

Questa, NM Recreation Opportunity Report

Prepared for the
Questa Economic
Development Fund
by
Public Land Solutions



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Executive Summary [Back to Table of Contents](#)

In October 2020 the Questa Economic Development Fund contracted with PLS to create a community-based proposal for recreation asset development in the region. The goal of the proposal is to realize the potential inherent in nearby recreation assets on public lands. In conversations with local stakeholders, Public Land Solutions (PLS) identified a variety of additional components that will accelerate Questa's ability to attract recreation related visitors, along with recreation and quality of life businesses.

This report details outreach and research completed by PLS to determine necessary next steps for the region to succeed in developing its outdoor recreation related economy. Goals of this work include development of a methodology to prioritize a list of all nearby outdoor recreation recommendations using criteria related to the economic impact, recreation opportunity, feasibility, and community support. Each of the four criteria were equally weighted. Please see the "Recommendations and Analysis by Area" section of this document for a detailed table ranking all recreation options in the study area. This methodology revealed the following top recreation opportunities and actions near Questa:

Tier 1 Recommendations: [Click on the recommendation for detailed summary.](#)

- Largo-Llama Canyons Trail Network
- Guadalupe Mountain Trail and Road Networks
- Questa Rock Climbing and Via Ferrata Improvements
- Questa Fishing (aka "Red River through Questa")
- Chevron Mine 1 Site
- Cebolla Mesa



Recommendation: Largo-Llama Canyons Trail Network

- Develop between 15-30 miles of trails for Hiking, Biking and Equestrian (non-motorized use) near Largo-Llama Canyons (USFS) south of Questa. The staging area should be the Moly Field park operated by the village of Questa. Moly Field is also slated to be the trailhead of the Questa to Red River Trail which increases trail connectivity. Visitors will likely have to travel through town to access the trails and be more likely to patronize businesses including lodging.

Highlights: This area is USFS land that provides undulating terrain which is ideal for a trail network with a diversity of difficulties, but not too steep to be concerned with excessive erosion. The terrain faces north, east and west, but has quick drying soils. The vegetation is a pinyon-juniper mosaic providing some shade in the summer. The area has some evidence of old roads/previous disturbance which may be converted to singletrack.

Key Considerations:

- The historic “Kiowa Trail” runs through this area between Questa and Taos pueblo. Any proposed trails in this area should avoid disturbing cultural sites. There is also an opportunity for interpretation of this historic trail.
- Consider other trail priorities on the Carson RD and incorporate this network appropriately
- Private lands in this area may require an easement or careful trail routing to use Moly field as a trailhead for access to USFS lands.

Recommendation: Guadalupe Mountain Trail and Road Networks

- Expand and develop between 20-35 miles of trails for Hiking, Biking and Equestrian (non-motorized use) near Guadalupe Mountain (BLM) west of Questa. There are already 3 trailhead locations to access these trails, and it is recommended to add an additional trailhead from town (exact location TBA) that provides access to this network on a proposed trail on BLM lands. This additional trailhead in town and trail expansion will allow visitors to spend more time in town and patronize business including lodging.
- There are also approximately 23-30 miles of existing BLM roads in this area that need to be mapped, named, rated for difficulty and properly maintained to allow for an improved OHV experience.

Highlights: This area in BLM land that is undulating terrain which is ideal for a trail network/expansion with a diversity of difficulties. The terrain faces all aspects and has fast drying soils. The vegetation is a mix of Pinyon-juniper forest, which can provide shade, and sage desert ideal to sunny/dry conditions for cooler season use.

Key considerations:

- Grazing allotments are in this area and outreach must occur with the lease owners to eliminate or reduce conflicts with their operations.
- BLM’s capacity is low around trail system development (Horsethief Mesa has been very slow to gain momentum, but a management decision on new proposed routes is expected soon, which might open up staff for next project.).

Recommendation: Establish South Side OHV Route

- All Climbing Areas: Work with nearby climbing guides (i.e Mountain Skills) to secure funding for the development of easy to moderate climbing which would bring more Climber tourism and guiding options to this area. There is potential for many high-quality easy to moderate routes that would bring many more visiting climbers to Questa. Later, harder climbs would be established as more people visit the area to provide a well-rounded product mix for climbers. If municipal or state funding for anchor hardware and developing equipment were to be made available, Mountain Skills guides are willing to cover the cost for a small crew to perform this specialized work done at no additional cost to the town or the state.
- Rio Grande Gorge (BLM): Develop climbing routes and related infrastructure improvements including parking, toilets, and access trails in the Rio Grande Gorge (BLM) west of Questa, especially in the Bears Crossing area and to designate additional access trails near the Redtail wall area to provide safer access to crags in this area. This area is estimated to provide potential for at least hundreds to a thousand routes, which would make it one of the major climbing destinations in New Mexico.
- Bear Canyon / Lion's Den / Roadside Distraction (USFS): Develop routes and related infrastructure improvements including parking, toilets, and access trails for rock climbing near Bear Canyon / Lion's Den / Roadside Distraction (USFS) to the east of Questa. This area is estimated to provide potential for hundreds of routes, with both steep, hard routes and easier single and multi-pitch routes. This range of difficulty and experiences would make it a major climbing destination in New Mexico. Access to these climbing areas will be significantly enhanced by the "Questa to Red River Trail" which includes concepts for pull-outs for safe, formal parking and river crossings that align with access to both these climbing spots.
- Questa Dome (USFS): This climbing area should have a formal trailhead and trail designated to allow for easier navigation to the climbing walls and boulders.
- Via Ferrata: There is a desire for via ferrata (i.e. iron bars installed into rock to allow for vertical and horizontal passage) and rappelling at a one of these climbing locations outside of Wilderness. This is a unique feature common in Europe and gaining popularity in America. Identify an existing or create a new local non-profit organization to help identify and construct this via ferrata like the Telluride Mountain Club and Ouray Via Ferrata in Colorado.

Highlights:

- The Rio Grande Gorge area is on the way to the Wild Rivers Recreation Area west of Questa and managed by the BLM. The rock type is basalt and ideal for both traditional and sport climbing. The crags typically face east and west providing sun or shade which allows users to expand the use season. The area includes nearby cultural sites, petroglyphs, wildlife and raptors, and fantastic canyon and river views.
- The Bear Canyon and Lion's Den areas are located east of Questa on USFS lands. The rock type is granite and ideal for traditional multi-pitch and steep sport climbing. The crags typically face north, east and west, providing sun and shade to expand the use season.

Key Considerations:

- Need to find a workable solution to allow new routes in accordance with existing language from the BLM Resource Management Plan (See specific language in the analysis section of this report)
- There may be surveys and mitigation measures needed to implement this recommendation due to cultural resources and raptors in this area.

- Questa Dome is located north of town on USFS lands in the Latir Peaks Wilderness. The rock is granite and offers multi-pitch climbing and bouldering.

Recommendation: Questa Fishing (aka “Red River through Questa” in this document)

- Market the existing fishing opportunities, guiding, and festivals/derbies near Questa, including the many existing opportunities (i.e. Eagle Rock Lake, Wild Rivers area, Red River and Columbine Creek).
- Develop new opportunities for fishing along the Red River as it flows on the south side of town. This recommendation may be expanded to include trails along the river and boating/tubing opportunities along this section of river, specifically at Moly field, Hunts Pond and any other public easements accessing the river in this corridor.
- The Enchanted Circle Trails Plan also includes a tier 2 route from the Gonzales owned RV park south to the Rio Grande river for fishing access.

Highlights: The Questa area fishing involves multiple rivers, creeks and water bodies that provide habitat for a variety of fish species notably Rio Grande cutthroat trout and Rainbow trout.

Key Considerations:

- Private landowners may need to be consulted to provide access to the Red River as it flows south of town.
- Need to work with New Mexico Fish and game to develop a strategy for funding and planning for habitat improvements and public access along the Red River south of town.

Recommendation: Chevron Mine 1 Site

Develop the Chevron Mine 1 site, which is owned by the village of Questa, for developed recreation including a Zip line(s) and “King walk(s)” or challenge courses, trailheads, trails, camping and primitive lodging for a fee. This area would serve as a “recreation hub” for other nearby recreation assets. This area may be an ideal location for a developed sledding hill in the winter, especially since these types of facilities can be a challenge to develop on public lands. The access road would need to be maintained and plowed in winter.

Highlights: This area is approximately 350 acres and located south of Questa near the Largo-Llama canyon and Bear Canyon areas. The terrain is undulating hills and arroyos with north, east and south aspects. The vegetation is a pinyon-juniper mosaic forest. This is a unique asset that is owned by the town which allows for more flexibility for planning and charging fees.

Key Considerations: Need to work with the USFS if improvements to the access road are required.

Recommendation: Cebolla Mesa

Improve the existing motorized user experience by:

- Develop an official trailhead (not just unofficial) along Hwy 550 to improve user safety and visitor recognition of a road and trail network.
- Develop official staging areas in town to promote connections between local businesses and this road network. This would also foster a new business opportunity to rent OHVs in Questa.
- Develop a maintenance plan with the USFS to regularly grade roads more often to reduce the existing rutting and rough roads
- Identifying and reducing redundant roads that go to the same locations
- Install bollards and boulders to keep users on roads since a lack of trees in this area warrants these additional mitigation measures
- Map, name, rank difficulty and promote the existing network of roads to OHV users in the area.

