Executive Summary

This report provides a socioeconomic assessment of the relationships between the five mountain Ranger Districts (RDs) of the Santa Fe National Forest (Santa Fe NF), the seven counties with boundaries within the Santa Fe NF, and neighboring communities. This includes Indian Reservations, Pueblo lands and Land Grant communities. This assessment was commissioned by the Southwestern Regional Office of the USDA Forest Service (USDA FS or FS), and serves as a source of information for the development of a revised plan for Santa Fe NF.

The assessment is based primarily on secondary data sources, including those of the United States Census Bureau, the Bureau of Land Management, the Geological Survey, the Federal Highway Administration, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics as well as the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the NM Department of Labor, NM Department of Game and Fish, and those plans and other documents produced by county governments. The most important source of data was National Forest Service (FS) records including the Forest Service infrastructure (INFRA) database and their GIS databases. In some cases, specific information was not available in a form appropriate to this analysis, requiring BBER to make estimates, using the best available data. In other cases, data were not available at all and this fact limited the analysis possible. Information sources and analysis methods are thoroughly documented throughout the report.

The Santa Fe NF consists of mountainous terrain and many of New Mexico's highest mountains which are under FS management. Santa Fe NF spans seven New Mexico counties which are widely divergent in their socioeconomic characteristics. The assessment area includes Native American and Land Grant communities as well as Santa Fe, Española, Cuba and Las Vegas. The study area includes a dynamic mix of peoples from different socioeconomic circumstances and with different histories and cultural traditions. Depending on their background, people in the assessment area may have differing and often conflicting perspectives on the Santa Fe NF and how land is used, and may be expected to make different and at times conflicting demands on the resources of the NF.

The Santa Fe NF makes a substantial and significant contribution to the socioeconomic well-being of the assessment area, representing many elements of a superior quality of life. A major finding of this study is that visitor spending in the ski areas within the national forest is the largest and most influential contributor to the economic impact of the Santa Fe NF. Additionally, the history of tribal activity, ranching and other traditional land use in northern New Mexico has resulted in a deep-rooted desire to preserve the characteristics of rural agricultural communities.

This conclusion is the result of a socioeconomic analysis, based on seven assessment topics: demographics and socioeconomic trends in communities neighboring the Santa Fe NF, access to the NF, land cover and ownership, NF users and uses, special areas and places, economic impacts, and community relationships. In sum, the findings of these topics are as follows:

Demographic and Socioeconomic Trend:

The population of all counties in the assessment area grew between 1980 and 2000. The assessment area's population rose from 203,452 to 344,018, increasing nearly 70 percent, well above the 40 percent average for the state. Santa Fe County comprised the majority of population in the area growing by over 71 percent to 129,292. Sandoval County, which includes Rio Rancho on its southeastern edge, topped the list in growth adding 55,000 residents, a 158 percent growth rate. This growing population base has one major implication for the FS: more use. To complicate

matters, in areas with growing residential populations like Santa Fe, Española and Taos, homes are being built on private land abutting the national forest. Subdivisions near the forest raise access concerns by either obstructing traditional points of access or by facilitating access to places previously difficult to get to. Homes in or near the Forest also impact the methods and costs of fire management.

Following the national trend, the population in the assessment area counties is aging. In the more rural counties of Mora and Taos, this aging process appears to have been accelerated by both the out-migration of the young and the in-migration of those in their retirement years. An older population, with more time on their hands, may seek out the recreational and leisure opportunities of the forest; they also, however, may be willing to volunteer their time on various types of FS projects.

New Mexico was the first state in the United States with a majority minority population. The seven assessment counties vary considerably in their racial and ethnic composition, with Mora (80%), San Miguel (78%), and Rio Arriba (73%) having large proportion of their population identifying as Hispanic or Latino. The number of people identifying as Hispanic or Latino in Taos County fell 9 percent while the number identifying as white rose 7 percent between 1990 and 2000. The Hispanic population in the Santa Fe NF counties remained constant at 49 percent, while the state as a whole increased from 38 percent to 42 percent between 1990 and 2000. While most racial and ethnic compositions in the assessment area only changed slightly over the 10 year period, the percentage of those identifying as other increased – from 16 percent to 23 percent in the assessment area versus a two percent increase statewide.

Poverty in the assessment area tracks with race and ethnicity. Native Americans as a group were most likely to be in poverty in 2000, with approximately one-third of Native Americans living below the federal poverty level. Among Native Americans, poverty is greatest in the rural counties. Nevertheless, even in urban areas their rates of poverty exceed those of other racial and ethnic cohorts. The percent of population in poverty by race in the assessment area are: White Alone (52%), African Americans (1%), American Indians (18%) and “Other” (29%). The percent of race in poverty are White alone (11%), African Americans (13%), American Indians (33%) and “Other” (19%). In terms of ethnicity, 60% of Hispanics and 40% of Non-Hispanics were below the federal poverty level.

Access:

The five ranger districts in the Santa Fe NF are divided into separate contiguous areas with paved roads providing access to most forest areas. Interstate 25 (I-25), US84, NM4 and NM96 run through portions of the Santa Fe NF with I-25, a major north-south thoroughfare running through part of the Pecos-Las Vegas RD.

New Mexico’s largest airport is the Albuquerque International Sunport located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It is the busiest airport in the state serving about six million travelers a year, with connections to major hubs and international destinations. However, it is located over 70 miles away from any part of the Santa Fe NF.

The NF is near the communities of Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Mora and Española. Santa Fe is the largest city in northern New Mexico and is a major source of visitors to the area. Outside of Santa

Fe, the area is sparsely populated. Therefore, with the exception of Santa Fe, the assessment area's roads are characterized by light traffic.

Specific problems regarding right-of-way and other access issues date back more than one hundred years, and many of these issues stem from incomplete or incorrect land records. As a result, the FS often addresses these problems as they are discovered or brought to their attention by landowners. When there are right-of-way issues, the FS tries to resolve them by purchasing easements following an existing trail or road through the property. In cases where the FS is unable to secure an easement, the FS may construct a trail or road that goes around private property. However, this method is more costly than purchasing an easement.

Forest roads provide access for both forest users and FS officials to areas of interest throughout the Santa Fe NF. . For some areas these forest roads allow the only access to complete maintenance and rehabilitative activities. Access to the forest becomes critical in the event of a forest fire or other catastrophic event. In all, the Santa Fe NF has almost 7,500 miles of forest road. The forest has the highest road density of all forests in the Southwestern Region. This road density has made it a target of environmental conservation groups.

The growing use of Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs), particularly for unmanaged recreation is viewed as one of the four major threats by the USDA FS, providing impetus for the Travel Management Directive, under which all the NFs will have to designate which roads and trails will be open to motorized vehicles.

Land Cover:

GIS data show that over 80 percent of the Santa Fe NF is evergreen forest, encompassing 1,282,151 acres. Grasslands make up most of the remaining 20 percent. Over one-third of the forest's grassland (89,376 acres) is in the Española RD.

Land cover defines land use capabilities, which strongly influence land ownership. The majority of land within the exterior boundary of the National Forests is federally owned. However, there are 137,964 acres of private land in-holdings within the administrative boundary of the National Forest, accounting for about eight percent of the total acreage within this exterior boundary. Frequently, there are parcels of forest land scattered around the boundaries of the forest that are costly and difficult to manage and can pose significant right-of-way issues. Land exchanges are one way to address this issue, allowing the Forest Service to exchange less ideally located land parcels with better suited privately owned parcels to create a more contiguous administrative unit, but such exchanges are often controversial.

Users and Uses:

The FS management strategy is guided by the multiple-use mandate.1 However, increased usage of essentially limited resources can ultimately give rise to conflict over land use. In the Santa Fe NF, recreational uses, like hiking, camping, picnicking, skiing, off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, and rock climbing – have increasingly eclipsed the more traditional economic pursuits of grazing,

[1] Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960, 16 U.S.C. §§ 528-531, June 12, 1960.

Economic Impact:

Analysis using the IMPLAN regional economic model indicates that visitor spending is by far the largest contributor to economic activity generated by Santa Fe NF. Ranching and USDA FS operations contribute a much smaller but significant amount. Timber harvesting plays only a minor role. Ranching is an important activity in New Mexico and plays a critical role in the economy and culture of many small rural communities. In small rural communities, the NF can be particularly critical for subsistence activities, like hunting and gathering herbs, as well as providing a source of cash income (e.g., from the sale of firewood or Christmas trees).

Community Relationships:

The FS has an extensive history of working with local communities on various projects, ranging from economic development to forest health and sustainability. Partnerships are an indispensable method of managing operations and conducting business. They are a vital means of achieving goals that might not be met by the FS alone. The most common partners are non-governmental organizations, which are typically non-profit organizations such as neighborhood associations and agricultural sustainability groups. One way the FS has been teaming up with community groups is through the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP). This program provides cost-share grants to stakeholders for forest restoration projects on public land which are designed through a collaborative process. Santa Fe NF had the support of over 476 volunteers between 2003 and 2005.

1 Introduction

The Santa Fe National Forest (NF) is located in north central New Mexico and consists of 1,587,184 acres. It is near the communities of Santa Fe, Española, Cuba and Las Vegas, New Mexico. The Rio Chama runs along the northwest end of the forest and the Rio Grande splits the Forest from north to south. Interstate 25, US84, NM4, and NM96 all run through portions of the Santa Fe NF. Around the perimeter of the forest are Native American pueblos and reservations, areas managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Carson National Forest and land grant communities. Refer to **Figure 1.1** for a general orientation to the Forest.

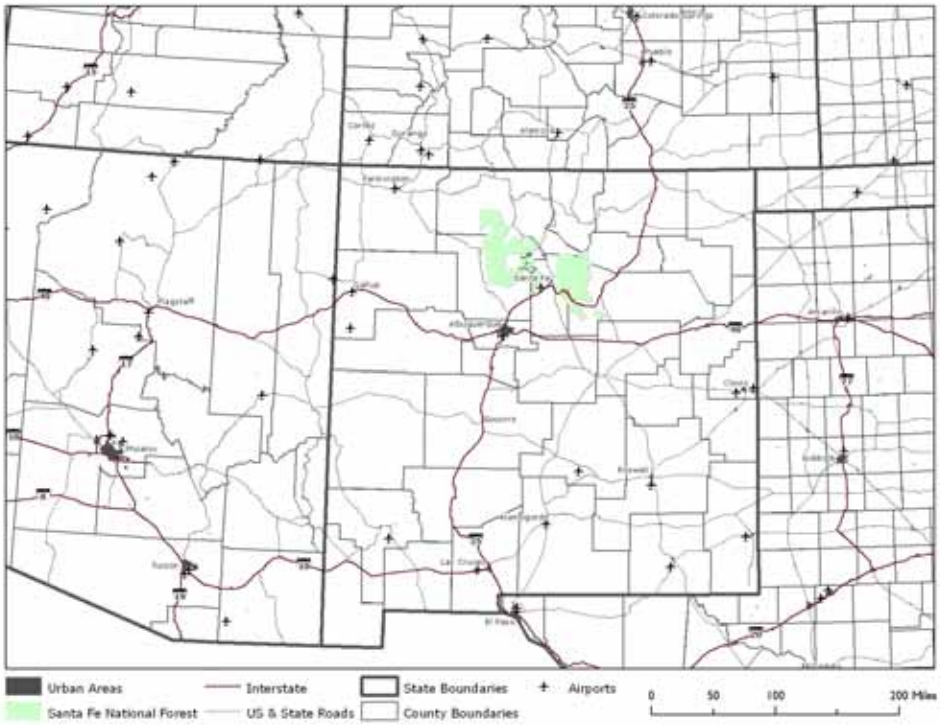

Figure 1.1: Santa Fe National Forest

The Forest includes many of New Mexico's highest mountains, though the state's highest peaks are located in the Carson NF, immediately to the north. The Sangre de Cristo Mountains are situated in the eastern portion of the Santa Fe NF and the Jemez Mountains are located to the west around Los Alamos. Elevation levels are from about 5,300 feet (1,600 meters) to 13,102 feet (3,993 meters) at the summit of Truchas Peak.

