

Cultural Resources Analysis

San Marcos Pueblo

San Marcos area was named for the San Marcos Pueblo. Around 700 years ago, during a particularly rainy period in the Southwest, a great pueblo was built on the North bank of the largest arroyo in the District. This pueblo, called Corn Pueblo in Keres or Turquoise Pueblo in Tewa, is most widely known by its Spanish name, San Marcos. Blessed with reliable springs, land especially suited for growing corn, and nearby mineral resources, including lead for decorating pottery and turquoise, San Marcos prospered. It soon became one of the largest pueblos in the Southwest. For nearly 400 years the fortunes and population of San Marcos varied with cycles of rain and drought, and with the comings and goings of different people. Possibly the greatest change happened around 1635 when Spanish Franciscans came to live in the area, building the Iglesia de San Marcos Mission atop one of the pueblo room blocks. The San Marcosenos were early participants in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, and when the Spanish departed New Mexico, the surviving San Marcosenos moved into Santa Fe, eventually abandoning the Pueblo altogether. By 1692, when Diego de Vargas returned to New Mexico, the San Marcos Pueblo was in ruins and the entire Galisteo Basin depopulated.¹ Today, the San Marcos Pueblo site is owned by the Archaeological Conservancy and used to train young professionals.

The San Marcos Pueblo site is protected by the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act, a federal act administered through the BLM, protects archaeological sites on federal property and with willing land-owners. For example, Santa Fe County, though not a federal entity, will abide by the regulations in the Act. These protections include preservation and interpretations of these significant sites.

Arts

Just as pottery and turquoise were an important feature of the San Marcos Pueblo culture, so too the arts remain an important part of the San Marcos community today. Many artists find their home in the District, some with private studios and others with exhibitions open to the public. Along the southern part of the HWY 14 corridor in San Marcos, passersby can appreciate multiple sculpture gardens and arts displays, such as Origami in the Garden and the Turquoise Trail Sculpture Garden and Studio, as they traverse the Scenic Byway. The legacy of prominent native sculptor, Allan Houser, is preserved through the Allan Houser Sculpture Garden and Foundry on Haouzous road, named after Mr. Houser's Warm Springs Chiricahua Apache family. The Foundry is used by and has trained many local artists over the years.

Eaves Movie Ranch may be one of the original filming locations in the District, but in recent years, San Marcos has flourished as a backdrop for many films and TV series. Film crews support local business in the area by using equestrian and trucking services in San Marcos District.

¹ 2006 San Marcos District Community Plan p.8

Mining

During the 19th and 20th century, San Marcos area was the site of many mining operations, notably in what is today the Cerrillos Hills State Park, where historic mining sites are preserved and interpreted for the public. Pueblos like Cochiti and Santo Domingo used turquoise from the Cerrillos Hills to make jewelry that was traded as far West as Navajo country. It is unclear when mining began in the area, but with expansion in 1881 of the railroad and resulting tourism, the Pueblo turquoise jewelry found a new niche and miners traveled to the area in search of riches.²

State Land Office

The State Land Office (SLO) owns five large properties within the San Marcos District totaling 1,826.3 acres. The mission of this agency is to optimize revenues generated from State Trust Lands to support the beneficiaries of the State, notably schools, universities, and hospitals. The SLO holds agricultural leases on the properties within San Marcos District, as well as a small mineral lease at the base of their northwest parcel. They employ two Trust Archaeologists, as well as a Conservationist, Range Conservationist, and Forester in their Field Operations staff.³

Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) owns numerous tracts of land in the San Marcos District, including a lot in the southeast portion and a lot in the northwest portion of the District totaling 3,876.8 acres. The BLM has several areas with unique or sensitive culture resources that are designated for special management. These areas within San Marcos District, which are classified as Galisteo Basin Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), have reduced access and restrictions on surface-disturbing activities. The BLM's "Cerrillos Hills/Burnt Corn Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)" seeks to, "Manage this area to provide access to trails and open space, opportunities for routine exercise and escape, and learning local history and prehistory."⁴

Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway

The National Scenic Byways program, recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, was established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. "The term "scenic" goes beyond vistas, to represent natural and man-made panoramas, electrifying neon landscapes, and ancient and modern history coming alive, native arts and cultures."⁵ "Believed to be an ancient path, Turquoise Trail travels between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. The natural geological formations found here are like nowhere else

² <http://www.cerrilloshills.org/history/turquoise-mining-history>

³ <http://www.nmstatelands.org/staff-directory-fo.aspx>

⁴ Taos BLM RMP Chapter 2, Plan Decisions p.74

⁵ <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/about>

on Earth. See nature up-close in the Cibola National Forest and Sandia Mountain Wilderness Area. Appreciate the distinctive, artistic communities of Madrid and Los Cerrillos.⁶ Turquoise Trail Corridor Management Plan Version 2.0 was completed in July 2006 and sets out a vision for the Turquoise trail corridor. Importantly, the plan identifies intrinsic assets along the byway and sets out strategies to protect, enhance, and interpret those assets for the public. Some assets, like sunsets, grassland wildlife and other scenic qualities, apply to the entire corridor, other assets, like the **Cerrillos State Park**, the **first strip mine in the United States** and the and the **San Marcos Pueblo**, are unique sites to the San Marcos District. Additionally, the plan calls for the improvement of existing byway facilities to serve residents and visitors.”⁷

⁶ <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/2094>

⁷ <http://www.turquoisetrail.org/nsb/cmp.html>