Improve the non-motorized user experience by:

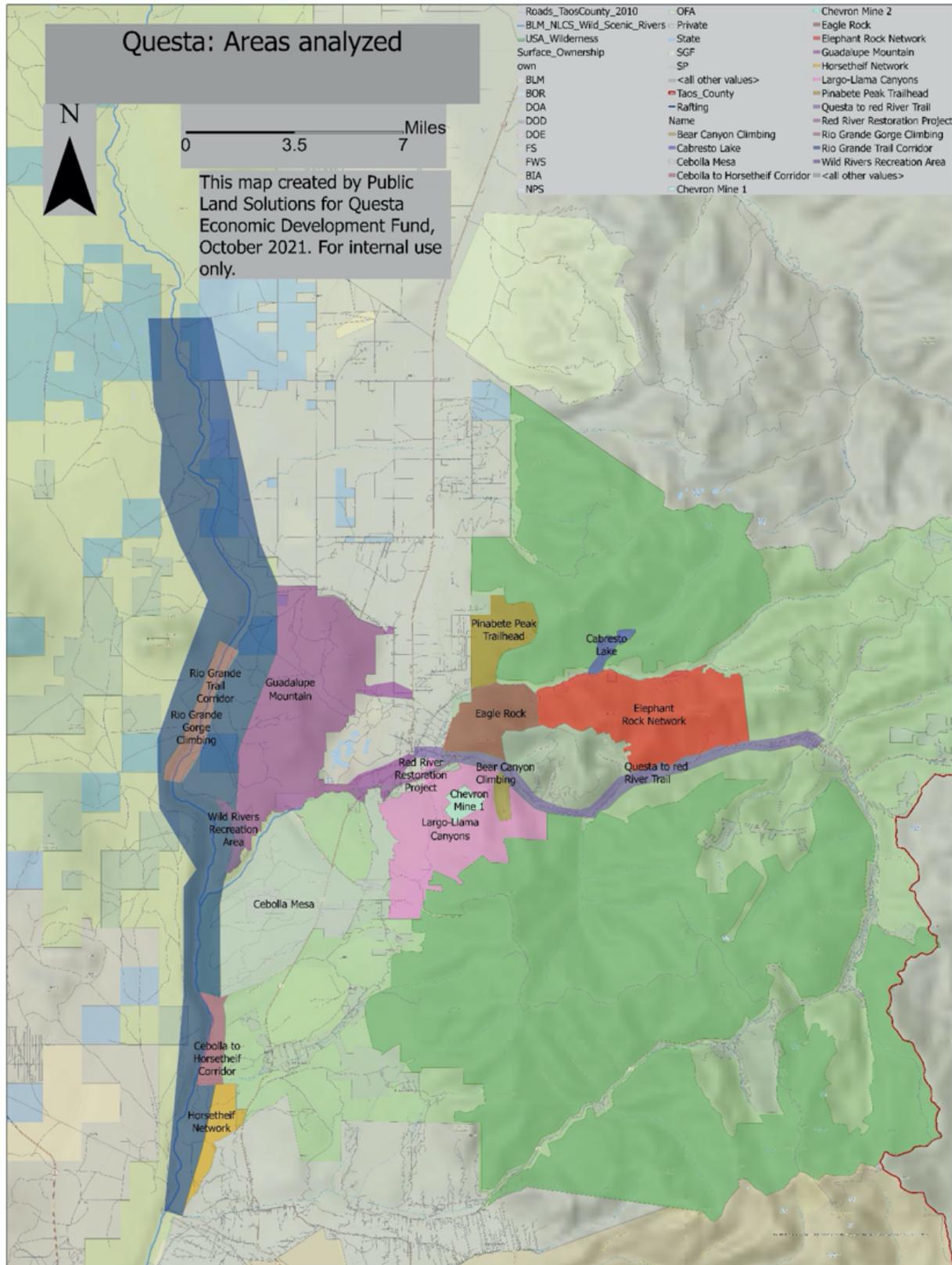
- Develop an official trailhead (not just unofficial) along Hwy 550 to improve user safety and visitor recognition of a road and trail network. This could be the same trailhead for motorized users or separate. There is a formal trail head with developed campsites on the west side of this area which provides through hike access to BLM Wild Rivers Recreation area with the newly installed La Junta Bridge.
- Develop a new non-motorized trail from town/businesses to access this non-motorized network. This trail would allow motorized and non-motorized users to remain separate and would allow trail users from the proposed Rio Grande Trail to visit and increase tourism spending in the village of Questa.
- Map existing social trails in the area and add all or part of this network to the USFS system trails for non-motorized use
- The Rio Grande Trail (RGT) is proposed through the Cebolla Mesa, connecting to the BLM Horsethief Mesa Trails to the south, and BLM Wild Rivers Recreation Area trails to the north by means of the La Junta Bridge. The RGT is a state priority trail that needs to be highlighted as Questa would be a gateway community.

Highlights: This area has an unofficial trailhead located south of the village of Questa along highway 522 (6 minutes or 5 miles). The area is managed by the USFS (Questa ranger district). The terrain is relatively flat on top, a mesa above the Red River and confluence with the Rio Grande River. The vegetation is mixed open grasslands and pinon juniper.

Key Considerations:

- There may be conflict with motorized and non-motorized users sharing the same trails. Care should be taken to separate these uses, if possible, for a more enjoyable experience for all.
- Consult with USFS grazing allotments lease owners in this area to help reduce impacts to their operations

Project Areas Map



Background

Geography

Questa is situated in northern Taos County near the confluence of the Rio Grande River and the Red River. There are many other recreation assets nearby and much of the surrounding land is managed by the US Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management, providing many opportunities to grow the outdoor recreation economy.



Questa is just north of the popular destination of Taos, NM, and just west of the popular resort town of Red River, NM. Its proximity to these two towns results in strong competition for tourism revenue. However, there is an opportunity for Questa to hold a comparative advantage to produce outdoor recreation goods and/or service for a lower opportunity cost than the surrounding towns.

Economics

The mining of molybdenum had been a mainstay of the Questa area economy for approximately one hundred years from 1916 to 2014, providing jobs, tax revenue, and opportunities for local businesses. Chevron inherited the mine with its acquisition of Unocal in 2005. Ever since, the Village of Questa and Chevron have worked to diversify the local economy. The mine was designated a superfund site in 2011 and was permanently closed in 2014 resulting in the loss of approximately 150 jobs. Chevron is now performing environmental remediation and reclamation work on the site and while this does create economic activity, Questa would benefit further, in , by improving the region's reputation as an outdoor recreation destination. It is important to note that the mine's superfund status and Chevron's ongoing work in no way hampers the growth of this outdoor recreation economy. Chevron's presence is positive as they are prepared to make properties available for recreation while they continue to fund economic diversification projects.



Methodology

Introduction

PLS has a proprietary methodology to analyze the outdoor recreation options in the study area. Four main criteria were developed including Economic Value, Recreation Value, Feasibility, and Community support. Each criteria also had their own subset of criteria to further assist with the analysis. The criteria was developed from the experience of staff members. The goal is to inform the county and the public about the “total value” of a recreation asset and assist with developing an implementation plan.



Criteria for Analysis

The following is a representation of all the criteria and subcriteria used in this report:

- Economic Value** This criteria analyzed projected additional number of visitors in town(s), proximity of asset(s) to town(s), and identified businesses (number of businesses, projected economic value to businesses).
- Recreation Value** This criteria analyzed value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult), connectivity to other assets, used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc), projected number of additional users, likelihood of destination status, uniqueness of asset and scenery.
- Feasibility** This criteria analyzed LUP Compliance, estimated cost, estimate time to complete, conflict with other user groups, resource analysis/protection (i.e. Minimal consideration. Southern slope to stay dry and extend the number of user days. Best for NEPA).
- Community Support** This criteria analyzed how often an asset was mentioned by stakeholders during meetings and how often the asset was mentioned in community proposed plans.

These four main criteria and subcriteria were given the following rankings:

1 = Low 2 = Low/Medium 3 = Medium 4 = Medium/High 5 = High

This report details outreach and research completed by Public Land Solutions (PLS) to determine next steps for the region to succeed in developing its outdoor recreation related economy. PLS developed this methodology to prioritize outdoor recreation proposals and opportunities using criteria related to the economic impact, recreation opportunity, feasibility and community support. Each of the four criteria were equally weighted. **Please see Appendix A: “Analysis by Area” for detailed analysis of all the existing and proposed recreation assets in the Questa area considered for this report.** This is the analysis used to inform the six topline recommendations in this executive summary of this report.

Economic Impacts of Outdoor Recreation

Many studies have been performed in other outdoor recreation destinations analyzing the economic impacts of outdoor activities. The following three studies highlight analyzed how the same activities recommended in this plan to Emery County made impacts to other outdoor recreation destinations:

A 2019 study by Eastern Kentucky University and other university researchers found the following information about the rock climbing destination known as the New River Gorge, WV:

- Non-local residents visiting the New River Gorge region to rock climb spent an estimated \$12.1 million in 2018 in Fayette, Nicholas and Raleigh counties.
- Non-local resident climber expenditures supported an estimated 168 jobs and \$6.3 million in wages in the study area
- Estimated annual climber visitation: 199,704 (2017 data)

Industries Most Affected by Rock Climbing Expenditures in the New River Gorge, WV:

Type	Jobs	Labor Income
Full-Service Restaurants	55.8	\$1,224,742
Retail, Gas Stores	25	\$699,705
Campgrounds, Rental Cabins	11.4	\$1,758,785
Limited-Service Restaurants	11.7	\$232,663
Retail, Sporting Goods	11.4	\$205,514
Wholesale Trade	9.2	\$570,360
Retail Grocery Stores	5.0	\$145,625
Retail General Merchandise	2.9	\$85,261

A 2018 study in the Custer Gallatin National Forest, MT found that rock climbing, mountain biking, hiking, paddling, and snow sports annually support the following:

- \$223.1 million in annual visitor spending
- 3.5 million visitors to the forest
- 2175 full time jobs
- \$65.7 million in wages

A 2017 study by Trout Unlimited found the following information about the destination fishing location known as the “Driftless area” of Minnesota and Wisconsin:

- 24,000 square miles and approximately 6000 miles of designated trout waterways.
- Direct spending by visiting anglers, government agencies and non-government organizations adds well over \$413 million to the Driftless Area economy each year.
- Indirect spending results in an additional estimated amount of over \$670 million added to the Driftless Area economy each year.
- Overall, it is estimated that the total spending and economic impact of recreational angling in the Driftless area has increased from \$1.1 billion in 2008 to \$1.6 billion in 2016.
- An estimated 6,500 jobs across the region are supported by recreational angling.