Though the winter weather pattern has varied over the past few years, generally speaking, northern New Mexico has regular winter weather patterns which allow for extensive winter recreation opportunities. Ski areas include Ski Santa Fe and Pajarito Ski Area, located on private land within the Santa Fe NF. More importantly, the accumulated snow-pack in these mountains is a substantial contributor to the runoff water used along the Rio Grande, Pecos River and the Jemez River for agricultural purposes. In recent years, dry winter and spring seasons have contributed to drought conditions in the region. The NF comprises some of the most productive and important watersheds in the region, including the Santa Fe Watershed. The watershed is the principal source of drinking water for the residents of Santa Fe.

timber, hunting and mining, although these latter uses are critical to the livelihood of people living in communities adjacent to the forest.

This Socioeconomic Assessment found recreation to be the primary land use of the Santa Fe NF.2 Grazing is another primary use of the Santa Fe NF's and is certainly embedded in the culture and history of the local residents. It is not a major economic force, ranchers engage in this traditional activity because it is part of their heritage. The timber industry is not a major economic force in the area today, nor does it provide many jobs. However, soft saw timber accounted for about 27 percent of the total timber cut value, while small-diameter wood harvesting accounted for about 22 percent of the total timber cut value. In the Carson and Cibola NF's small-diameter wood harvesting accounted for about 85 percent of total timber cut value. Small-diameter woods are a potential source of economic development. There may be market potential for small diameter wood products, including fuel wood, heating pellets, mulch, panels, composite products, fence posts, round wood construction, and "character wood" niches.

Native American tribes make ongoing use of FS managed lands for religious and other cultural purposes. The Santa Fe NF has archaeological resources, cultural lands, and sacred sites that are unequivocally important to tribes.

One of the most public and farthest-reaching multiple-use debates is the use of OHVs. The FS acknowledges that unmanaged recreation, primarily OHV use, is one of the four largest threats facing the National Forest System.

Special Areas, Recreational Sites, and Heritage and Cultural Resources:

Special Areas in the Santa Fe NF include Wilderness areas and inventoried roadless areas (IRAs). Much of the IRAs on the Santa Fe NF exist within established Wilderness areas such as the Chama River Canyon Wilderness in the Coyote RD and the Pecos Wilderness in both the Española RD and Pecos/Las Vegas RD. Within the Santa Fe NF, there are 155,000 acres of IRAs where neither road construction nor reconstruction is allowed. These areas comprise 8% of NF System lands in New Mexico. The legal status of these lands and what may need to be done to protect them has changed with recent court decisions.

The Santa Fe NF features over 100 developed recreational sites. Developed sites include campgrounds, picnic areas, shooting ranges, visitor centers, and interpreted historical and/or archaeological sites, and are maintained with the help of volunteers.

Within the boundaries of the National Forest, there are numerous areas of cultural significance to the indigenous peoples of the surrounding areas. These places are of importance to Native American tribes and pueblos for their traditional cultural and religious activities. Maintaining the integrity and sanctity of these traditionally significant areas is a challenge for both the Forest Service and the local native peoples.[3]

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[2] Refer to Chapters 4 and 5, and Section 5.1 in this document for a detailed report.
[3] Russell, J. C., & Adams-Russell, P. A. (2005b). Values, Attitudes and Beliefs Toward National Forest System Lands: The New Mexico Tribal People (Issue Brief). Placerville, CA: Adams-Russell Consulting, September 11, 2005.

1.1 Statement of Purpose

This report provides a socioeconomic assessment of the Santa Fe NF and surrounding counties and communities that comprise the assessment area. The report explores relationships and linkages between the USDA Forest Service (USDA FS or FS) managed lands, the visitors and other users of the forest, and the surrounding communities. Specifically, this report contains information and analysis intended to help the FS and the public:

1. Document and assess the current contributions of the Santa Fe NF to the socioeconomic health and cultural vitality of the communities neighboring the public land.
2. Identify opportunities and strategies to address land use conflicts arising from growing multiple use concerns.
3. Compile information and analyses that would be helpful in developing a forest management and planning framework in one place.

1.2 Sources of Information and Analytical Methods

Five ranger districts (RDs) comprise the Santa Fe NF: Coyote, Cuba, Española, Jemez and Pecos/ Las Vegas. The assessment area of this report includes the seven counties that contain Santa Fe NF land: Los Alamos, Mora, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Taos Counties.

Information in this assessment is largely drawn from secondary data sources. Secondary data sources often involve data collected for specific purposes, but the data may be useful for other purposes. Key data sources for this report include:

- • Demographic and economic data sets, such as those available from the United States Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis;
- • Administrative, land management and resource data mostly provided by the FS and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); and
- • Contextual and historical information obtained from archival sources, such as newspapers, internet sites and trade journals.

1.3 Assessment Area and Level of Analysis

The Santa Fe NF comprises 1,587,184 acres and consists of five ranger districts which span seven counties. The Santa Fe NF is adjacent to or includes lands claimed by several Indian Reservations, Pueblo lands, and land grant communities. The Santa Fe NF shares a border with the Carson NF and county coverage with the Cibola NF.

In New Mexico's seven north central counties (Los Alamos, Mora, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Taos), approximately 34 percent of the land is federally owned. Together, the US Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the FS manage about 52 percent of the land in Rio Arriba County and about 53 percent in Taos County[4]. Northern New

[4] Carol Raisch and Alice McSweeney ,"Livestock Ranching and Traditional Culture in Northern New Mexico," *Natural Resources Journal*, vol. 41. (2001): p713-730.

Mexico is a region with a long history of conflict over the role of state and federal agencies in land management. **Figure 1.2** is a map of the Santa Fe NF and vicinity.

Beyond the role of the federal government, it is also important to acknowledge historical events and circumstances, as they still shape forest planning and decision making today. There are ten Native American pueblos and reservations and several active land grant communities all with ties to the land that predate the United States, in the immediate vicinity of the Santa Fe NF. The mix of landowners and interests complicates the forest planning and decision making efforts of the FS. Another complex issue is the perception of many residents in surrounding communities that perceive the forest land as their own private land because it once belonged to their ancestors. As a result, these residents are often skeptical of the FS's motives and are reluctant to engage in collaborative arrangements or discussions. This history plays an important role in current land management practices and should not be left out of any analysis. For this reason, historical accounts of land ownership and land use are presented throughout this report.

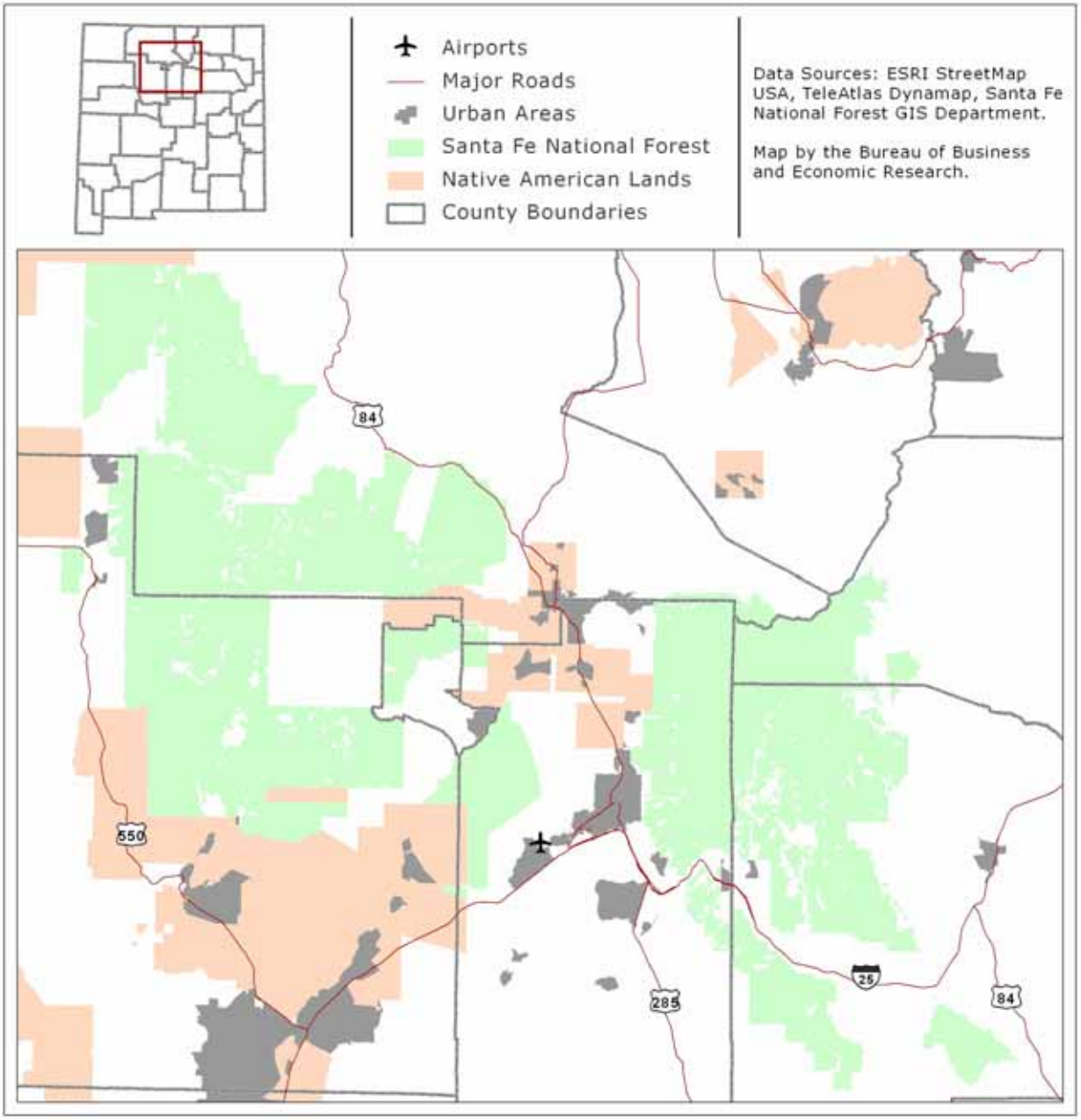

Figure 1.2: Santa Fe National Forest Assessment Area

Much of the quantitative data used for this report are available only at the county level. Thus, county boundaries define the parameters of much of the data and determine the assessment area – the area includes only New Mexico counties that are contained or touched by the five ranger districts of the Santa Fe NF. The assessment area is comprised of seven New Mexico counties (13,117,024 acres). Much of the data provided by the FS is at the aggregate forest level and is not broken out by RD. Where it is possible and appropriate, data is presented at the ranger district-level.

