

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
SANTA FE COUNTY
RESOLUTION NO. 2019 - 144**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE CORRIDORS IN
THE UPPER RIO GRANDE BASIN, URGING U.S. CONGRESS TO ADOPT THE
WILDLIFE CORRIDORS CONSERVATION ACT OF 2019, AND EXPRESSING
SUPPORT FOR THE SANTA FE NATIONAL FOREST TO ADOPT AND ESTABLISH
THE CAJA DEL RIO WILDLIFE AND CULTURAL INTERPRETIVE MANAGEMENT
AREA**

WHEREAS, in Santa Fe County our wildlife is fundamental to our history, culture, and identity; and

WHEREAS, for centuries, wildlife has been intertwined with the cultural fabric of the Upper Rio Grande Basin and has been integral in supporting thriving civilizations and our interaction with wildlife has fostered the creation of important cultural traditions, which continue to be passed down today; and

WHEREAS, wildlife species can move considerable distances to meet their daily, seasonal, and ecological needs, and their movement often crosses multiple jurisdictional boundaries, including federal, state, tribal, city, county, and private lands; and

WHEREAS, public lands and waters provide vital habitat for hundreds of wildlife species and also include important corridors for wildlife to safely move and migrate across larger landscapes; and

WHEREAS, fragmentation such as roads, fences, development, fires, and other human-created and natural barriers are increasingly making it more difficult for wildlife species to migrate safely across landscapes; and

WHEREAS, there exists a need and opportunity to foster increased collaboration among state, federal, tribal, and local governments to promote and protect landscape connectivity; and

WHEREAS, land managers from the Santa Fe National Forest have a role in identifying and addressing the importance of the National Forest in establishing connectivity for wildlife to safely move and migrate across forest lands; and

WHEREAS, Special Management Areas, such as the proposed Caja del Rio Wildlife and Cultural Interpretive Management Area, are areas of profound and cultural and historical significance and are critical to wildlife habitat and connectivity; and

SFC CLERK RECORDED 12/09/2019

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio, also known as La Bajada, is located within Santa Fe County and was recognized in 2003 by the New Mexico Preservation Alliance as one of New Mexico's "most endangered places" as it is home to thousands of wildlife species, including elk, mule deer, burrowing owls, black bear, golden eagles, and cougar and serves as a key wildlife migration corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio contains invaluable archaeological and cultural resources including the La Cienguilla Petroglyph site, iconic portions of the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, and Route 66; and

WHEREAS, the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act of 2019 is currently a bill in the U.S. Congress that was introduced by New Mexico Senator Tom Udall and sponsored by the following senators: Mr. Booker, Ms. Harris, Mr. Merkley, Mr. Wyden, Mr. Blumenthal, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Whitehouse, Mr. Tester, and Mrs. Feinstein, to establish National Wildlife Corridors to provide for the protection and restoration of certain native fish, wildlife, and plant species; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act of 2019 are to 1) support a diverse array of native species, including species protected under Federal, State, and Tribal law, that have experienced or may experience habitat loss, degradation, fragmentation or obstruction to connectivity; 2) to provide long-term habitat connectivity for native species migration, dispersal, adaption to climate and other environmental change, and genetic exchange; 3) to help restore wildlife movements that have been disrupted by habitat loss, degradation, fragmentation, or obstruction; 4) to facilitate coordinated landscape- and seascape-scale connectivity planning and management across jurisdictions; and 5) to support State, Tribal, local, voluntary private landowner, and Federal agency decision makers in the planning and development of National Wildlife Corridors.

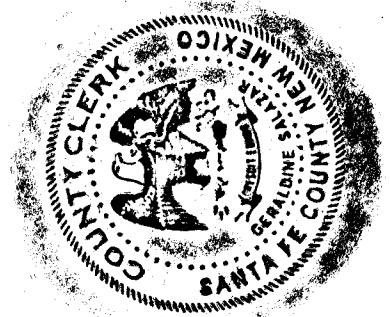
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of Santa Fe County, hereby:

1. Urges Congress to act swiftly to enact the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act of 2019 in order to mitigate connectivity issues by establishing a grants program to support habitat connectivity for migrating species.
2. Expresses support for the Santa Fe National Forest to adopt and establish the Caja del Rio Wildlife and Cultural Interpretive Management Area, which would provide protection for wildlife corridors as well as preserve important cultural and archaeological sites.
3. Requests that the County Manager's Office forward a copy of this Resolution to the entire New Mexico Congressional Delegation and the Regional Forester of the Santa Fe National Forest to express support for the protection of wildlife corridors in the Upper Rio Grande Basin.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED ON THIS 26th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2019.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF SANTA FE COUNTY

By: Anna T. Hamilton
Anna T. Hamilton, Chair



ATTEST:

Geraldine Salazar
Geraldine Salazar
Santa Fe County Clerk

Date: 12/3/2019



Approved as to form:

Rachel Brown
Rachel Brown
Interim Santa Fe County Attorney

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

BCC RESOLUTION
PAGES: 3

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 9TH Day Of December, 2019 at 03:02: PM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1903927
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Deputy Estrella Martinez Geraldine Salazar
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

SFC CLERK RECORDED 12/09/2019