Stakeholder Engagement

PLS reached out to a range of recreation enthusiasts and businesses to better understand existing and future recreation opportunities. As part of this outreach PLS conducted:

- Extensive interviews with recreation stakeholders and local officials involved in the project
- Researched online resources to ascertain the status of local recreation opportunities
- Hosted a series of virtual workshops in Questa attended by locals interested in improving the region's recreation amenities and developing a recreation economy to help replace some of the jobs lost in the Moly mining industry.
- This outreach included communications with: Carson National Forest (Questa Ranger District) Bureau of Land Management (Taos Field Office), the New Mexico Department of Fish and Game, the Village of Questa and other interested stakeholders.



PLS documented obstacles and opportunities to improving experiences related to the following recreation activities:

- Snow Sports (non-motorized)
- Motorized use including
 - Full Size
 - ATV
 - Motorcycle
 - Snowmobiling
- Non-motorized use including:
 - Equestrian
 - Mountain Bike
 - Hiking
- Water-Based Activities including rafting, SUP and flatwater boating
- Fishing and Hunting
- Rock Climbing
- Developed Camping



The following report analyzes these activities to evaluate the opportunities to improve conditions and to expand the regional recreation market beyond local participation. To date most of the recreation in the Questa area is enjoyed by local residents, and to successfully attract visitors and quality of life businesses, these assets must be enhanced. To document that the status and future needs of each group of recreation assets, we asked the following questions:

- Where is the recreation activity?
- Is the activity authorized (i.e., is the road or trail formalized in the BLM travel plan)
- Is additional infrastructure needed to protect and/or enhance the activity?
- Are there user conflicts that diminish the recreation experience?
- Is the activity currently “marketable” or are there improvements needed to attract recreation enthusiasts?
- What are the opportunities to better market the activity?
- Are there new potential locations for this activity?

Questa, NM
Current Recreation Assets
By Activity

Winter Sports
White Water and Flatwater Boating
Hunting
Fishing
Climbing
Camping Opportunities
Motorized and Non-motorized Trails

Recreation Asset: Winter Sports

A total of 6 recreation assets were found related to Snow Sports in the study area with a diverse mix of uses including downhill skiing, xc skiing, and snowshoeing. Motorized snow sports are captured in the Roads and Trails section of the existing conditions.

Columbine Trail	For cross-country skiing only, this trail takes off at the beginning of Columbine Campground. The campground is located 8 miles west of Red River and 4 miles east of Questa on Highway 38. The trail is marked at the south end of the campground. There is parking space available at the gate to the campground. The first 3 miles of the trail is for beginners and intermediate skiers. After that it becomes expert terrain. Beware of avalanche hazards.
Enchanted Circle Cross-Country Ski Winter trails	Over 1400 acres, 27.96 miles total, 18.64 miles (over 30k) for classic and skate cross country skiing, 9.32 miles (over 15k) of trails for snowshoes (with 3.1 miles (5k) of trails for skiing or snowshoeing with your dog), Open: 9a.m.-4:30 p.m. (5 p.m. beginning March 15) Elevation: 9,800-10,300 feet, Trails signed with an accompanying map. Trails have tracks set and picnic areas. There are trails for all levels of skiers.
Red River Ski Area	<p>A developed ski resort with over 60 years of operation as a family owned business, Red River Ski & Summer Area offers an unspoiled New Mexico vacation experience surrounded by the Southern Rockies of New Mexico. Situated along the famed Enchanted Circle and situated at 8,750 feet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Average Snowfall 218 inches ● Average days of sunshine N/A ● Total Acreage N/A ● Number of Trails: 57 ● 32% Beginner ● 38% Intermediate ● 30% Expert ● Number of Lifts: 7 ● Elevation: Base 8,750, Top: 10,350 ● Uphill Capacity 7,920 skiers/hr
Taos Ski Valley	<p>A developed ski resort flanked by wilderness, rugged peaks and near the center of New Mexico's Enchanted Circle. Located 50 miles south of the Colorado border, Taos Ski Valley is a haven for 300+ inches of bone-dry powder stashes and chutes, bowls and glades.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual Snowfall: 305 inches ● Annual days of sunshine: 300 days ● Total Acreage: 1,294 ● Number of trails: 110 ● 24% Beginner ● 25% Intermediate ● 51% Expert ● Number of lifts: 13 (4 quads, 1 triple, 5 double, 3 surface) ● Elevation: Base 9,207, Top: 11,819 ● Uphill capacity: 15,000 skiers/hr

Endless Blue Resort

Formerly known as Ski Rio Costilla, this resort has been restored and now features in excess of 3000 acres under private ownership. The resort is often used as a private family retreat. It appears some or all of the original lifts have been removed. Despite the immense developable potential, the owners have decided to not further develop the site and instead, to initiate a natural process of it's recovery to a pristine state. At the moment, the resort is offered for unblock rentals with a price of \$ 100,000/week. The proceeds will be strictly used to offset the cost of recovery of the resort. You will receive full access to the mountain, you will be housed in adobe style casitas at the base of the mountain. A heavy duty, custom modified Ford truck will be at your disposal and will take you around the resort.

- 3,000 acre private ski resort (similar size to Beaver Creek, CO)
- 300 sunny days per year
- 300 inches average snowfall per season
- 900 skiable acres (86 ski runs)
- Elevation: Base: 9,500'; Summit: 11,650'; Drop: 2150'

Cabresto Lake

XC, snowshoe. Snowmobiling is permitted as far as the lake, beyond that it is cross-country only. Cabresto Lake Road 134A takes off in a northerly direction from Cabresto Canyon, Forest Road 563, about 5 miles from the intersection. It is about 2 miles to Cabresto Lake in 134A and the Lake Fork trailhead, Trail 82. There are toilets at the lake. Lake Fork Trail is for experienced skiers only.

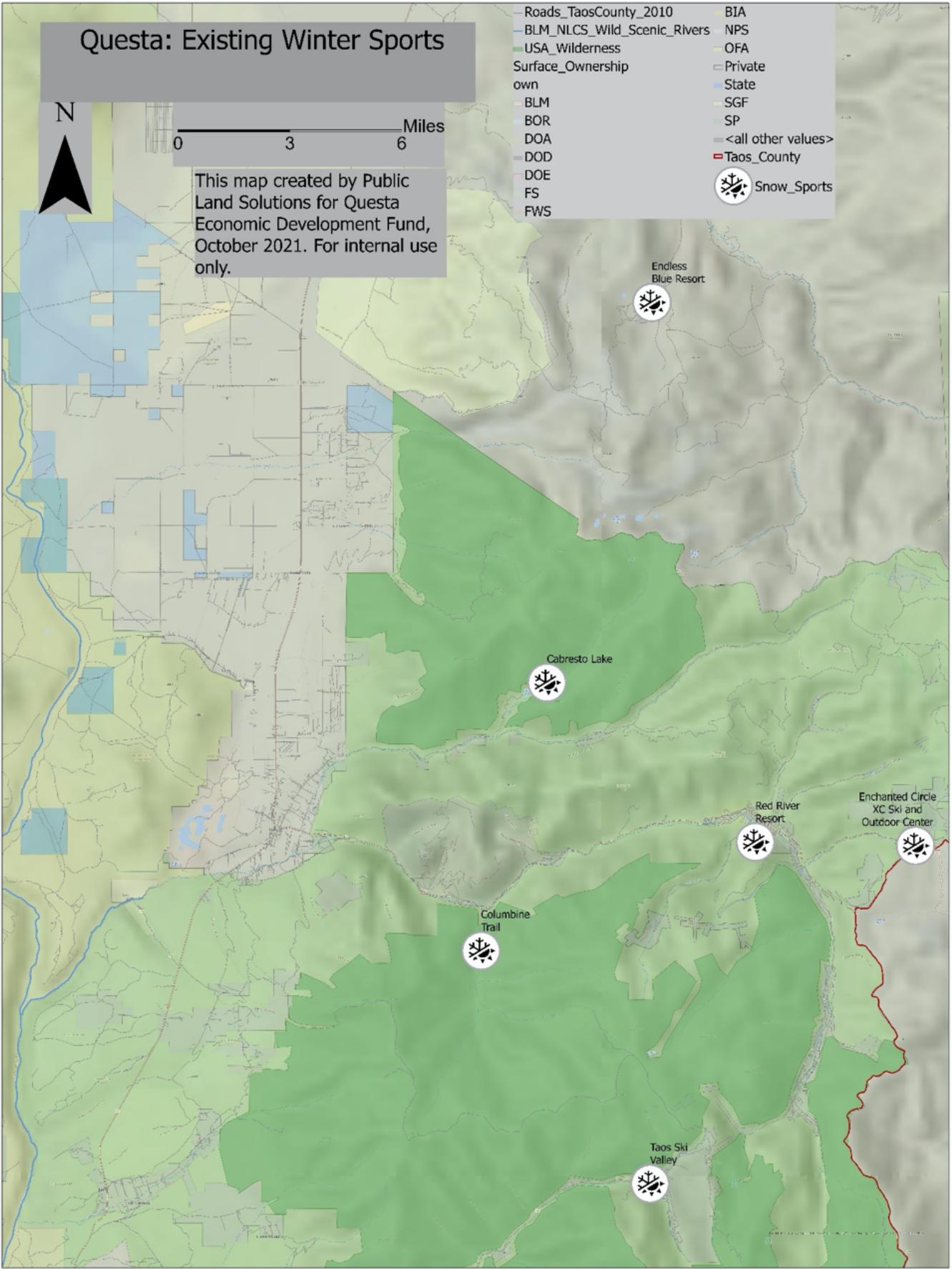
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Questa: Existing Winter Sports