Table 1.1 lists the counties in the assessment area and shows the proportion of land owned by the FS.

Table 1.1: Forest Owned Land by County (Acres)

County	Acres				Forest as % of County
	County Land Area	Forest Land Area			
		USFS	Other	Forest Total	
Los Alamos	69,882.37	28,730.99	13,315.13	42,046.12	60.17%
Mora	1,236,469.19	82,884.60	17,274.67	100,159.27	8.10%
Rio Arriba	3,772,882.04	533,284.08	21,770.72	555,054.80	14.71%
San Miguel	3,028,615.73	334,497.00	44,680.63	379,177.63	12.52%
Sandoval	2,376,986.78	337,503.49	22,632.60	360,136.09	15.15%
Santa Fe	1,222,276.57	239,556.92	18,256.32	257,813.24	21.09%
Taos	1,409,912.05	7,285.30	0.00	7,285.30	0.52%

The table only shows data for the Santa Fe NF. It is important to remember that the Santa Fe NF borders the Carson NF in many areas. In fact, Sandoval County holds parts of the Santa Fe, Carson, and Cibola NFs within its boundaries. Rio Arriba County contains the most acres of the Santa Fe NF (555,055 acres) of any county and accounts for about 33 percent of the total NF. Taos County contains a very small portion of the forest, about 7,000 acres. This area is a portion of the Pecos Wilderness which is co-managed with the Carson NF. Out of the 1.6 million acres included in the Santa Fe NF, about 137,930 (~8%) acres are owned by entities other than the USAD FS. About a third of the privately held land (44,680 acres) within the forest is located in San Miguel County.

1.4 Background and Brief History of Assessment Area

The land which is now the Santa Fe NF was originally designated as the Pecos River Forest Reserve (1892) and the Jemez Forest Reserve (1905). In 1915, these reserve areas were combined to form the Santa Fe NF. The two divisions of the Forest resemble the boundaries of the original reserves. East of the Rio Grande, the southern Sangre de Cristo Mountains cover the Pecos division including the Pecos Wilderness and the 13,101 foot Truchas Peak. The Pecos division includes the Santa Fe Ski Basin, popular among forest visitors, the historic Glorieta Pass and the Old Santa Fe Trail.[5]

The region west of the Rio Grande includes the Jemez Mountains, with Chicoma Peak as the highest point at 11,561 feet. Also in the area is the Los Alamos National Laboratory, Native American pueblos and the Bandelier National Monument. The region's landscape is characterized by a large volcanic caldera and the ring of mountains surrounding the valley.[6]

Long before the Forest Service was founded and prior to Spanish conquest, the area was inhabited by Native American tribes. Today, the Santa Fe NF shares borders with several Native American pueblos and reservations. The ten tribal groups that directly surround the NF are comprised of two major language families – Keresan, spoken at Cochiti, Santo Domingo, and Zia; and Tewa, which include San Juan, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Tesuque, Pojoaque, and Nambe. The other

[5] Robert D. Baker, Robert S. Maxwell, Victor H. Treat and Henry Dethloff. USDA Forest Service. Timeless Heritage: A History of the Forest Service in the Southwest. August 1988.
[6] Ibid.

subdivision, Towa, is spoken only by the Jemez people who live along the Jemez River west of the Rio Grande.[7] On the northeast side of the forest is the Jicarilla Apache Reservation, which also borders the Carson NF.

The Pueblos were and continue to be agriculturally-based with their inhabitants' subsistence based largely on farming, grazing, hunting, fishing, and gathering dependent upon proximity to the mountains and the adequacy of other food supplies. The NF contains many areas that are culturally significant to tribal groups and are used for ceremonial and other traditional purposes. The location and purpose of these areas are typically kept secret to preserve privacy and the sanctity of their ceremonies and practices. However, ethnographic research dating back to the 1900s has documented a few of these areas. This is explored further in **Chapter 6 "Special Places."** The following paragraphs are descriptions of the neighboring pueblos and their historical uses of the land. [8] Refer to Figure 1.3 for a depiction of tribal land in and near the Santa Fe NF.

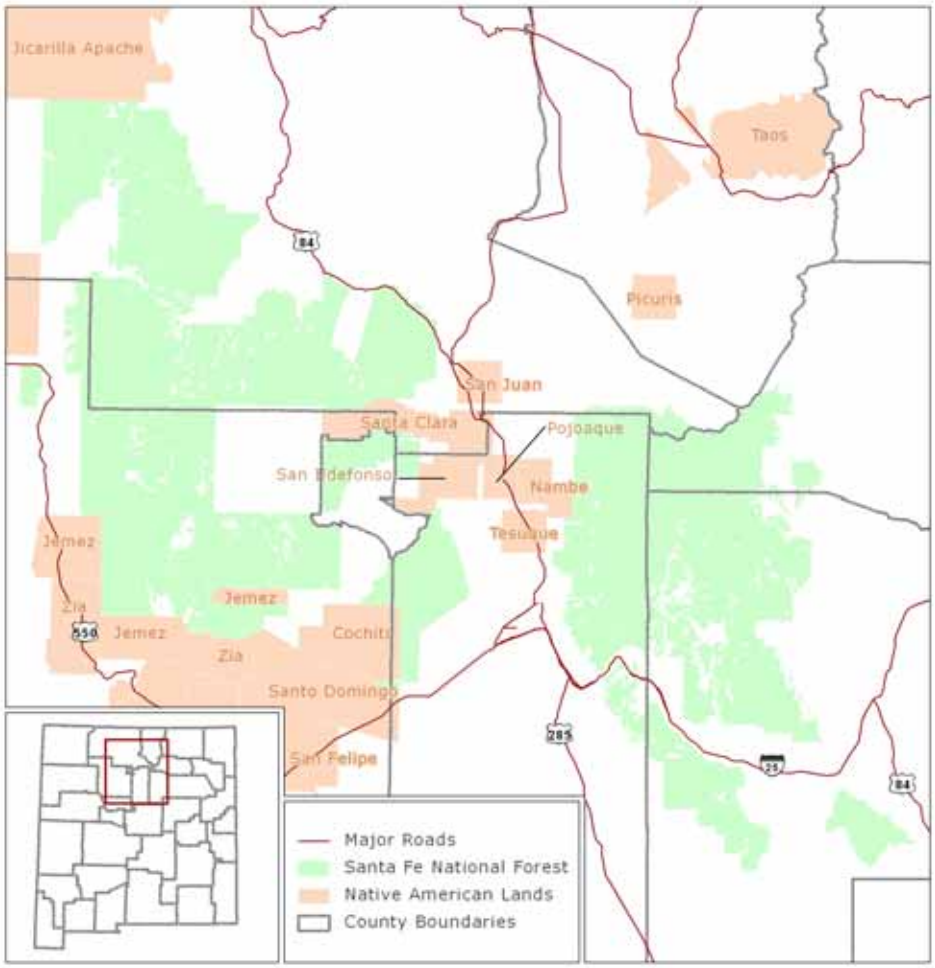

Figure 1.3 Tribal Lands in the Santa Fe National Forest

[7] Friedlander and Pinyan (1980), Indian use of the Santa Fe National Forest: A Determination from Ethnographic Sources. Albuquerque, NM: Center for Anthropological Studies

[8] For a comprehensive review of ethnographic research on Native American land use in the Santa Fe NF, see Friedlander and Pinyan, Ibid.

Established norms concerning land management and ownership began to change dramatically with the arrival of Spanish settlers. The Hispano ranching tradition, in what is now New Mexico, began with the first Spanish colonization of the area in 1598, but did not reach its apex until the Spanish re-conquest of the area in the late 1690s. During colonization, the Spanish brought domesticated plants and animals from Europe, including cattle, sheep, goats, and horses.[9] In addition to these imports, they introduced new agricultural technologies and subsistence practices to the Native Americans. However, during the 1600s, Native American populations drastically decreased in the area as a result of new diseases, warfare and famine caused by droughts and raiding nomadic tribes.

During the Spanish Colonial (1598 to 1821) and Mexican (1821-1848) periods, land ownership and land use in the West was determined by land grants from the Spanish Crown or Mexican government. Various types of land grants were issued in New Mexico, but it is the community land grants, where groups of settlers used portions of the land grant area in common, that became the source of major land ownership conflicts in contemporary north-central New Mexico.[10]

When a community land grant was conferred, settlers generally received individually owned home sites and small plots of irrigated farm land that averaged about three to 12 acres with access to the grant's common lands for grazing, timber and livestock pasturing. Both animals and plants were part of an integrated subsistence farming strategy used by the settlers. Sheep and goats were most frequently used for food whereas cattle were used for plowing, threshing, transporting produce, and fertilizing fields. Often a community's livestock were owned by individuals who shared responsibility and land for grazing.[11]

With the American conquest of the region after the Mexican-American War, patterns of land ownership changed dramatically with consequences that are still the subject of debate and conflict today. In 1848, the U.S. and Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, whereby the U.S. agreed to recognize the property rights of the former Mexican citizens to land within the new boundaries of the U.S. Property rights, however, were not automatically confirmed as claimants had to apply for title confirmation according to procedures that varied depending on the location of the land.[12]

Several active communities in the assessment area were created via land grants. Immediately east of the Pecos Wilderness is the Town of Mora Land Grant. The town of Mora is an active community, situated near the area where NM518, NM434 and NM94 converge. The entire grant area consists of 827,631 acres, which is the total number of acres claimed by the grantee. In 1860, the United States government confirmed the entire amount. The grant spans over Mora, San Miguel, Taos and Colfax Counties. Governor Albino Perez issued the grant to José Tapia and others in 1835 as a community grant.[13]

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[9] Raish, Carol. "Environmentalism, the Forest Service, and the Hispano Communities of Northern New Mexico," *Society & Natural Resources*, 13 (2000): 489-508.
[10] United States General Accounting Office (January 2001), "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: Definition and List of Community Land Grants in New Mexico."
[11] Raish, Carol and Alice McSweeney, "Livestock Ranching and Traditional Culture in Northern New Mexico," *Natural Resources Journal*, vol. 41: p713-730.
[12] Raish, Carol. "Environmentalism, the Forest Service, and the Hispano Communities of Northern New Mexico," (2000) *Society & Natural Resources*, 13 (2000): 489-508.
[13] SouthwestBooks.org: Center For Land Grant Studies.
http://www.southwestbooks.org/grants_co_colfax_mora.htm

Just south of the Mora Land Grant is the Las Vegas Land Grant. In 1835, Governor Mariano Martinez issued the land to Juan de Dios Maes and 28 others in order to establish a Hispano community. According to the claimants to the grant, the land covered 496,446 acres but the United States Government confirmed 461,653 in 1860.[14]

South of the Town of Mora Land Grant is another grant, which also abuts the Santa Fe NF; the Tecolote Grant. In 1728, 48,123 acres were granted by Governor Bartolome Baca to Salvador Montoya and five others as a private grant. Private grants were often issued to ranchers as a way to encourage settlement in a region. The entire grant was confirmed by the United States in 1858.

