data for Table 2 from Santa Fe County Assessor's Office, 2000

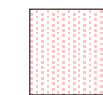
Map A: San Pedro Contemporary Community Zoning District and Planning Area



Legend

 San Pedro Contemporary Community Zoning District and Planning Area (Designated by County Resolution 2001-51)

 Roads

 BLM Land

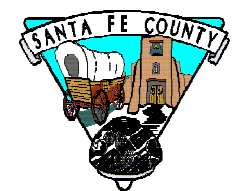
 State Land



Scale 1:40,000

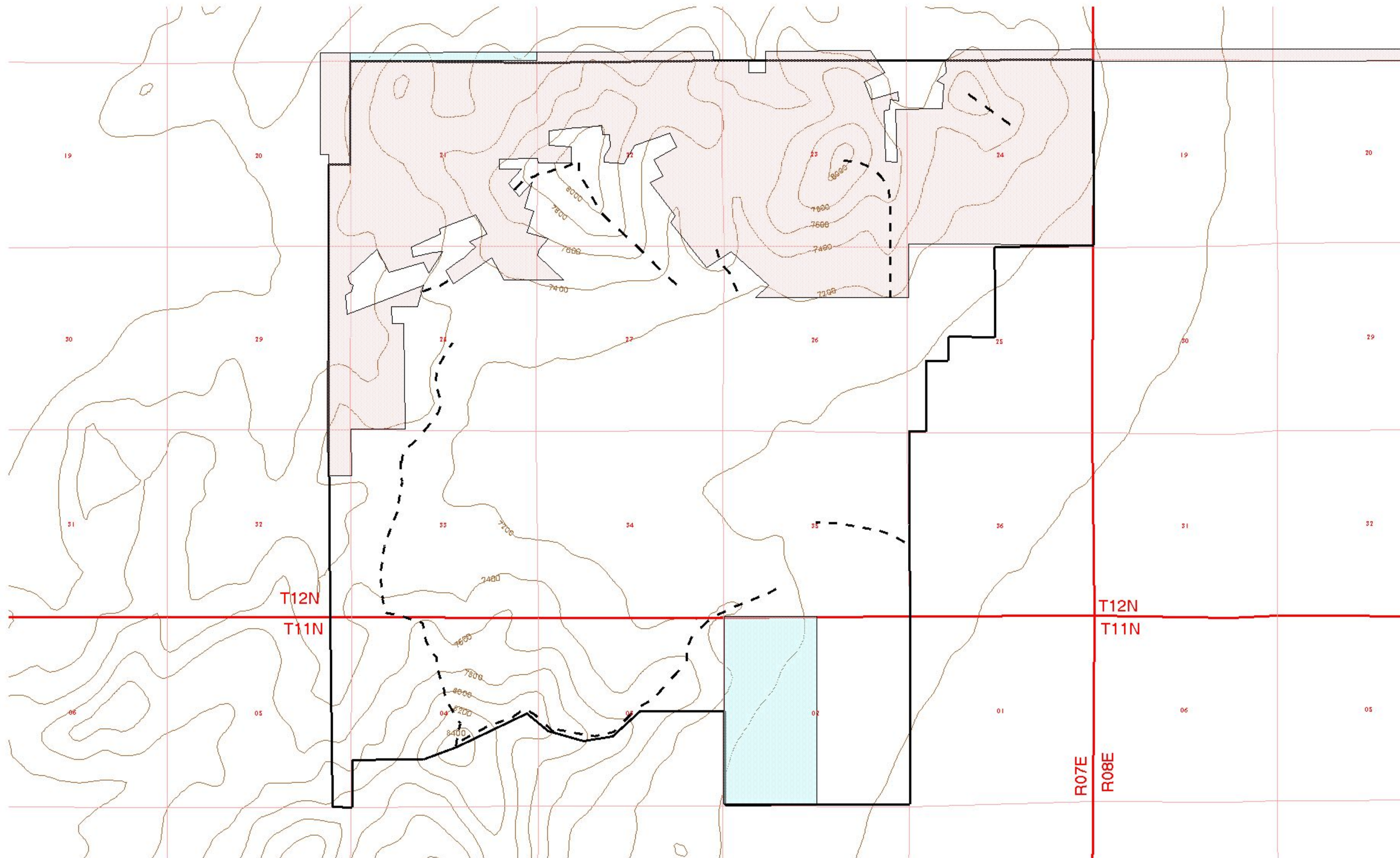
Contour Interval = 50 Feet

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January 8, 2002

Map B: Ridgetops in San Pedro Contemporary Community



Legend

RIDGETOPS

(Ridgetops shall be determined based on the Ridgetop definition in the ordinance. Map representations of ridgetops are included for informational purposes only.

San Pedro Contemporary Community Zoning District and Planning Area (Designated by County Ordinance 2002-2)

BLM Land

State Land



Scale 1:40,000

Contour Interval=50 Feet

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January 8, 2002