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|-----------------------------|---|
| Roads_TaosCounty_2010 | BIA |
| BLM_NLCS_Wild_Scenic_Rivers | NPS |
| USA_Wilderness | OFA |
| Surface_Ownership | Private |
| own | State |
| BLM | SGF |
| BOR | SP |
| DOA | <all other values> |
| DOD | Taos_County |
| DOE |  Snow_Sports |
| FS | |
| FWS | |



Recreation Asset: Whitewater and Flatwater Boating

The study area contains both whitewater and flatwater boating options. Whitewater boating occurs on the two large rivers: Rio Grande and Red River. These rivers encompass approximately 29.6 miles and range from difficulty class 2 to 5. Flatwater boating mainly occurs at Cabresto Lake, with other lakes located by longer drive or long hike.

Rio Grande River -- Boat Launches on this river on the study area include: Lee Trailhead, Chiflo, Big Arsenic, River Trail North, River Trail South, Little Arsenic Springs, La Junta, East Rim, John Dunn Bridge

Lee Trail to Chiflo Campground aka The Razorblades

- 9.9 miles
- Class 2-4
- 47 feet per meter
- 500-3000 cubic feet second

Summary: The Razorblades is an excellent warm-up run for the Upper and Lower Taos Box sections below. It features a short 3-6 mile run (depending upon access points) on Class III to IV+ whitewater amid a gorgeous walled canyon and awesome scenery. In normal flow conditions the river is a typical pool-and-drop format that turns to one long, continuous rapid when flows exceed about 2,000 cfs. The very difficult access points relegate this run to inflatable or hard kayaks only, though canoes with flotation could do it if paddlers are willing to struggle up and down the long, steep trails to get in and out of the river. Free BLM permits are required.

Put-in: Lee Trail (South of Sunshine Valley road), 0.25 miles one-way, Elevation drop 200 feet, Moderate to difficult access. Also used as the main take-out for Ute Mountain run further north.

Take-out: Chiflo Trail, 0.5 miles one-way, Elevation drop 320 feet, Moderate

Chiflo to Little Arsenic aka The Upper Box

- 7.8 miles
- Class 5
- 69 Feet per meter
- 300-3000 cubic ft second

Summary: This is truly one of the classic runs in the west. The Taos Box is actually where the Rio Grande has fallen into one of the largest rifts on earth. The entire Taos Box is almost 100 miles long. The Upper Box refers to the 6 mile Class V run from the Chiflo Trail to the Little Arsenic Trail. There is no access at all in between these two points so make sure to bring spare paddles and rescue gear as a hike out in the middle is not an option.

Put-In: Chiflo Trail

Take-out: For many the run is defined by the takeout. You have 2 less than appealing options. You can float out on 9 miles of flat water, or take a 45 minute hike to the rim at Little Arsenic Trail. Although the Little Arsenic takeout is by far preferred, it does climb 750 feet up in .8 miles. The best camping is at the end of the takeout trail.

Red River -- Boat Launches on this river on the study area include: El Aguaje, La Junta (Confluence of Red River and Rio Grande. Same as Rio Grande), John Dunn Bridge

Hwy 515 to John Dunn Bridge

- 11.9 miles
- Class 4+
- 140 - 1000 cubic feet per second

Summary: This section of the Red River flows 3 1/2 miles through a scenic gorge to the confluence with the Rio Grande. Rafters float through the Wild Rivers Recreation Area (BLM). From there it is 8 1/2 miles to a take out at County Road B-007.

Put in: Highway 515 ends at the Red River Fish Hatchery on the Red River.

Take Out: John Dunn Bridge (El Aguaje and La Junta as an alternate hike take outs)

Cabresto Lake, USFS: Surrounded by high peaks, this small campground of 9 sites at 9500 feet overlooks the 15-acre Cabresto Lake from a level ridge at the head of a 4 mile trail to Heart Lake. One of the few places in NM for catching brook trout.

- Directions: 5 miles northeast of Questa on Forest Road 134 then 2 miles north on Forest Service Road 134A. The last 2 miles on Forest Road 134A are on a primitive road.



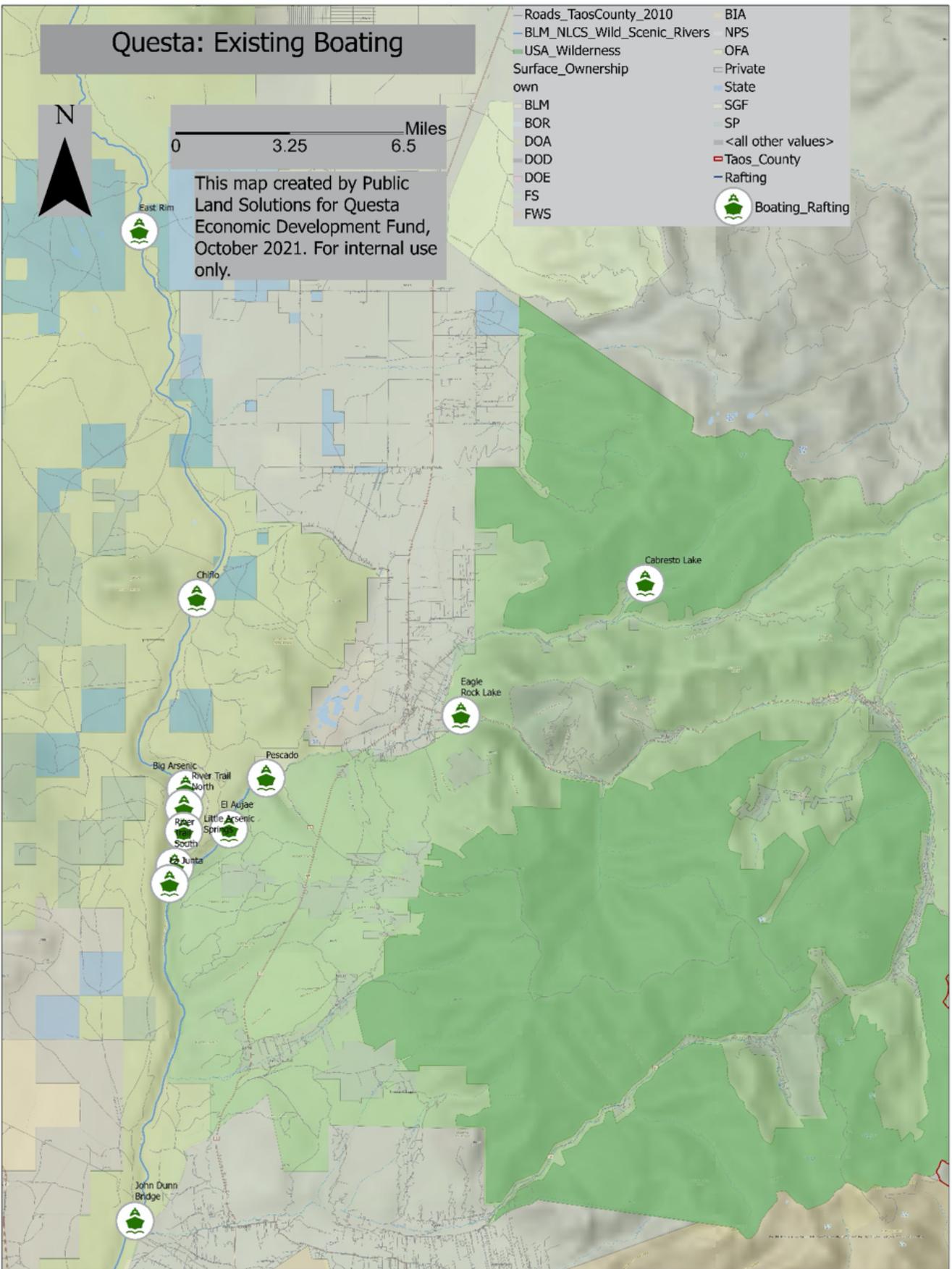
Questa: Existing Boating



0 3.25 6.5 Miles

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- Roads_TaosCounty_2010
- BLM_NLCS_Wild_Scenic_Rivers
- USA_Wilderness
- Surface_Ownership
- own
 - BLM
 - BOR
 - DOA
 - DOD
 - DOE
 - FS
 - FWS
- BIA
- NPS
- OFA
- Private
- State
- SGF
- SP
- <all other values>
- Taos_County
- Rafting
- Boating_Rafting



Recreation Asset: Hunting

The study area has three main hunting locations which identify as having some of the best elk hunting in the state and western North America. Other popular game hunting includes black bear, mountain lion and bighorn sheep. Most of the hunting in this area occurs on USFS, BLM or private ranch land.