While the examples described above depict situations where the majority and sometimes the totality of the grant was confirmed by the United States after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo,[15] in many cases, claims were rejected by the courts or claimants did not pursue the land confirmation because they could not provide required documentation or could not navigate the American bureaucracy. During the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, much of the land that had confirmed titles was lost as well. It was common that villagers could not afford the property taxes excised by the new American system of monetary tax payments and had to sell. Even more land was lost by corrupt speculations practices of the Anglo and Spanish, and by commercial enterprises, which were becoming more common in the region. Private land and business owners began fencing off private lands that were traditional, non-grant, parcels of land used for grazing and farming. In total, it is estimated that the U.S. settlement of the area resulted in the alienation of eighty percent of the Spanish and Mexican land grants from their original owner.[16]

For example, the Cañada de Cochito grant was over 104,000 acres and was given to Antonio Lucero as a private grant in 1728. However, only 19,112 acres were confirmed by the United States in 1894. Lost grant land was not limited to private landholders. The Santo Domingo and San Felipe Land Grants were given to the inhabitants of the pueblos in 1770 by Governor Pedro Fermin de Mendinueta. However, only 1,770 of the original 40,000 acres were confirmed in 1898. In a similar case, the inhabitants of Santa Ana, Jemez and Zia Pueblos were granted 382,849 acres for grazing by Domingo Jironza Petroz de Cruzate in 1766. However, the claim was summarily rejected by American courts. [17]

With a long history surrounding land use and land management in the areas in and around the Santa Fe NF policy and land use decisions are comprised of dynamic interactions between residents from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Each group represents different, and often opposing, expectations of the services and management obligations of the Forest Service.

Later chapters of this report will look at these issues and the management challenges they create. The following sections describe each of the ranger districts, including a discussion of historical

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[14] Ibid.
[15] United States General Accounting Office (January 2001), "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: Definition and List of Community Land Grants in New Mexico,"
[16] V. Westphall, *The Public Domain in New Mexico 1854-1891* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1965).
[17] SouthwestBooks.org: Center For Land Grant Studies. http://www.southwestbooks.org/grants_co_colfax_mora.htm

land uses, using information from the Santa Fe NF website and other sources. For reference, refer to **Figure 1.4** for a map of the ranger districts.

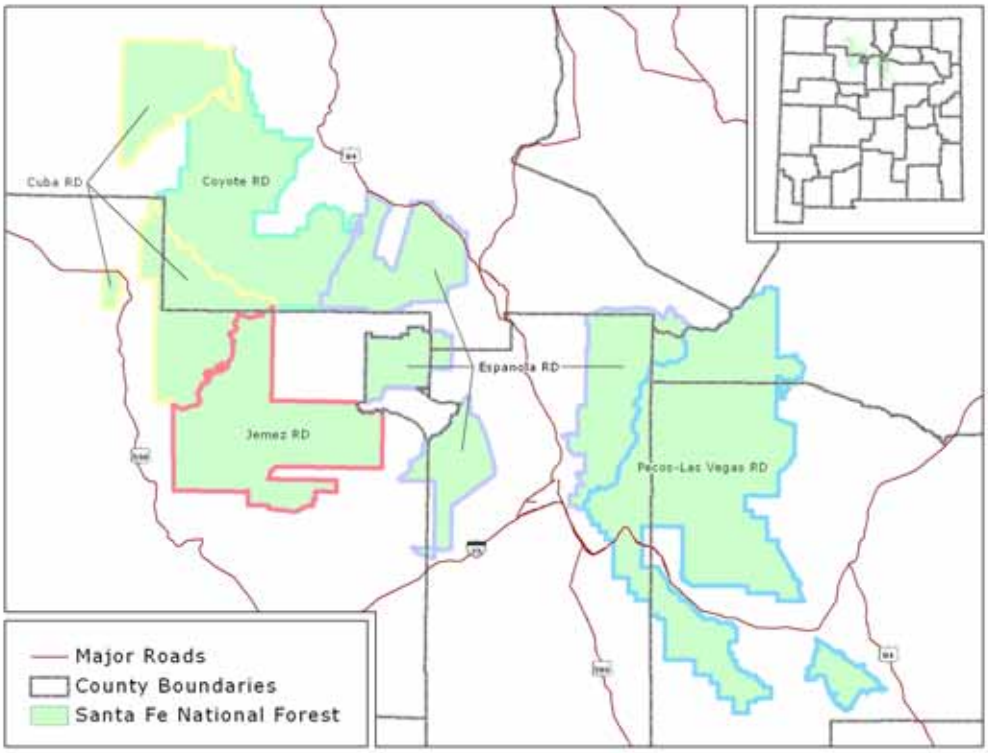

Figure 1.4: Ranger Districts on Santa Fe NF

1.5 Coyote Ranger District

The Coyote RD is the northern-most district of the forest and covers 265,100 acres. The landscapes in this district have been immortalized by artist Georgia O'Keefe.

None of the nine designated campgrounds within the RD charge a fee. During hunting season three of the campgrounds have many visitors: Coyote Canyon, Golf Course, and Guadalupita Area. Mule deer and elk are commonly hunted. There are six sites for winter recreation in the district which provide opportunities for cross-country skiing and snowmobiling.

The most significant feature of the Coyote RD is the Chama River Canyon Wilderness. With small areas reaching into the Carson NF, the majority of the Chama River Canyon Wilderness is in the Coyote RD. Designated in 1978, the Rio Chama Wilderness encompasses 50,300 acres.

Two popular trails provide the best access to the wilderness area, Trail #293 (The Hart Trail), runs from US84 and Forest Road 145, travels down into Chama River Canyon and connects to the Rio Chama. The other trail, a section of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, provides two points of access: The Skull Bridge on Forest Road 151 and the top of Ojitos Canyon. About forty miles of the Continental Divide Trail are within the Coyote RD. The Coyote RD also contains the northernmost portion of the Sand Pedro Parks Wilderness.

In 1986, the Rio Chama, which runs through the wilderness, was designated a Wild and Scenic River. The Rio Chama is one of the main tributaries of the Rio Grande in Northern New Mexico and has provided subsistence to many Native American societies which built their settlements along its banks after the desertion of Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde in the 1300s. The Chama River Canyon features sites such as cave dwellings, pit houses, schoolhouses and homesteads. The documented history of the area goes even further back, however. Archaeologists have found evidence of people living in the area as early as 9,500 BCC. The Rio Chama also offers recreational opportunities for scenic trips, boating, and rafting.

1.6 Cuba Ranger District

The Cuba RD is located in the western portion of the Santa Fe NF and includes the majority of the San Pedro Parks Wilderness. The District is divided into three distinct sections. The larger southern portion travels through the San Pedro Parks Wilderness. A small portion of the Cuba RD is separated from the other two sections by US550. In total, the Cuba RD covers 254,410 acres, making it the second smallest RD in the forest.

There are two developed campground sites in the district: Clear Creek and Rio de las Vacas campgrounds two developed recreation areas, Clear Creek Group Area and Clear Creek Picnic Area, as well as nine hiking trails, ranging from 2 to 11 miles. The trails are also suitable for horseback riding. The Jemez and Zia Pueblos and the Jicarilla Apache Reservation all neighbor the RD and are dependent upon many of the natural resources in the region. Many residents in the local communities, including Cuba, San Pablo and the pueblos use the land adjacent to and within the forest to graze cattle and sheep.

A small portion of the San Pedro Parks Wilderness is located in the southern part of the Coyote RD with the majority of the wilderness located in the northern portion of the Cuba RD. The San Pedro Parks Wilderness has a history dating back to 1931 when the Chief of the Forest Service classified 41,132 acres in the San Pedro Mountains as a primitive area. Ten years later, the Secretary of Agriculture recognized the land as a Wild Area. A year after the Wilderness Act of 1964 was passed, the land was officially designated a Wilderness Area.

1.7 Jemez Ranger District

The land in this region was designated as the Jemez Forest Reserve in 1905, ten years before the Santa Fe NF was established. The Jemez Mountains are central to the culture, history and heritage to the people of Jemez Pueblo. The NF typically works with the Pueblo to protect and preserve cultural sites. Jemez is the smallest RD in the Santa Fe NF, with only 250,912 acres.

The Jemez RD contains the Dome Wilderness, the smallest wilderness area in the Southwestern Region with only 5,200 acres. It is located within the Bandelier Wilderness in the Bandelier National Monument.[18] The trail system into the area provides access to the west side of the Bandelier Wilderness via several designated trailheads situated along Forest Road 289.

The Jemez Hot Springs have attracted visitors for hundreds of years. Spence Springs and San Antonio Springs, and McCauley Warm Springs continue to be major destinations for both bathers

[18] In Figure 1.3, the Bandelier Monument appears as the white box in between the Jemez and Española RDs

and hikers. Seven Springs Ice Pond is a destination for anglers and hikers. Additionally, there are five developed campgrounds in the district. Two of them, Jemez Falls and Redondo Campground, contain amphitheatres.[19] The Vista Linda campground is accessible to those with disabilities and plans are in the works to make the San Antonio campground accessible as well.

The Jemez Mountain Trail National Scenic Byway is also in the District, stretching 163 miles from San Ysidro through the Jemez Mountains. The Byway includes NM4, NM216 and NM44, providing access to Soda Dam, Seven Springs, the cliff dwellings in Bandelier and other attractions.

1.8 Española Ranger District

The Española RD is home to the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. This RD is split into four sections and shares the Pecos Wilderness with its neighbor, the Pecos/ Las Vegas RD. The Española RD is the second largest RD in the Forest, with 376,339 acres. Located near the towns of Santa Fe, Española and Los Alamos, the large district attracts many visitors. There are four campgrounds in the RD, three of which are located along scenic byway NM475. There are two campgrounds open year-round: Aspen Basin, located off NM475 and Borrego Mesa, located about nine miles off of NM503. Thirty-three trails crisscross the district, ranging from half a mile to 12 miles. Cross country skiing and snow-shoeing are common activities in the district, which features 9 sites for winter recreation activities, including Ski Santa Fe and the Pajarito Ski Area, which is on privately-owned land within the RD. Both sites are described in further detail in later sections.

