



My Turn

Support for Rio Grande del Norte National Monument

Mya Coursey

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Last Tuesday we took a day trip to southern Colorado, driving north on Hwy. 522 in the morning and returning to Taos by way of Hwy. 285 in late afternoon. On the drive out, a sense of peace reached out to us from the long vistas, glimpses of the Gorge, and iconic Ute Mountain. I agreed when Wally said, "It helps just knowing this is here."

Near San Antonio Mountain on the trip back, a large coyote streaked across the highway on its mysterious journey and a predatory bald eagle perched in a roadside tree. Near sundown we crossed the Gorge Bridge, taken as always by its breathtaking view.

We moved to Northern New Mexico in large part to be near these possibilities, and we support the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument proposal for the same reason.

Designation as a National Monument will protect for future generations 250,000 acres encompassing sagebrush plateaus, ancient volcanic cones, the incomparable R'o Grande Gorge, and habitat for our indigenous wildlife and migrating species. Studies have shown that this protection will have economic benefits to our area as well as environmental and cultural ones.

To learn more about the proposed conservation area and broad-based support for the designation, watch the This American Land video on the home page at www.riograndedelnorte.org. To take action in support of the proposal, go to <http://action.sierraclub.org/RioNM> and send your message to the appropriate legislators through the Sierra Club.

Mya Coursey and her husband Wally Cox moved to Taos in 2011.