Rio Costilla Park

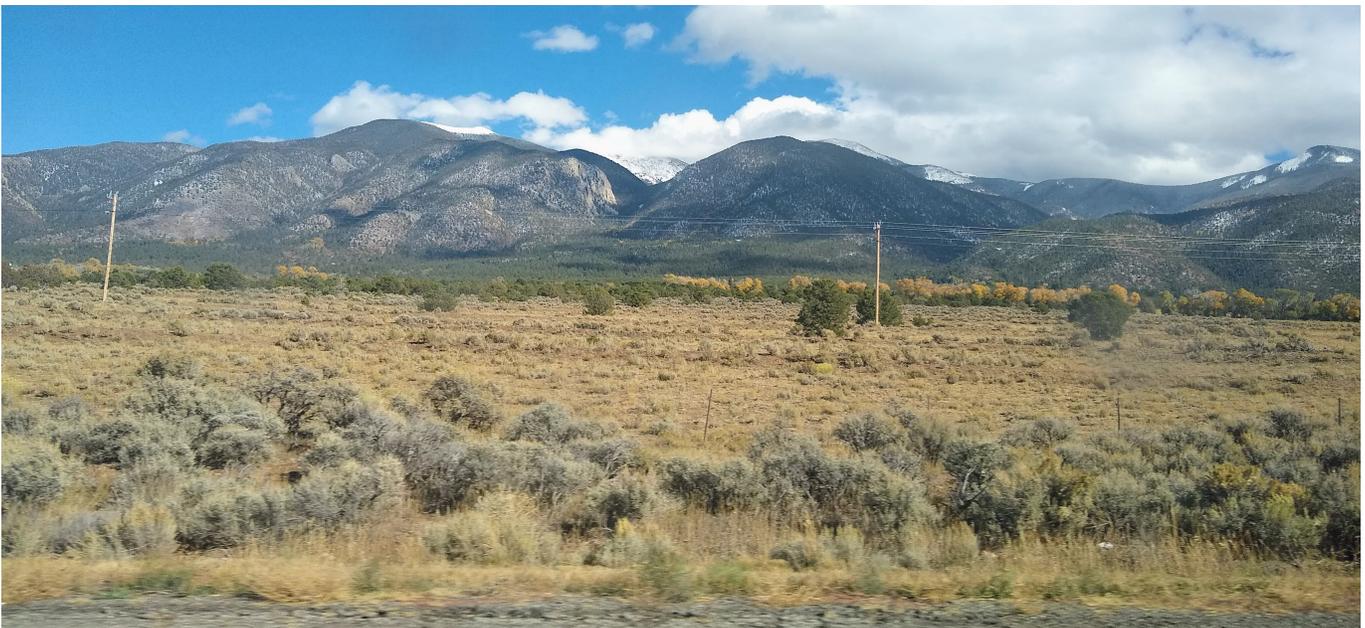
Located in Game Management Unit 55 Region D, it is part of a trio of locations: Vermejo Park, Valle Vidal and RCCLA Ranch. It is a unique hunter's paradise and is easily accessible. Vast herds of Rocky Mountain elk and mule deer are nestled within our mountains. Black bear, mountain lion and wild turkey are also plentiful. Drive north on Hwy 522 until you reach the village of Costilla, NM. Mixed land ownership.

Valle Vidal

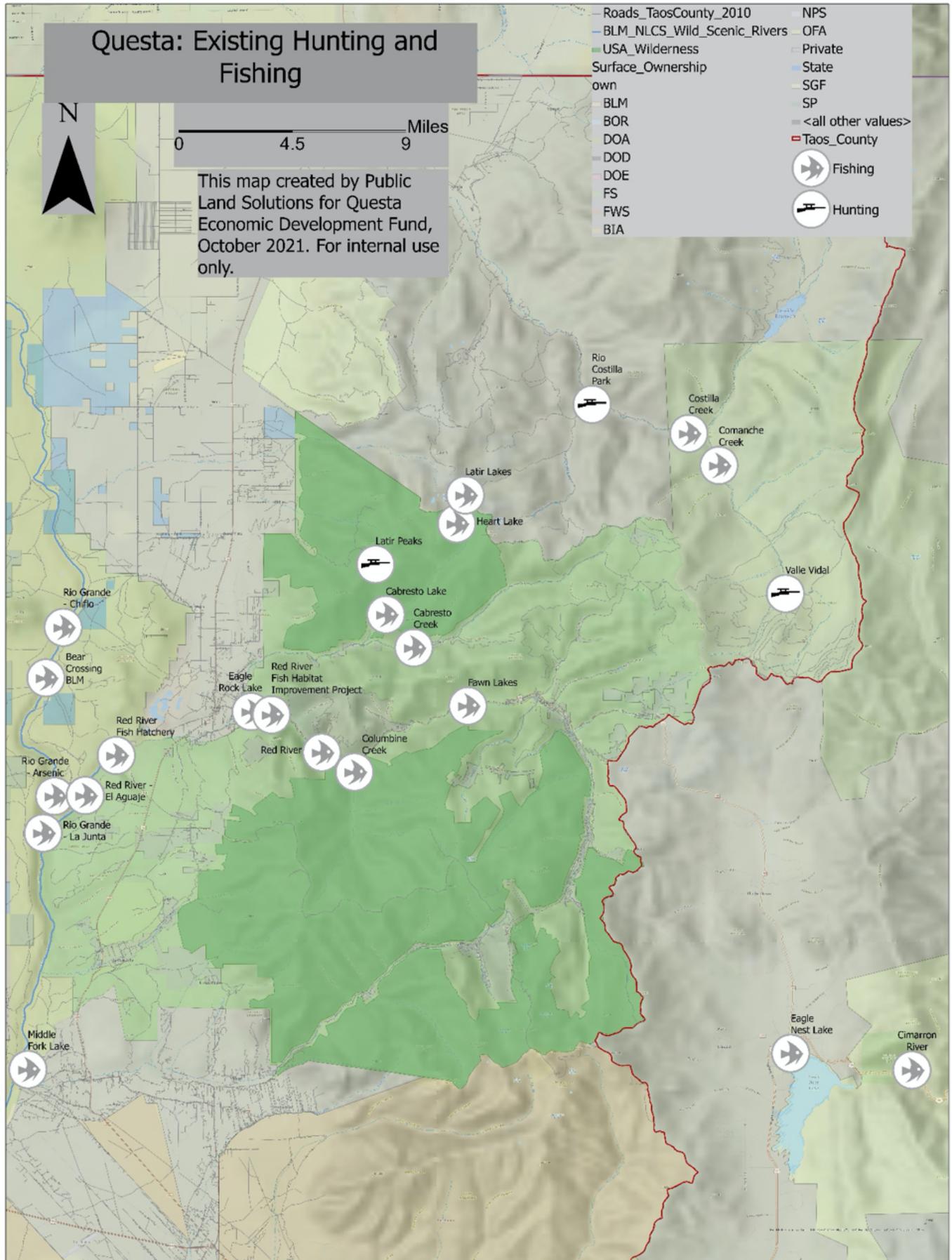
Valle Vidal of the Carson National Forest in Game Management Unit 55 is a 101,794 acres mountain basin in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains within the Carson National Forest. There is very little road travel in the Valle Vidal. Horses are often a necessity to make your hunt a success. Valle Vidal hosts a herd of about 2,500 elk within its boundaries. This area is home to some of the largest rocky mountain bighorn sheep in North America and is one of North America's top elk hunting destinations. This area is located approximately 1 hour east of Questa. USFS lands.

Latir Peaks

In Autumn, hunters hike or ride horseback from Cabresto Canyon into the Latir Peaks Wilderness Area northeast of Questa. These remote peaks and mountain meadows are home to bobcat, cougar, bear, bighorn sheep, deer, and elk. Access is located approximately 20 minutes northeast of Questa. USFS lands.



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Recreation Asset: Fishing

There are over 21 distinct fishing locations, each with a variety of species available. There have been recent efforts by the New Mexico Department of Fish and Game and Trout Unlimited to improve and market the fishing opportunities near Questa. There are ongoing efforts by these partners to continue to improve fish habitat in this area. The Village of Questa has a strong identity with fishing and hosts two events annually related to fishing: an annual Fishing Derby (Fall) and the Río Grande Cutthroat Fish Festival (Spring).

Río Grande River

Access Locations:

- Chiflo
- Arsenic
- La Junta
- Bear Crossing
- Cebolla Mesa (USFS)

Río Grande anglers are challenged by Rio Grande Cutthroat, brown, and rainbow trout, as well as northern pike. Fish are stock here from the nearby Red River Fish hatchery. Much of this river flows through the Rio Grande Gorge, which is difficult to access. In general, the Rio Grande is a river of fewer but larger wild fish. Excellent fishing for large brown and rainbow trout. Typically fished in early spring before it becomes high and turbid from the spring runoff, which can often last until mid to late summer. In the early fall, when the water clears and big browns are getting ready to spawn, is the best time to fish here, with a chance of landing some really nice trout. The Rio Grande has a tremendous caddis hatch that usually starts about Mother's Day and lasts for several weeks. If you want to fish big pocket water in one of the most beautiful canyons in New Mexico, the Rio Grande Gorge is your spot. Access points and trails lead down the side of the 800 ft. gorge from Cebolla Mesa Campground (USFS) and from the Bureau of Land Management Wild River recreation area. To improve trout fisheries, Special Fishing Regulations are in effect. All anglers must have a valid New Mexico fishing license and a Wildlife Habitat Improvement Validation in their possession. Fishing licenses are sold in Questa. The daily bag and possession limit is 4 fish per license holder.