Also in the Española District is the Santa Fe National Forest Scenic Byway; a 16 mile stretch starting in Santa Fe's downtown and ending at the Santa Fe Ski Area. The byway is a stretch of NM475 and provides views of the fall foliage and access to campgrounds and picnic areas along the way.

1.9 Pecos/ Las Vegas Ranger District

When it was founded in 1892, the Pecos/ Las Vegas RD was called the Pecos River Reserve. It was combined with the Jemez Forest Reserve to form the Santa Fe National Forest in 1915. The land east of the Rio Grande was designated the Pecos district. The Las Vegas District was separate until the late 1980s when its administration was combined with the Pecos RD. The Pecos/ Las Vegas RD is the largest in the Santa Fe NF, spanning 544,955 acres.

For centuries, the Pecos high country has been a resource for Native Americans. It was used as a place to hunt, fish, cut fuel wood and timber, and gather medicinal and edible plants. To the west, lived Tewa and Keresan Pueblo peoples; to the north lived Tiwa Pueblos and nomadic mountain tribes such as the Utes; to the east Plains Indians roamed; and to the south Towa speaking people inhabited the pueblo the Spaniards called Pecos, from a Keresan word meaning "place where there is water."[20]

Spaniards arrived in the district in 1540 and established villages around the perimeter of what is now the Pecos Wilderness Area. The grazing of livestock became common as early as 1825, but

[19] USFS Camping Guide. http://www.forestcamping.com/ Accessed May 6, 2006.
[20] Ibid.

its impact on the land was relatively small. That changed, however, when English-speaking settlers arrived after the United States annexed New Mexico in 1846, bringing with them vastly more powerful agricultural technologies. With the new government also came the philosophy that emphasized market economics over subsistence economics.

Recreation is a major draw to the area, such as hunting, stream and lake fishing, camping, hiking, mountain biking, four-wheeling, motorcycling, sledding, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and cross country skiing. The district has a vast trail system featuring about 250 miles of trails. The district is within a short driving distance of Pecos, Las Vegas, and Santa Fe. The district attracts day-trippers, picnickers, backpackers, and overnight campers.

The wilderness area was not able to sustain its wildlife after more and more people began accessing the area. By 1888, elk had been exterminated in what is now the Pecos Wilderness. By 1900, they were gone from the rest of the state. Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep had disappeared by 1900. The last Grizzly Bear in the Pecos Wilderness was killed in 1923.

While there are portions of the Pecos Wilderness that receive very heavy use (85 percent of hikers use 15 percent of the wilderness) other areas receive very few visitors. The most frequently traveled trails are those leading to Beatty's Cabin, Puerto Nambe, Hermits Peak, the high peaks, the lake basins, and even Pecos Falls. But after Labor Day, visits to these areas decline precipitously.[21] The wilderness area is a major draw for recreational purposes, but it also has a long history of over-grazing and loss of wildlife.

In 1892 President Harrison proclaimed the upper Pecos watershed a timberland reserve for watershed protection (a proclamation not implemented until 1898). The area was withdrawn from every use including logging, grazing, and mining, and it was closed completely to the public. The Pecos Primitive Area of 133,640 acres was established by the Chief of the Forest Service in 1933. It was declared a Forest Service Wilderness in 1955 and became part of the National Wilderness Preservation System on September 3, 1964, when President Johnson signed the Wilderness Act. In 1980, the New Mexico Wilderness Act added 55,000 acres to include more lands with wilderness character. There are 15 lakes and eight major streams in the wilderness which sustain both plant and animal health including the native Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout. In summer months, the area is a popular destination for fishing enthusiasts and hikers. In the winter, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing is popular.

1.10 Organization of the Report

The organization of this assessment is based on the collection and analysis of data pertinent to seven individual assessment topics. Chapter 2 provides information on demographic trends and economic characteristics of the counties located within the assessment area. Chapter 3 discusses the access and travel patterns within the area. Chapter 4 examines the Forest's land cover and uses, including descriptions of historical conveyances and exchanges, invasive species, fire and fuels. Chapter 5 explores major types of land use and describes conflicts arising from multiple use. Chapter 6 examines special management areas in the forest including recreational sites and inventoried roadless areas. Chapter 7 provides an assessment of the economic impacts the Santa Fe NF has on surrounding communities. Chapter 8 explores relationships between the Santa Fe

[21] New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, "Pecos Wilderness," http://www.nmwild.org/wilderness/pecos (accessed April 19, 2006).

NF and various communities at the local and regional levels. Chapter 9 identifies opportunities, risks, and special circumstances facing the National Forest lands and their management.

2 Demographic and Socioeconomic Trends

The chapter examines the changing demographic characteristics of those living in the seven county assessment area of the Santa Fe National Forest. .

2.1 Population Growth

Table 2.1 shows population density varies by county in the assessment area, ranging from 2.7 persons per square mile in Mora County to 168.3 in Los Alamos County. Santa Fe County is the most populous county in the assessment area.

Table 2.1: 2000 Population Density (sq. mile)

	Population Density
Los Alamos	168.3
Mora	2.7
Rio Arriba	7.0
San Miguel	8.1
Sandoval	16.3
Santa Fe	67.9
Taos	13.6

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census.

Note: Population Density calculated as per square mile of land area.

Table 2.2 shows about 344,000 people lived in the assessment area in 2000, approximately one in five people in the state. Between 1980 and 2000, the area added 141,000 new residents, for a growth rate of 69 percent which surpasses New Mexico's 40 percent average rate of growth. The assessment area has faced a number of economic changes.

Santa Fe County, the largest county in population, comprised over one-third of the assessment area's population in 2000. During 1980-2000 the county's population increased about 54,000. Sandoval County's population, the second largest and fastest growing (158%), increased 55,000 during the historical period. Rio Arriba and Taos counties had above average growth rates for the state while Mora, San Miguel and Los Alamos counties were below the New Mexico average growth rate. Together, these five counties added 32,000 new residents. Wealthy retirees attracted by recreational amenities have been relocating in and around mountain communities in the assessment area. Taos and Santa Fe counties are attractive for those seeking cultural amenities as well.

A projected 588,000 residents will live in the assessment area by 2030. The population is projected to increase 38 percent, or by 163,000, between 2010 and 2030. Once again, the assessment area is expected to grow faster than the state average. As in the historical period, Sandoval and Santa Fe counties will grow more quickly. Following state trends, growth rates will taper for all counties throughout the projected period. Refer to **Table 2.2** which illustrates changes in growth rates. Santa Fe County is projected to reach about 226,000 residents, adding 67,000, and Sandoval County is projected to add 71,000 people for approximately 197,000 residents by the year 2030.

Table 2.2: Historical & Projected County Population, 1980-2030

	Historical			Projected		
	1980	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**
Los Alamos	17,599	18,115	18,343	19,114	20,060	20,749
Mora	4,205	4,264	5,180	6,205	7,137	7,862
Rio Arriba	29,282	34,365	41,190	45,058	48,630	50,996
San Miguel	22,751	25,743	30,126	34,746	38,847	42,190
Sandoval	34,799	63,319	89,908	126,294	162,409	197,182
Santa Fe	75,360	98,928	129,292	158,624	191,403	226,012
Taos	19,456	23,118	29,979	35,097	39,442	42,678
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**203,452**	**267,852**	**344,018**	**425,138**	**507,928**	**587,669**
TOTAL NM	1,303,303	1,515,069	1,819,046	2,112,986	2,383,116	2,626,553

	Percent Change				
	80-90	**90-00**	**00-10**	**10-20**	**20-30**
Los Alamos	3%	1%	9%	5%	3%
Mora	1%	21%	38%	15%	10%
Rio Arriba	17%	20%	18%	8%	5%
San Miguel	13%	17%	29%	12%	9%
Sandoval	82%	42%	81%	29%	21%
Santa Fe	31%	31%	48%	21%	18%
Taos	19%	30%	32%	12%	8%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**32%**	**28%**	**24%**	**19%**	**16%**
TOTAL NM	16%	20%	16%	13%	10%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1980, 1990, 2000. Calculations done by UNM-BBER.

Table 2.3 displays a selected list of ten of the larger communities in northern New Mexico and the populations of each. A complete list of incorporated communities and unincorporated places that meet the criteria for Census Designated Places (CDP's) is shown in **Appendix Table 1**.

In both 1990 and 2000 these ten communities accounted for about three-fourths of the population in all places within the assessment area. The population increased 58 percent between 1990 and 2000 compared to 18 percent during 1980-1990. The cities of Santa Fe and Rio Rancho had the largest populations in 2000. Eldorado at Santa Fe CDP grew the fastest (157%) during 1990-2000. Rio Rancho also grew quickly, at 59 percent. During the 1980's the population of Bernalillo and Corrales nearly doubled, though from small bases, and both slowed markedly during the following decade.

Table 2.3: Population in Larger Places, 1990-2000

Santa Fe Places	County	1980	1990	2000	% Change 80-90	% Change 90-00
Bernalillo town	Sandoval	3,012	5,960	6,611	97.9	10.9
Corrales village	Sandoval	2,791	5,453	7,334	95.4	34.5
Eldorado at Santa Fe CDP	Santa Fe	NA	2,260	5,799	NA	156.6
Espanola city	Rio Arriba	6,803	8,389	9,688	23.3	15.5
Las Vegas city	San Miguel	14,322	14,753	14,565	3.0	-1.3
Los Alamos CDP	Los Alamos	11,039	11,455	11,909	3.8	4.0
Rio Rancho city	Sandoval	NA	32,505	51,765	NA	59
Santa Fe city	Santa Fe	48,953	55,859	62,203	NA	NA
Taos town	Taos	3,369	4,065	4,700	20.7	15.6
White Rock CDP	Los Alamos	6,560	6,192	6,045	-5.6	-2.4
LARGER SANTA FE PLACES		**96,849**	**146,891**	**180,619**	51.7	23.0

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1980, 1990, 2000. Calculations by UNM-BBER.

2.2 Racial/Ethnic Composition

New Mexico was the first state in the United States with a total minority population exceeding that of the White Non-Hispanic population. **Table 2.4** and **Table 2.5** show race-ethnicity by county for 1990 and 2000. The population increased for most race-ethnic groups in the assessment area between 1990 and 2000. Rio Arriba County was a significant exception, where the number who self-identified as White actually fell. This happened while the “other” race category added over 7,000 people. While the White population increased about 33,000, it dropped seven percentage points to 68 percent of the total and the White share of the population decreased in all counties, except Mora County. The “other” group increased a corresponding seven percentage points. The assessment area had an increase of about 36,000 – in the number of people who self-reported as “other” when asked about racial identity. This “other” includes individuals who self-identify with more than one racial group, but it also includes those, fairly numerous in New Mexico, who self-identify with some racial group not listed. Many of those who so identify are Hispanic. While the White population increased in Taos County, there was a large increase as well, over 4,000 people, who self-reported as “other.” Despite growing by over 5,000 people, the share of Hispanics in Taos County fell from 65 percent to 58 percent.

