

Carson National Forest

Weekly Fall Color Report

October 3, 2012

- **Area with greatest amount of color:** The area around Taos is at its peak.
- **Recommended viewing routes:** The High Road to Taos is especially beautiful this time of year. From Santa Fe, take US 84/285 north into Española. In the heart of Española, turn on New Mexico 76 east. Stay on that highway into a small rural high mountain community called Truchas, where the highway takes a northerly direction. The highway will go through the small communities of Ojo Sarco and Las Trampas and dead ends at NM 75. Turn right on NM 75, headed in an easterly direction. Stay on NM 75, going through communities of Peñasco and Vadito. NM 75 ends at NM 518, turn left. NM 518 connects with US 68 in Ranchos de Taos, after about 15 miles. However, upper elevations, about 9,000 feet, the aspen are past peak.
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- **Estimated peak viewing period:** The colors are at their peak right now until about Oct. 10.

Remarks: (Example) The aspens are quickly changing to vibrant gold. Gambel oak is also turning to its rusty red color. This year some of the aspens are also turning red, an uncharacteristic trait of some of aspens, but it makes for incredible views. The gooseberry and willows are also spectacular along the lower lying drainages.