Red River

Access Locations:

- Hwy 38 access points (many campgrounds provide the best access here)
- Red River Fish Hatchery: State / USFS / BLM
- Red River, El Aguaje, BLM
- Red River, La Junta, BLM

The Red River flows into the Rio Grande from the east, north of the town of Questa. New Mexico Game and Fish operates a trout hatchery on the lower part of the stream. Some of the best fishing on the Red is found downstream of this hatchery where warmer water from springs enter the river and enhances fish growth. Rainbow trout. In mid to late winter there is a spawning run of cuttbows (rainbow/cutthroat hybrids) that move into the lower Red River to spawn. They average 15 to 25 inches in length. Located on land administered by the USFS and BLM.

<p>Eagle Rock Lake</p>	<p>One of the most popular recreation spots in the Questa area. Spreading across some three acres, it is a hot spot for both locals and visitors for fishing, picnicking, and hiking. The lake was recently completely rebuilt and redesigned. The restoration of the lake began in 2015. Thanks to an extensive collaborative effort involving the Village of Questa, Chevron Mining, the Carson National Forest, EPA and state and federal agencies, contamination of sediment and ground and surface water was cleaned up. In addition, recreation facilities were upgraded, a walking path was created and the site was made ADA accessible. Stream restoration work was also completed around the lake. The 4-year project to restore the lake was nationally recognized with the Greenovation Award from the Environmental Protection Agency. New Mexico Game and Fish stocks the lake on a regular basis from spring until fall. To protect the lake's liner, swimming, boating and wading in the water are not allowed. The Lake is located 1 mile east of Questa on land administered by the USFS. Day Use only.</p>
<p>Columbine Creek</p>	<p>A small tributary to the Red River near Questa. Cutthroat and rainbow trout. USFS</p>
<p>Cabresto Lake</p>	<p>A 15-acre lake six miles northeast of Questa. Rainbow, brook, and cutthroat trout.</p>
<p>Cabresto Creek</p>	<p>A small tributary to the Red River northeast of Questa. Rainbow, brown, brook, and cutthroat trout. Some private land. USFS lands.</p>
<p>Heart Lake</p>	<p>A three-acre lake near the head of Cabresto Creek. Cutthroat trout. USFS.</p>
<p>Latir Lakes and Creek</p>	<p>A small tributary and small lakes to the Rio Grande near Cerro. Cutthroat, rainbow, and brown trout. USFS</p>
<p>Middle Fork Lake</p>	<p>Fishing is permitted in compliance with State Fishing Regulations. Little additional information is available about the fishing in the lake. This lake is The one the only home of the Sangre de Cristo peaclam. This high elevation body of water (10,845 feet above sea level) is a cirque lake, created by retreating glaciers during the last ice age. Middle Fork Lake contains no submerged aquatic vegetation, only a few emergent grasses in the shallows of sheltered bays.</p>

<p>Fawn Lakes</p>	<p>Nice spot on NM38 east of Questa towards the town of Red River. Two lakes totaling two acres. Rainbow and brown trout. These lakes are currently not serviceable for fishing and need repairs to the dams. Due to the damage to the dams, this is currently not a good fishing option, but is listed in this report as a potential project to restore the habitat and fish. USFS lands.</p>
<p>Red River Fish Habitat Improvement Project</p>	<p>State / Private. Located in the town of Questa, there are currently limited public access locations to the Red River including: Near Eagle Rock Lake and Miner’s Memorial Park aka “Moly Field”. This area is listed in the report as a potential project location to improve public access and habitat.</p>
<p>Costilla Creek</p>	<p>Costilla Creek is possibly New Mexico's best wild Rio Grande cutthroat stream. It is a small tailwater flowing out of Costilla reservoir, down through the Valle Vidal. Most of the upper Costilla is fly fishing only. The wading is very easy and casting is unobstructed in the wide open meadows. It is a great stream for dry flies and small nymphs. Day trips to Costilla Creek are possible from northern New Mexico, but overnight trips may be preferred due to the remote location.</p>
<p>Eagle Nest Lake</p>	<p>Located on the Enchanted Circle Byway, Eagle Nest Lake is a must stop spot for Northern New Mexico fishing. Stocked with trout and salmon, Eagle Nest offers excellent year round fishing from shore, and boat. Be sure to check out Eagle Nest for winter trout fishing. Surface Area: 2,500 acres. Elevation: 8215 feet. Fish Species: Rainbow Trout, Cutthroat Trout, Kokanee Salmon, Northern Pike, & Perch. Directions: From the junction of US 64 in Taos, follow US 64 East following signs to the lake.</p>
<p>Cimarron River</p>	<p>The Cimarron is a tailwater which flows out of the dam on Eagle Nest Lake. This river offers many types of waters to fish on, ranging from canyon stretches to open meadows; riffles and deep pools along with channels and undercut banks. For such a small river, there is a diverse amount of insect life which supports a very healthy population of wild brown trout, mostly in the 10 to 15 inch size range. The varied types and large numbers of bugs in the Cimarron make for good dry fly fishing. On a typical day, one can often catch fish on the surface on any number of different fly patterns.</p>

Comanche Creek

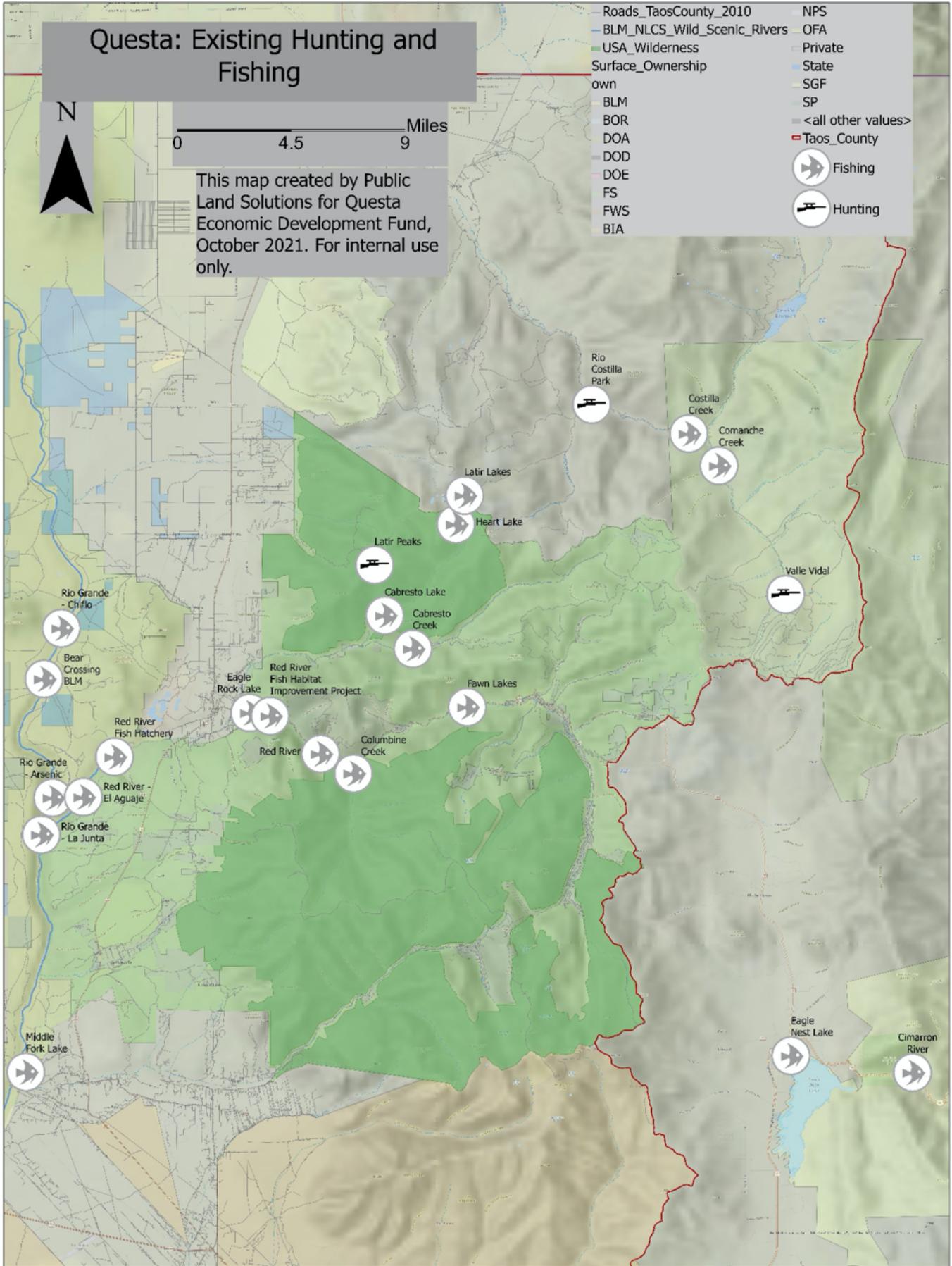
Fishing season on Comanche Creek and the rest of the Valle Vidal is July 1 through Dec. 1. Regulations for Comanche Creek are catch-and-release only, with tackle restricted to artificial flies and lures with single, barbless hooks. The fish stocked throughout the watershed July 2 included 600 12-inchers and 4,500 4-inchers.