In the assessment area, all other races maintained the same share of the total population in 2000 as in 1990. The African American population increased about 900 in the area and constituted a tiny share the population. American Indians increased as a share of the New Mexico population between 1990 and 2000 and during the same period increased about 4,500 in the assessment area. American Indians comprised 16 percent of the 2000 population in Sandoval County, 14 percent in Rio Arriba County, and 7 percent in Taos County. The American Indian population declined from 14 percent to 12 percent of the total population in Rio Arriba County despite a modest population gain. Rio Arriba County contains the Jicarilla Apache Reservation in the northwest and several pueblos in the eastern part of the county. In Taos County, American Indians retained a stable 7 percent share of the county population, the majority largely members of Taos Pueblo. (Refer to **Appendix Table 1** for pueblo CDP populations.)

Between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic share of the total population in New Mexico rose from 38 percent to 42 percent. The Non-Hispanic and Hispanic share of the population in the assessment

area stayed at 51 percent and 49 percent, respectively. Only small shifts, if any, in ethnic share occurred in the counties between 1990 and 2000, except in Taos County where the Hispanic share of the total population fell 7 percentage points. While not shown in the table, White Non-Hispanics added about 31,000 people overall. White Non-Hispanics increased over 13,000 and 12,000, respectively, in Sandoval and Santa Fe counties. White Non-Hispanics maintained their 41 percent share of the total between 1990 and 2000.

As indicated above, population trends for race and ethnicity varied by county. These shifting demographics have social and political implications that will inevitably affect interactions between the Santa Fe NF and the surrounding communities.

Table 2.4: Race / Ethnicity by County, 1990 and 2000

	ETHNICITY		RACIAL GROUP					
	NON-HISPANIC	HISPANIC	WHITE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER	TOTAL
Year 1990								
Los Alamos	16,107	2,008	17,064	96	126	428	401	18,115
Mora	641	3,623	2,423	2	21	3	1,815	4,264
Rio Arriba	9,410	24,955	24,323	138	5,225	58	4,621	34,365
San Miguel	5,252	20,491	16,392	170	222	151	8,808	25,743
Sandoval	45,947	17,372	43,440	939	12,491	503	5,946	63,319
Santa Fe	49,989	48,939	79,390	615	2,822	513	15,588	98,928
Taos	8,110	15,008	16,868	63	1,571	86	4,530	23,118
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**135,456**	**132,396**	**199,900**	**2,023**	**22,478**	**1,742**	**41,709**	**267,852**
Year 2000								
Los Alamos	16,188	2,155	16,556	67	107	700	913	18,343
Mora	951	4,229	3,050	5	59	6	2,060	5,180
Rio Arriba	11,165	30,025	23,320	143	5,717	103	11,907	41,190
San Miguel	6,639	23,487	16,938	236	549	188	12,215	30,126
Sandoval	63,471	26,437	58,512	1,535	14,634	992	14,235	89,908
Santa Fe	65,887	63,405	95,053	826	3,982	1,227	28,204	129,292
Taos	12,609	17,370	19,118	105	1,975	149	8,632	29,979
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**176,910**	**167,108**	**232,547**	**2,917**	**27,023**	**3,365**	**78,166**	**344,018**

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM - BBER.
Note: Hispanic can be of any race. The "Other" group includes two or more races.

Table 2.5: Race / Ethnic Composition by County, 1990 & 2000

	ETHNICITY		RACIAL GROUP					
	NON-HISPANIC	HISPANIC	WHITE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER	TOTAL
Year 1990								
Los Alamos	89%	11%	94%	1%	1%	2%	2%	100%
Mora	15%	85%	57%	0%	0%	0%	43%	100%
Rio Arriba	27%	73%	71%	0%	15%	0%	13%	100%
San Miguel	20%	80%	64%	1%	1%	1%	34%	100%
Sandoval	73%	27%	69%	1%	20%	1%	9%	100%
Santa Fe	51%	49%	80%	1%	3%	1%	16%	100%
Taos	35%	65%	73%	0%	7%	0%	20%	100%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**51%**	**49%**	**75%**	**1%**	**8%**	**1%**	**16%**	**100%**
TOTAL NM	62%	38%	89%	2%	8%	1%	0%	100%
Year 2000								
Los Alamos	88%	12%	90%	0%	1%	4%	5%	100%
Mora	18%	82%	59%	0%	1%	0%	40%	100%
Rio Arriba	27%	73%	57%	0%	14%	0%	29%	100%
San Miguel	22%	78%	56%	1%	2%	1%	41%	100%
Sandoval	71%	29%	65%	2%	16%	1%	16%	100%
Santa Fe	51%	49%	74%	1%	3%	1%	22%	100%
Taos	42%	58%	64%	0%	7%	0%	29%	100%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**51%**	**49%**	**68%**	**1%**	**8%**	**1%**	**23%**	100%
TOTAL NM	58%	42%	86%	2%	9%	1%	2%	100%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM - BBER.
Note: Hispanic can be of any race. The "Other" group includes two or more races.

2.3 Age of Population

Table 2.6 presents the age of the population by county in the assessment area. Shown are the percentages of those within each cohort as derived from the 2000 Census and followed by projections of each age cohort in 10-year increments until 2030. Corresponding with the national trend, growth will occur in all counties in the population aged 65 and older.

The 15 to 64 aged cohort represents those of working age, but its share of the area total is expected to shrink from 67 percent to 59 percent between 2000 and 2030. All counties will experience the trend of proportionally fewer working age people. Several counties have mid-sized populations and cities (for New Mexico) but they also have less economic activity and diversity than urban centers in the state. With limited opportunities for employment, some younger people migrate to larger cities with more diversified economic bases. However, Santa Fe and Los Alamos are within commuting distance of many workers in North Central New Mexico.

The 65 and older cohort is projected to increase from 11 percent to 25 percent of the total Santa Fe NF population between 2000 and 2030. This cohort will reach at least 30 percent of the total population in Mora, Taos and Los Alamos counties. These three counties will also see approximately 18 percentage point increases in this cohort's share of the total. Rio Arriba and Sandoval counties will have the smallest representation of the aged, with the former the only county lower than the state average and the latter about at the state average.

Aging populations will present new challenges for governments as those retiring from the workforce expect to receive services funded by revenues from a workforce that is a shrinking portion of the total population. These retirees will compete for federal and state funds as they seek services such as Medicaid and Social Security. The consequence for federal agencies like the USAD FS may be increased competition for funding in an era of flat or declining government revenues.

Table 2.6: Age Distribution by County, 2000-2030

		Percent Distribution			
County	**Age**	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**
Los Alamos	0 - 14	21.0	16.9	14.9	13.0
	15 - 64	66.9	68.2	63.2	56.7
	65 yrs. & over	12.1	15.0	21.9	30.3
Mora	0 - 14	20.6	16.0	16.0	12.7
	15 - 64	64.0	63.8	63.8	53.8
	65 yrs. & over	15.4	20.2	20.2	33.5
Rio Arriba	0 - 14	23.8	20.7	20.9	19.4
	15 - 64	65.3	66.8	62.6	60.5
	65 yrs. & over	10.9	12.4	16.5	20.1
San Miguel	0 - 14	22.2	17.8	17.0	15.8
	15 - 64	66.1	66.9	62.3	58.0
	65 yrs. & over	11.7	15.3	20.7	26.1
Sandoval	0 - 14	24.6	18.9	18.2	17.5
	15 - 64	64.8	67.6	63.7	59.9
	65 yrs. & over	10.6	13.5	18.1	22.7
Santa Fe	0 - 14	19.8	16.9	16.2	15.5
	15 - 64	69.4	68.8	62.9	59.1
	65 yrs. & over	10.8	14.3	20.9	25.4
Taos	0 - 14	19.9	16.3	15.8	14.6
	15 - 64	67.7	66.3	58.9	55.0
	65 yrs. & over	12.3	17.3	25.4	30.4
Total Santa Fe Counties	0 - 14	21.8	17.9	17.2	16.3
	15 - 64	67.1	67.8	62.7	59.0
	65 yrs. & over	11.1	14.3	20.0	24.7
New Mexico	0 - 14	23.0	20.0	19.2	17.9
	15 - 64	65.3	66.1	62.6	59.7
	65 yrs. & over	11.7	13.9	18.2	22.4

Source: New Mexico County Population Projections: July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2030; UNM-BBER, April 2004.

2.4 Income and Poverty

Table 2.7 depicts per capita income in 1990 dollars by county in the assessment area for 1990 and 2000. Real per capita income in the area measured $16,181 in 2000, nearly $2,100 above the New Mexico average. Between 1990 and 2000, real per capita income nearly doubled in the state but grew 34 percent in the assessment area. Real per capita income was higher than the state average for Los Alamos, Sandoval, and Santa Fe counties but lower than the state average for the remaining counties in both 1990 and 2000. Los Alamos County, the location of Los Alamos National Laboratory, boasts one of the higher per capita incomes in the U.S. The Intel plant lifts per capita income in Sandoval County, and many of the county's residents commute to jobs in Albuquerque and some to Santa Fe. There is a large amount of commuting between adjacent counties in the assessment area.

The molybdenum mine in Taos County, formerly the county's largest private employer, closed in the Questa area in the early 1990's. Sawmill closures around Española contributed to economic difficulties in that area. However, several casinos opened within a short drive of Española and the local economy was supported by housing development, partly for commuters to employment centers in Santa Fe (state government) or Los Alamos (national lab). Many of these people seek housing outside employment centers because it is difficult to find affordable housing in areas such as Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

Table 2.7: Per Capita Income and Persons in Poverty, 1990 & 2000

	1990			2000		
	Per Capita Income	Persons Below Poverty	% Persons Below Poverty	Per Capita Income	Persons Below Poverty	% Persons Below Poverty
Los Alamos	22,900	433	2%	28,268	534	3%
Mora	7,021	1,540	36%	10,068	1,305	25%
Rio Arriba	7,859	9,372	27%	11,637	8,303	20%
San Miguel	8,149	7,357	29%	10,825	7,110	24%
Sandoval	10,849	9,852	16%	15,644	10,847	12%
Santa Fe	15,327	12,564	13%	19,250	15,241	12%
Taos	9,158	6,335	27%	13,138	6,232	21%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**12,067**	**47,453**	**18%**	**16,181**	**49,572**	**14%**
TOTAL NM	7,542	NA	21%	14,083	NA	18%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM - BBER.
Note: The poverty line is the federal established poverty level. Per capita income is in 1990 dollars.

