



Taos Pueblo celebrates the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument
*Tribal government joins its community in praising President Obama for
protecting critical natural and culture area*

TAOS, NEW MEXICO (March 25, 2013) – The federally recognized Taos Pueblo Tribal government praised President Obama today for protecting the [Rio Grande del Norte National Monument](#). The designation will preserve for future generations naturally and culturally significant lands in Taos and Rio Arriba counties.

The Rio Grande del Norte National Monument includes some of the most ecologically significant lands in northern New Mexico, including Ute Mountain, the Rio Grande Gorge and the Taos plateau. Protecting the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument will safeguard a vital source of water for the entire state. The monument is home to bighorn sheep, river otter, antelope, deer, elk, eagles, hawks and falcons. It is also an economic driver for the area through hiking, fishing, rafting, hunting and horseback riding. Protecting the area also protects traditional uses of the land, like piñon picking, firewood collection and grazing.

“I applaud President Obama protecting Rio Grande del Norte National Monument because many of the wildlife species that live in that corridor come in and out of this area,” said **Benito Sandoval, the Taos Pueblo War Chief**. “Left unprotected, there may be very few animals available that the Native American people of Taos Pueblo depend on for food, clothing and shelter.”

In a [resolution supporting permanent protection](#) of Rio Grande del Norte, the Taos Pueblo said,

“**Whereas**, the Antiquities Act provides the President of the United States the authority to proclaim areas of federal public land as National Monuments and this authority could be used to create a Rio Grande del Norte National Monument;

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED Taos Pueblo in the strongest terms supports federal protection of the lands contained within Rio Grande del Norte Proposal... in order to protect its scenic, cultural, environmental, economic, and recreational values.”

The Rio Grande del Norte National Monument will add 242,000 acres to our National Conservation Lands for all Americans to enjoy.

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