Conejos River, NM/CO

The Conejos River is an outstanding fly fishing fishery for Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout. Colorado highway 17 from Antonito provides almost 25 miles of easy access to the Conejos. Forest Road 250 then weaves along the Conejos nearly 25 miles to Platoro Reservoir. Many access locations to this river are within 1 hour of Questa, NM.

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Recreation Asset: Climbing

There are 6 or 7 main climbing locations located within the study area which include some of the best climbing options in New Mexico. Rock types are mainly granite and basalt. The climbing is mostly sport and traditional, with some bouldering too. Difficulty of routes currently leans to intermediate and advanced climbers, with a desire to increase options for beginners.

Wild and Scenic

Crag: These crags are located in the Rio Grande Box section to the west of Questa. There is potential for much more climbing than already exists in this area.

The Candy Store. East / Southeast facing. The approach only takes 25 minutes to get down and about 40 mins to hike back out. The main cliff is known as the "Candy Store" and has the best basalt crack climbing in the region. Trad climbing splitter cracks and corners on perfect rock. From Taos, follow NM 68 north 7 miles. Take NM 522 approximately 20 miles to Questa. Travel 3 miles past the stoplight in Questa to NM 378. Turn left onto NM 378 and follow the signs about 12 miles west to Wild Rivers Recreation Area. The Candy Store is accessed from the Bear Crossing trail. Descend this steep trail for about 10 minutes. At the river, travel north on the East side, for about 10 minutes. (watch for poison ivy!) The cliff is located on the west side of the river and crossing the river can be problematic.

Ground Up Wall (No GPS, approximate location), This cliff is located upstream (North) of The Candy Store and directly across the river from The Red Tail Wall (Need to cross the river as the cliff is on the West side of river. East facing cliff)

Redtail Wall, The next big cliff upstream from The Candy Store on the East side of the river with no river crossing needed (West facing). It has its own trail in (a bit obscure but quick, check with locals) or approach as per Candy Store, as described in Taos Rock guidebook. (No GPS, approximate location)

Deep Water Horizon, (No GPS, approximate location) Upstream west [of river] wall above NCO rapid (2 miles downstream from Chiflo trail river access) in the upper box. Cliff faces east. Faint descent down the main rib north or upstream of the red tail wall. Then trend upstream into drainage. Wading across a sandbar reasonable at <300csf or bring a tube/boat/raft.

Flowing Chi Wall, Hike down trail at Chiflo and head downstream looking for a place to cross. Boulder hop is obvious at rapids midway to the wall. Wading at the beach before the gauging station is easy in low water. The overhead cable has snapped and recently fallen into the water

Miner's Crag

This crag offers Sport and Trad crack climbing on the West Side of the Rio Grande Gorge North of John Dunn Bridge. The sport routes are well equipped and climb steep faces and aretes on solid rock. The trad routes follow cracks in faces and corners.

Directions: From the John Dunn Bridge Area described in the guide book Taos Rock or The Arroyo Hondo/Seco area follow the road past John's wall up switchbacks to the west rim above John Dunn Bridge. Turn right (North) on well maintained Montoso road (towards houses). Continue on this road for 1.6 miles. stay right at fork past last house onto two track (high clearance/4WD if wet). Continue 2.5 miles and stay on the main track then right at fork and park at Miner's trail head.

Trail: follow cairns down a steep trail into Rio Grande Gorge (about 10 minutes) and eventually traverse right for about 5 more minutes. Beware this trail has a few loose exposed sections. The cliff sits about midway between the rim and the river. About a 20 minute approach.

Questa Dome

Questa Dome is a 600-ft tall south-facing granite dome in the secluded Latir Peaks Wilderness area in northern New Mexico. The climbs on the main dome range from 5.10 to 5.12 linking crack systems with thin face climbing up the best granite in northern NM.

Directions from Questa: Take NM 522 north past the village of Questa. 6 miles past Questa take a right at a sign to El Rito. Go just under a mile to where the road turns (at a house) to dirt. Veer right and then climb up the steep road for just under a mile farther. At the T-junction, go right, and continue for 0.2 miles to a small parking area and the trailhead on the left. With high clearance you can get to the trailhead, without, you'll probably need to stop earlier (less than 10 minutes extra walk).

Approach: A social trail climbs through the pine forest and soon meets a beautiful creek. In early season, the trail may be flooded by the creek in some places, but should not be a problem. As the trail gets steeper, the dome is obvious on the left. Stay on the trail until about level with the base, then traverse left to the base of the rock. This will take 45 minutes or so.

Season: May through October, typically. Can be hot on hot summer days. Watch out for thunderstorms, especially in July and August. It can be warm enough in April, but the approach may still be snowy.

Roadside Distraction

A nice granite crag with a car bumper belay. Roadside Distraction crag faces south and is shady and cold from December to early February, but is sunny the rest of the year.

Directions: Roadside Distraction is located about three miles East of Questa on HW 38 (which is the road to Red River) on the north side of the road. Look for the large pull out on the left side of the road as you enter the canyon.

Lion's Den

This crag offers steep granite sport climbing above hwy 38 east of Questa. Most routes here seem to be for advanced climbers.

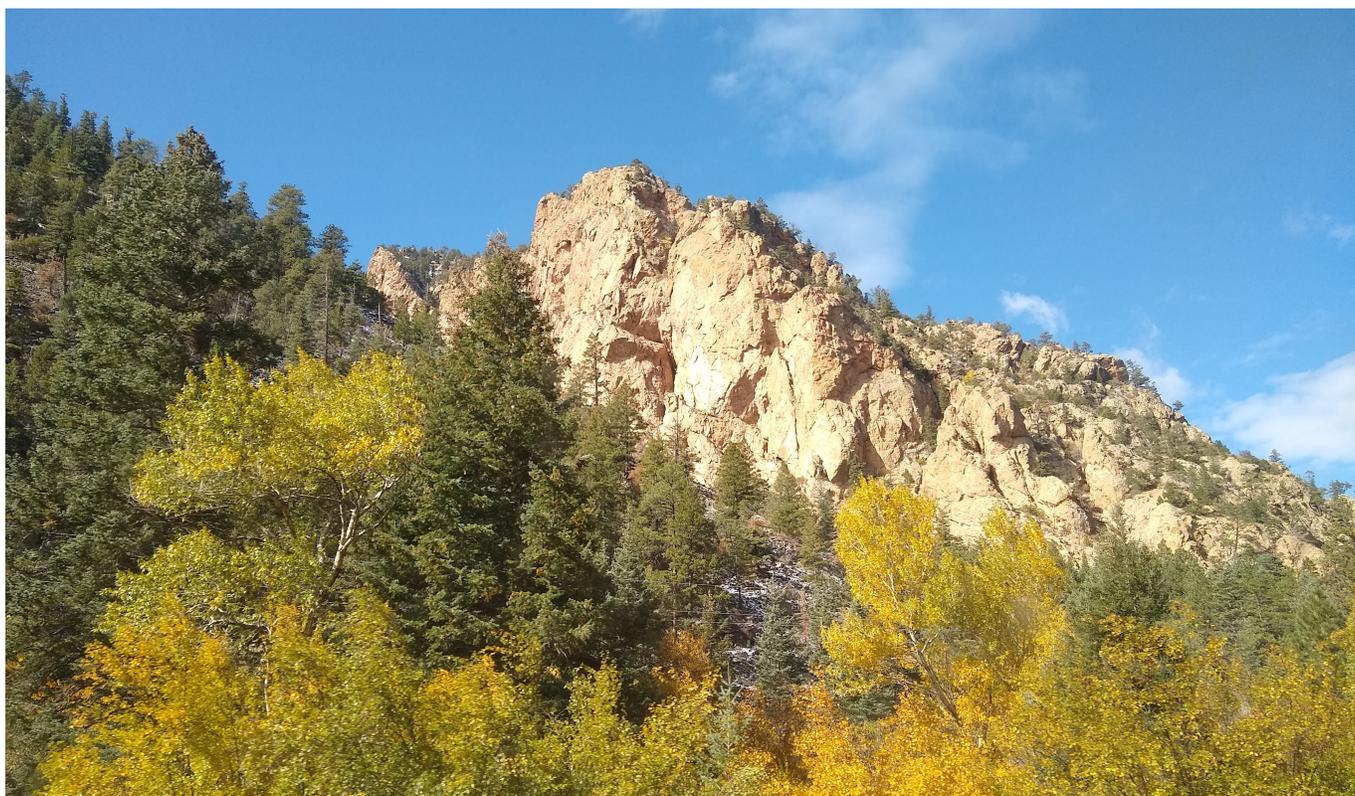
Directions: Located just east of Questa off Hwy 38. There is no formal parking or trail.