Table 2.7 also shows the relationship between income and poverty in the counties, presenting the number and percent of persons living below the federal poverty level for each county. Nearly 50,000 persons lived in poverty in the assessment area in 2000, an over 2,000 increase from 1990, and the poverty rate dropped from 18 percent to 14 percent. Poverty rates fell in all counties, except in Los Alamos County where the rate increased slightly. Three counties, Los Alamos, Sandoval and Santa Fe, had poverty rates below the state average of 18.4 percent, and four, Mora, Rio Arriba, San Miguel and Taos, were above the average rate for New Mexico in both 1990 and 2000. The poverty rate in Mora County, once the poorest in the state, dropped 11 percentage points.

As previously stated, poverty in the assessment area was moderate (14%) in 2000 and generally tracked with race and ethnicity. **Table 2.8** shows 50,000 persons lived in poverty in 2000 in the assessment area. Poverty percentages by race in the assessment area were: Whites (52%), African Americans (1%), American Indians (18%), Asians and Pacific Islanders (0%), and Other (29%). American Indians comprised a higher share of the total number of persons in poverty in Sandoval (48%) and Rio Arriba (19%) counties than in other counties. The percent of race in poverty in the assessment area, not shown in the table, was: White alone (11%), African Americans (13%), American Indians (33%) and "Other" (19%).

In the assessment area the poverty rate differed by ethnicity for Non-Hispanics (40%) and Hispanics (60%). Hispanics were a large majority of those in poverty in five counties and were the minority in two counties. Generally Hispanics were more likely than Non-Hispanics to live in poverty in rural counties throughout the state. Not shown in the table was the lower poverty rate for White Non-Hispanics (21%) in the assessment area.

Table 2.8: Poverty by Race and Ethnicity, 2000

	RACIAL GROUP					ETHNICITY		
	WHITE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER	NON-HISPANIC	HISPANIC	TOTAL
Los Alamos	480	0	14	6	34	470	64	534
Mora	605	0	20	0	680	265	1,040	1,305
Rio Arriba	4,530	39	1,550	19	2,165	2,270	6,033	8,303
San Miguel	3,581	52	137	31	3,309	1,279	5,831	7,110
Sandoval	3,657	116	5,251	59	1,764	7,790	3,057	10,847
Santa Fe	9,340	151	1,074	91	4,585	4,998	10,243	15,241
Taos	3,653	4	639	35	1,901	2,604	3,628	6,232
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**25,846**	**362**	**8,685**	**241**	**14,438**	**19,676**	**29,896**	**49,572**
Percent of Total Group								
Los Alamos	90%	0%	3%	1%	6%	88%	12%	100%
Mora	46%	0%	2%	0%	52%	20%	80%	100%
Rio Arriba	55%	0%	19%	0%	26%	27%	73%	100%
San Miguel	50%	1%	2%	0%	47%	18%	82%	100%
Sandoval	34%	1%	48%	1%	16%	72%	28%	100%
Santa Fe	61%	1%	7%	1%	30%	33%	67%	100%
Taos	59%	0%	10%	1%	31%	42%	58%	100%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**52%**	**1%**	**18%**	**0%**	**29%**	**40%**	**60%**	**100%**

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000. Calculations done by UNM - BBER.
Note: Ethnicity can be of any race. The "Other" group includes two or more races.
The poverty line is the federal established poverty level. Per capita income is in 1990 dollars.

2.5 Household Composition

Table **2.9** presents household composition by type of household for 1990 and 2000. Households in the assessment area are exhibiting the same trend as seen in the US, as there are proportionally more single households and female-headed households. Total households in the area grew 37 percent, or 36,000, and numbered 132,000 in 2000**.**

Single households are non-family households headed by a single person. Female-headed family households are households that are headed by a female with children or other dependents and no husband is present. For example, in 2000 Santa Fe County has 52,481 total households, of which 15,418 (29%) are single households and 5,803 (11%) are female-headed family households.

Female-headed family households in the assessment area in 2000 increased 45 percent, or nearly 5,000, and totaled 16,000. The proportion of female-headed households in the assessment area (12%) increased slightly and was a bit lower than the state average (13%) in 2000. Female-headed households showed only slight changes in their share of total households in both decennial years, except in San Miguel County where female-headed households rose 4 percentage points to 18 percent.

Similarly single households have become increasingly common and continue to grow partly because of a trend in marrying at later ages and longer life expectancy. Roughly one-third of single person households in the state are over 65 years of age. In the assessment area, single households increased 57 percent, totaling nearly 35,000 in 2000. The percent of single households in the assessment area (26%) grew 3 percentage points between 1990 and 2000 and was comparable to the state average (25%). In Taos County, single households accounted for nearly one-third of all households in 2000 and Santa Fe County was not far behind.

Table 2.9: Type of Household, 1990 & 2000

	Number of Households			Percent of Total Households	
	Total	Single	Female Headed, Family	Single	Female Headed, Family
Year 1990					
Los Alamos	7,211	1,654	405	23%	6%
Mora	1,516	360	212	24%	14%
Rio Arriba	11,525	2,254	1,636	20%	14%
San Miguel	8,622	1,947	1,232	23%	14%
Sandoval	20,925	3,486	2,252	17%	11%
Santa Fe	37,787	10,105	4,172	27%	11%
Taos	8,811	2,210	1,155	25%	13%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**96,397**	**22,016**	**11,064**	**23%**	**11%**
Year 2000					
Los Alamos	7,495	1,862	389	25%	5%
Mora	2,015	543	271	27%	13%
Rio Arriba	15,015	3,545	2,248	24%	15%
San Miguel	11,133	2,965	1,950	27%	18%
Sandoval	31,412	6,255	3,733	20%	12%
Santa Fe	52,481	15,418	5,803	29%	11%
Taos	12,701	4,066	1,631	32%	13%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**132,252**	**34,654**	**16,025**	**26%**	**12%**

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM-BBER.

Note: Single households are non-family households headed by a single person. Female headed family households include children.

2.6 Educational Attainment

Table 2.10 and **Table 2.11** present educational attainment for the 25-year and older population in 1990 and 2000. Attainment levels have generally advanced in 2000 compared to a decade earlier, as the share of the population with at least some college or with a college degree increased while those with high school or less declined. The share of the population in the assessment area with at least some college education increased from 51 percent to 58 percent between 1990 and 2000. Meanwhile, the proportion of adults without a high school degree or equivalent decreased from 22 percent to 17 percent. The assessment area was better educated than the state average. All counties moved in a similar direction, with a higher share of the better-educated and lower share

of the less educated, between 1990 and 2000. At the low end of the educational spectrum were Mora and Rio Arriba counties and at the high end were Los Alamos and Santa Fe counties. In Mora County, low education levels were an aspect of the high number of elderly there. Both Santa Fe and Taos counties saw an influx of educated, wealthier migrants relocating from out of state.

Educational attainment is closely tied to one's ability to generate income, as the average earnings of a college degree holder are almost twice that of an adult with a high school diploma. As educational attainment increases, the likelihood of poverty decreases. This correlation usually holds in the assessment area. However, Taos and Rio Arriba counties displayed higher poverty rates and relatively higher educational levels. As previously mentioned, Taos County also had a large proportion of single households.

Table 2.10: Educational Attainment by County

	Less than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade	HS Grad or GED	Some College; No Degree	Assoc., BA. Or More	Total
Year 1990						
Los Alamos	146	521	1,957	2,529	7,390	12,543
Mora	559	512	866	296	422	2,655
Rio Arriba	3,412	3,409	6,550	3,470	3,173	20,014
San Miguel	2,963	1,913	4,479	3,028	3,051	15,434
Sandoval	3,169	4,793	11,976	8,866	9,660	38,464
Santa Fe	4,503	6,840	15,366	14,071	24,236	65,016
Taos	1,982	2,146	4,338	2,780	3,384	14,630
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**16,734**	**20,134**	**45,532**	**35,040**	**51,316**	**168,756**
Year 2000						
Los Alamos	170	300	1,549	2,215	8,588	12,822
Mora	481	530	1,061	602	674	3,348
Rio Arriba	3,030	3,971	8,110	5,271	5,548	25,930
San Miguel	2,218	2,508	4,740	3,964	5,101	18,531
Sandoval	2,575	5,326	16,157	14,104	18,317	56,479
Santa Fe	5,799	7,831	17,308	19,421	37,511	87,870
Taos	1,532	2,752	5,462	4,420	6,360	20,526
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**15,805**	**23,218**	**54,387**	**49,997**	**82,099**	**225,506**

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM-BBER.

Table 2.11: Educational Attainment Percentage by County

	Less than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade	HS Grad or GED	Some College; No Degree	Assoc., BA. Or More	Total
Year 1990						
Los Alamos	1%	4%	16%	20%	59%	100%
Mora	21%	19%	33%	11%	16%	100%
Rio Arriba	17%	17%	33%	17%	16%	100%
San Miguel	19%	12%	29%	20%	20%	100%
Sandoval	8%	12%	31%	23%	25%	100%
Santa Fe	7%	11%	24%	22%	37%	100%
Taos	14%	15%	30%	19%	23%	100%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**10%**	**12%**	**27%**	**21%**	**30%**	**100%**
TOTAL NM	11%	14%	29%	21%	25%	100%
Year 2000						
Los Alamos	1%	2%	12%	17%	67%	100%
Mora	14%	16%	32%	18%	20%	100%
Rio Arriba	12%	15%	31%	20%	21%	100%
San Miguel	12%	14%	26%	21%	28%	100%
Sandoval	5%	9%	29%	25%	32%	100%
Santa Fe	7%	9%	20%	22%	43%	100%
Taos	7%	13%	27%	22%	31%	100%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**7%**	**10%**	**24%**	**22%**	**36%**	**100%**
TOTAL NM	9%	12%	27%	23%	29%	100%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM-BBER.

2.7 Housing

Table 2.12 illustrates the number of housing units and the occupied status of these units in each county in the assessment area. As would be expected, the number of dwellings in all counties increased as the population grew. **Table 2.12** shows the housing stock expanded by over 40,000 units, increasing 36 percent, during 1990-2000 in the assessment area. Fourteen percent of houses were vacant in 1990 and 2000.

Table 2.12: Housing Units and Occupation of Housing

	1990			2000		
	Housing Units: Total	Housing Units: Occupied	Housing Units: Vacant	Housing Units: Total	Housing Units: Occupied	Housing Units: Vacant
Los Alamos	7,565	7,213	352	7,937	7,497	440
Mora	2,486	1,519	967	2,973	2,017	956
Rio Arriba	14,357	11,461	2,896	18,016	15,044	2,972
San Miguel	11,066	8,701	2,365	14,254	11,134	3,120
Sandoval	23,667	20,867	2,800	34,866	31,411	3,455
Santa Fe	41,464	37,840	3,624	57,701	52,482	5,219
Taos	12,020	8,752	3,268	17,404	12,675	4,729
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**112,625**	**96,353**	**16,272**	**153,151**	**132,260**	**20,891**

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM-BBER.

Table 2.13 and **Table 2.14** display vacant housing by county. About half of the nearly 21,000 vacant homes in the assessment area in 2000 compared to almost one-third in 1990 were for seasonal or recreational use. Nearly one-quarter of vacant houses were for rent or for sale. In Taos County seasonal or recreational use accounted for nearly two-thirds of vacant housing. Both Taos and Rio Arriba counties gained a large number of vacant houses for seasonal or recreational use.

Table 2.13: Vacant Housing by Type Of Vacancy

	For rent	For sale only	Rented or sold, not occupied	Seasonal or rec use	For migrant workers	Other vacant	Total vacant
Year 1990							
Los Alamos	101	42	68	89	0	52	352
Mora	7	36	305	348	3	268	967
Rio Arriba	326	128	200	658	7	1,577	2,896
Sandoval	318	396	235	710	13	1,128	2,800
San Miguel	349	93	129	1,141	14	639	2,365
Santa Fe	927	354	309	788	2	1,244	3,624
Taos	373	137	210	1,127	7	1,414	3,268
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**2,401**	**1,186**	**1,456**	**4,861**	**46**	**6,322**	**16,272**
Year 2000							
Los Alamos	201	100	16	100	9	14	440
Mora	15	19	135	489	3	295	956
Rio Arriba	209	204	105	1,177	4	1,273	2,972
Sandoval	690	579	263	1,282	8	633	3,455
San Miguel	402	188	143	1,558	0	829	3,120
Santa Fe	908	612	211	2,688	0	800	5,219
Taos	562	195	216	2,946	36	774	4,729
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**2,987**	**1,897**	**1,089**	**10,240**	**60**	**4,618**	**20,891**

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations done by UNM-BBER.

Table 2.14: Percent of Total Vacant Housing

	For rent	For sale only	Rented or sold, not occupied	Seasonal or rec use	For migrant workers	Other vacant	Total vacant
Year 1990							
Los Alamos	29%	12%	19%	25%	0%	15%	100%
Mora	1%	4%	32%	36%	0%	28%	100%
Rio Arriba	11%	4%	7%	23%	0%	54%	100%
Sandoval	11%	14%	8%	25%	0%	40%	100%
San Miguel	15%	4%	5%	48%	1%	27%	100%
Santa Fe	26%	10%	9%	22%	0%	34%	100%
Taos	11%	4%	6%	34%	0%	43%	100%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**15%**	**7%**	**9%**	**30%**	**0%**	**39%**	**100%**
Year 2000							
Los Alamos	46%	23%	4%	23%	2%	3%	100%
Mora	2%	2%	14%	51%	0%	31%	100%
Rio Arriba	7%	7%	4%	40%	0%	43%	100%
Sandoval	20%	17%	8%	37%	0%	18%	100%
San Miguel	13%	6%	5%	50%	0%	27%	100%
Santa Fe	17%	12%	4%	52%	0%	15%	100%
Taos	12%	4%	5%	62%	1%	16%	100%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**14%**	**9%**	**5%**	**49%**	**0%**	**22%**	**100%**

Source: 2000 US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations by UNM-BBER.

Table 2.15 depicts the housing stock in the assessment area was 29 years old in 2000, ranging from 17 years old in Sandoval County to 38 in Mora County. The state's average age of housing rose from 22 to 27 years. Also shown is the percent of households that lack complete plumbing. There is usually a correlation between counties of high poverty and the lack of plumbing in a dwelling. The proportion of households in the assessment area without plumbing dipped from 4 percent to 3 percent during 1990-2000. The number of houses that lacked plumbing facilities increased by nearly 300 units between 1990 and 2000, to over 5,000 units in 2000. In most counties, except in Mora County, the proportion of houses without plumbing declined. The percent of houses without plumbing in 2000 ranged from less than 1 percent in Los Alamos and Santa Fe counties to 12 percent in Mora County. Taos and Rio Arriba counties featured a younger housing stock while Mora County had an older inventory.

Table 2.15: Age of Housing Stock and Plumbing Availability

	Average Age of Housing Stock		Lacking Complete Plumbing Facities	
	1990	**2000**	**1990**	**2000**
Los Alamos	26.1	32.5	0.0%	0.1%
Mora	37.9	37.8	9.5%	12.4%
Rio Arriba	26.2	28.8	6.7%	5.7%
San Miguel	31.5	32.8	6.0%	5.2%
Sandoval	15.2	17.2	5.6%	3.6%
Santa Fe	22.6	24.6	1.5%	0.7%
Taos	28.4	28.3	8.0%	7.1%
TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES	**26.8**	**28.9**	**4.2%**	**3.3%**
TOTAL NM	22.2	27.0	3.0%	3.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations by UNM BBER.

2.8 Net Migration

Table **2.16** illustrates net migration into the assessment area at the county level. In each decennial Census, respondents are asked about their county and state of residence five years previous. **Table 2.16** shows only those in New Mexico who are five years of age or older. For the assessment area in 2000, 41 percent of those in the area were movers (had changed addresses in the past five years). Of these approximately 133,000 movers, 55,000 moved within the same county. Also, over 30,000 moved from other counties in New Mexico. While there was an increase of over 7,000 in movers originating from out-of-state, a slight decline occurred in the percent of these movers between 1990 and 2000 censuses. About 40,000 persons, or about one of three movers, came to the area from other states in 2000, which was similar to the percent in 1990. And of those who moved from other states, the region of origin in 2000 (as a percent of the total) was Northeast (2%), Midwest (2%), South (3%), and West (5%) -- (Texas is in the South region and California dominates the West region). One percentage point declines occurred in each category of movers from the South and West.

Table 2.16: Net Migration for New Mexico and Total Santa Fe Counties

	NEW MEXICO				TOTAL SANTA FE COUNTIES			
	1990	2000	Percent of Total 1990	Percent of Total 2000	1990	2000	Percent of Total 1990	Percent of Total 2000
TOTAL	1,390,048	1,689,911	100%	100%	246,241	322,023	100%	100%
Same House	719,628	919,717	52%	54%	136,964	189,200	56%	59%
Different House	670,420	770,194	48%	46%	109,277	132,823	44%	41%
in the United States	645,519	731,488	46%	43%	106,595	124,982	43%	39%
Same County	345,469	400,128	25%	24%	47,601	54,880	19%	17%
Different County	300,050	331,360	22%	20%	58,994	70,102	24%	22%
Same State	107,289	126,093	8%	7%	26,717	30,466	11%	9%
Different State	192,761	205,267	14%	12%	32,277	39,636	13%	12%
Northeast	14,311	15,329	1%	1%	4,125	5,062	2%	2%
Midwest	28,270	29,457	2%	2%	4,545	5,936	2%	2%
South	73,548	72,497	5%	4%	9,735	11,169	4%	3%
West	76,632	87,984	6%	5%	13,872	17,469	6%	5%
Puerto Rico	110	398	0%	0%	10	64	0%	0%
Elsewhere	24,791	38,308	2%	2%	2,672	7,777	1%	2%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000. Calculations by UNM BBER.

2.9 Opportunities, Risks and Special Circumstances

The demographic data developed in this chapter for the seven counties in the assessment area generally follow the demographics of the U.S. as a whole – the population is aging, more racially diverse, has higher educational attainment, and increasing per capita incomes. More households are headed by women and are single person households.

These general demographic trends between the U.S. and the Santa Fe NF counties, however, miss some important developments over the past two decades. Some of the economic changes relate to the natural resources of the area and to changing policies regarding use of the national forests. Over the past two decades, some businesses in the logging industry, such as sawmills, shut down in Rio Arriba County near Española. Furthermore, grazing on public lands has been curtailed and ranchers are reporting harder times (see Chapter 5, “Land Use and Users”).

The Santa Fe NF has many recreational uses, featuring two big attractions – Santa Fe Ski Basin and the Pecos Wilderness. As a result, the local tourism industry has expanded, as has amenity migration into the area by retirees and others investing in vacation and second homes. There was only a small decrease in the percent of people who had lived in a different state when comparing the 1990 and 2000 censuses. The housing stock expanded by about 40,000 units during 1990-2000, as the stock increased 36 percent in the assessment area. In 2000, one of six houses was vacant in the assessment area and almost half of these were seasonal or vacation homes. The assessment area and the Santa Fe NF offer many activities, including camping, hiking, skiing, fishing, and hunting.

Within the assessment area, the population increased in all counties between 1980 and 2000 and real per capita income also rose in the counties between 1990 and 2000. More people with more income in the assessment area may be expected to impact forest uses. In rural economies, more dependent on agriculture and other land uses involving extraction from the forest lands (e.g., grazing, wood gathering, piñon harvesting, etc.), management decisions could have lasting impacts on the economic well-being of portions of the population. It will become increasingly important that the desires of a more diverse population be represented in decisions concerning the Santa Fe NF.

The nation is aging and life spans are increasing. With the early edge of the Baby Boom generation reaching age 60, this massive generation is likely to have more leisure time to spend in the Santa Fe NF. As the healthier and wealthier Boomers retire, more demand for recreation could increase stress on the forest. Yet Boomers have indicated they will seek alternatives to retirement, which include volunteering, possibly benefiting Santa Fe NF. In fact, data show that about 41 percent of volunteers for the Santa Fe NF are aged 55 and older. Older Americans also desire cultural and heritage tourism, so they could take advantage of these offerings in the forest. Therefore, the retired and semi-retired may add to workloads of the Santa Fe NF personnel, but could be a target market for interpretive events. Aging Boomers will place heavy demand on federal benefits and entitlements, such as Medicare and Social Security, and therefore intensify competition for federal dollars. This could mean flat or reduced funding levels for federal agencies, including the USAD FS.

Finally, those seeking to live or retire in more peaceful forest surroundings are increasingly choosing to build houses within or adjacent to National Forests. This is happening in the Santa Fe NF. These homeowners may seek to block the access of other forest users or enterprises. Housing at the urban-wildland interface also impacts the Santa Fe NF as it shapes policies about handling fire and the reduction of fuel loads. Strategies for fighting fires when there are dwellings in the forest require additional resources to protect lives and property in or near the forest. Residents at the forest’s edge may oppose thinning and thinning methods. Housing in the forest also can alter access and impact forest use. New roads built to developments can impact forest health by creating runoff problems and access to new areas where unmanaged recreation can occur. Controlling invasive weed species is another serious problem in the forest.

Diversity does not only mean different races but changes in the mix of people in the area. These changes give rise to possible conflicts between new arrivals and long time landholders. This conflict occurs in growing places throughout the West (and nation). The newcomers have different expectations and less traditional ties to the land, which impacts land use and land values. Additionally, the presence of Native American pueblos and reservations adds another layer of complexity to decisions regarding land use and policies within the Santa Fe NF.