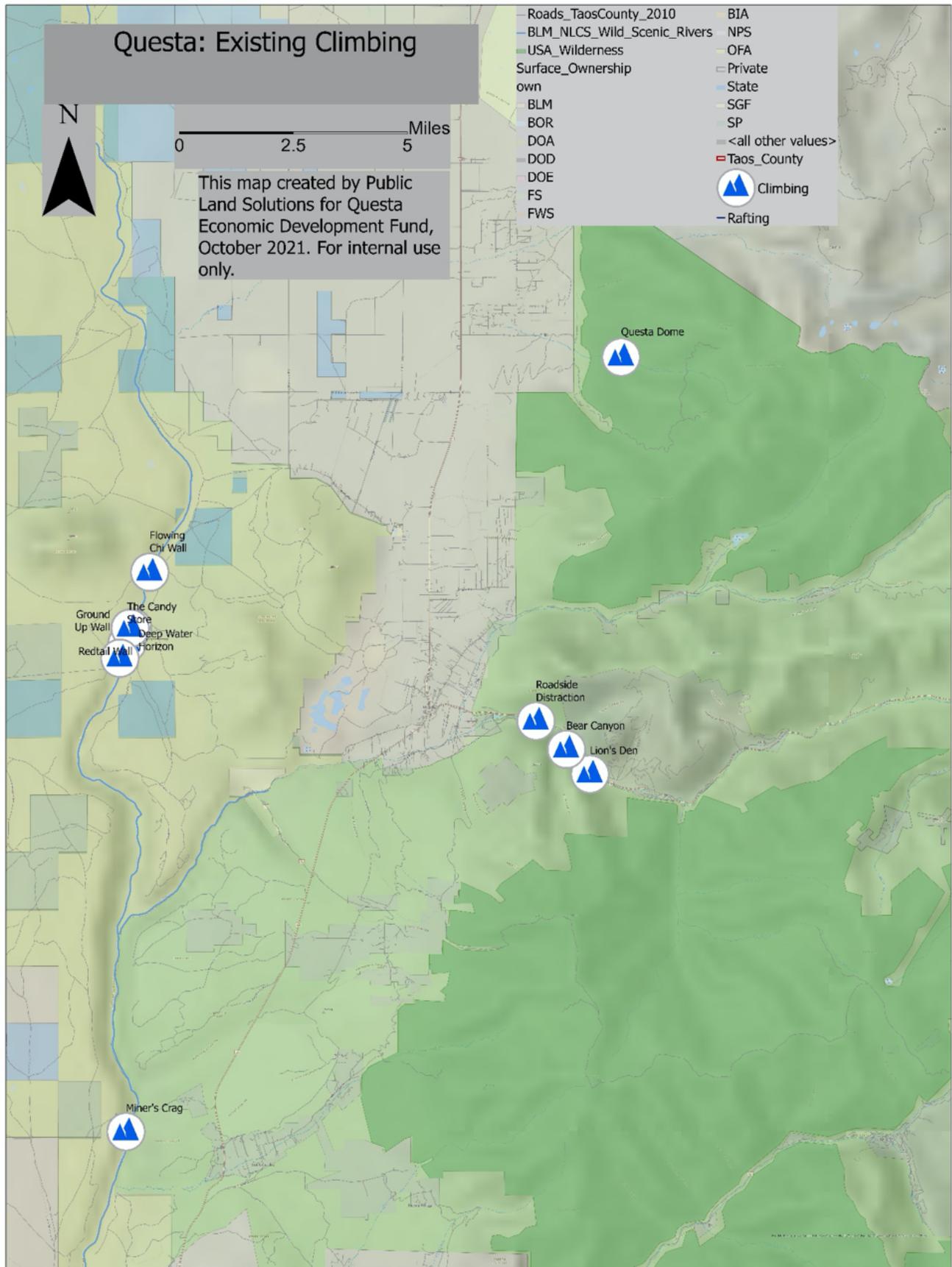
Bear Canyon

This crag offers both single and multi pitch climbing just east of Questa. Routes here are of a variety of difficulty. There is potential for much more climbing than already exists in this area.

Directions: Located just east of Questa off Hwy 38. There is no formal parking or trail.

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Camping Opportunities and Recommendations

There are 13 developed campgrounds, 8 primitive campgrounds and 1 volunteer campground. There are approximately 121 individual sites in the study area. The number of group sites is currently unknown due to lack of publicly available information by the administering agencies. For more details on the listed camping opportunities, click here.

Existing Developed Camping:

USFS: 8 developed campgrounds, 81 individual sites

- **La Bobita** -- Facilities: No water. Porta Potty.
- **Cabresto Lake** -- Facilities: Picnic tables, toilets. No Water.

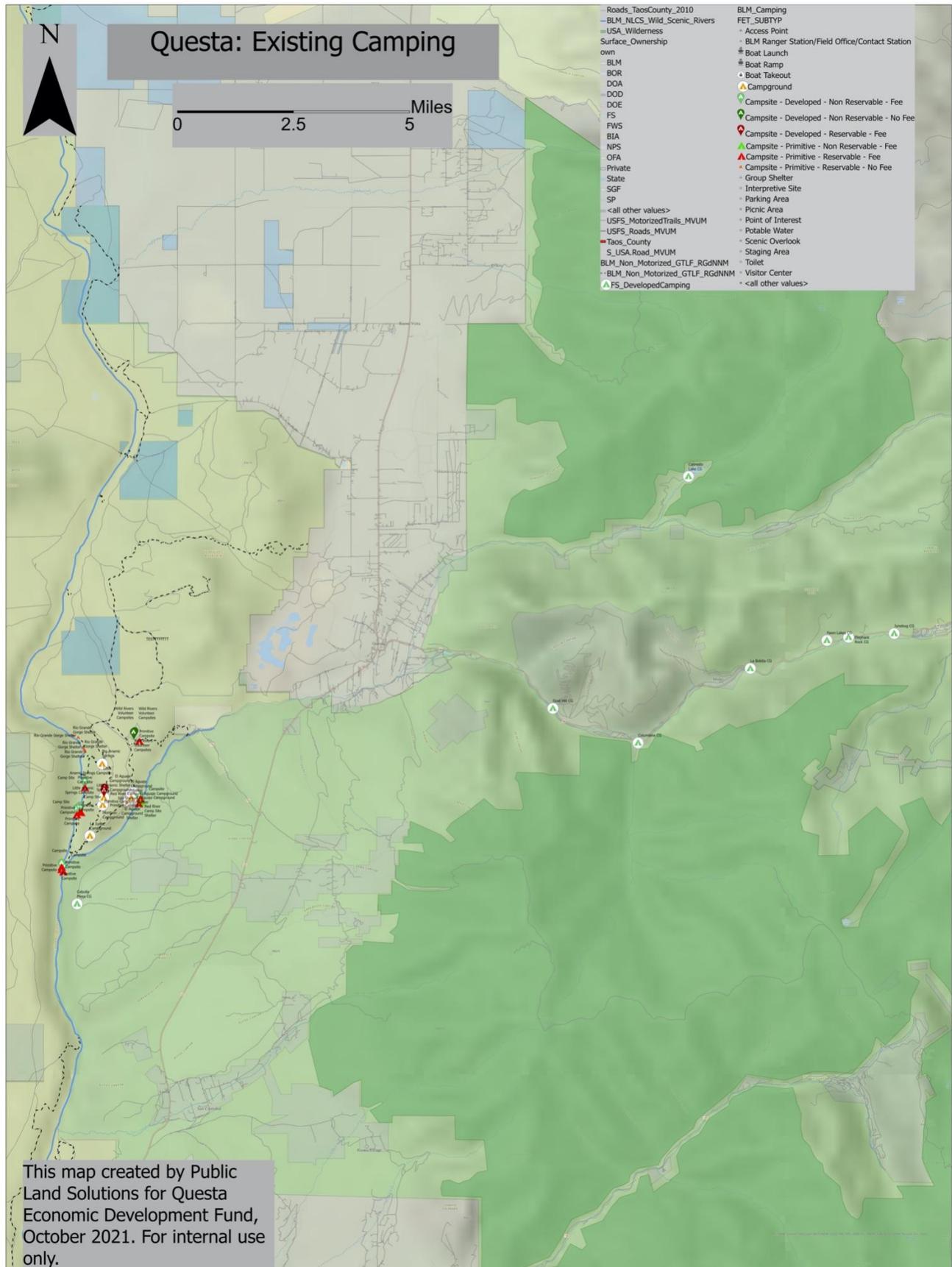
Summary:

- **Goat Hill** -- Facilities: Operated by concession. This campground offers 26 single sites, potable water, and vault toilets. Each site has a fire ring, picnic table, and tent pad. Please note that no water can be filled directly into a trailer, rv, or motorhome anywhere in this campground - the potable water is only for filling containers you bring back to your site.
- **Columbine** -- Facilities: Amenities: No Water, Picnic tables, Toilets. Operated by concession.
- **Cebolla Mesa** -- Facilities: Picnic tables and Toilets. There is no Water or trash service.
- **Junebug** -- Facilities: Picnic Tables, Toilets, Drinking Water, Parking. No electric hook ups.
- **Elephant Rock** -- Facilities: Operated by concession. This campground offers 20 single sites, potable water, and vault toilets. Each site has a fire ring, picnic table, and tent pad.
- **Fawn Lakes** -- Facilities: Operated by concession. The campground contains 18 family overnight sites, of which three are tent-only sites. Vault toilets and drinking water are provided. Firewood is available for purchase from the host.

BLM: 13 total camping areas, 40 individual campsites

Summary: There are five (5) developed campground areas located in the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. Each is equipped with tables, grills, drinking water, and restroom facilities. There are two large group camping sites. There are many primitive camping areas which require hiking down into the canyon to access the sites. Some of these primitive camping sites are reservable while others are first come, first serve. There is one (1) volunteer campground behind the Zimmerman Visitor Center.

- El Aguaje Develop Campground
- Red River Primitive Shelter (2)
- Red River Primitive campsite (2-3)
- La Junta Developed Campground
- La Junta Primitive Campsites (3)
- Montoso Developed Campground
- Little Arsenic Developed Campground
- River Trail / Little Arsenic Primitive Campsites (3)
- River Trail Primitive Campsite (1)
- Big Arsenic Developed Campground
- Big Arsenic Primitive Shelter (5)
- Pescado Primitive campsite (1)
- Wild Rivers Volunteer campsites (3)



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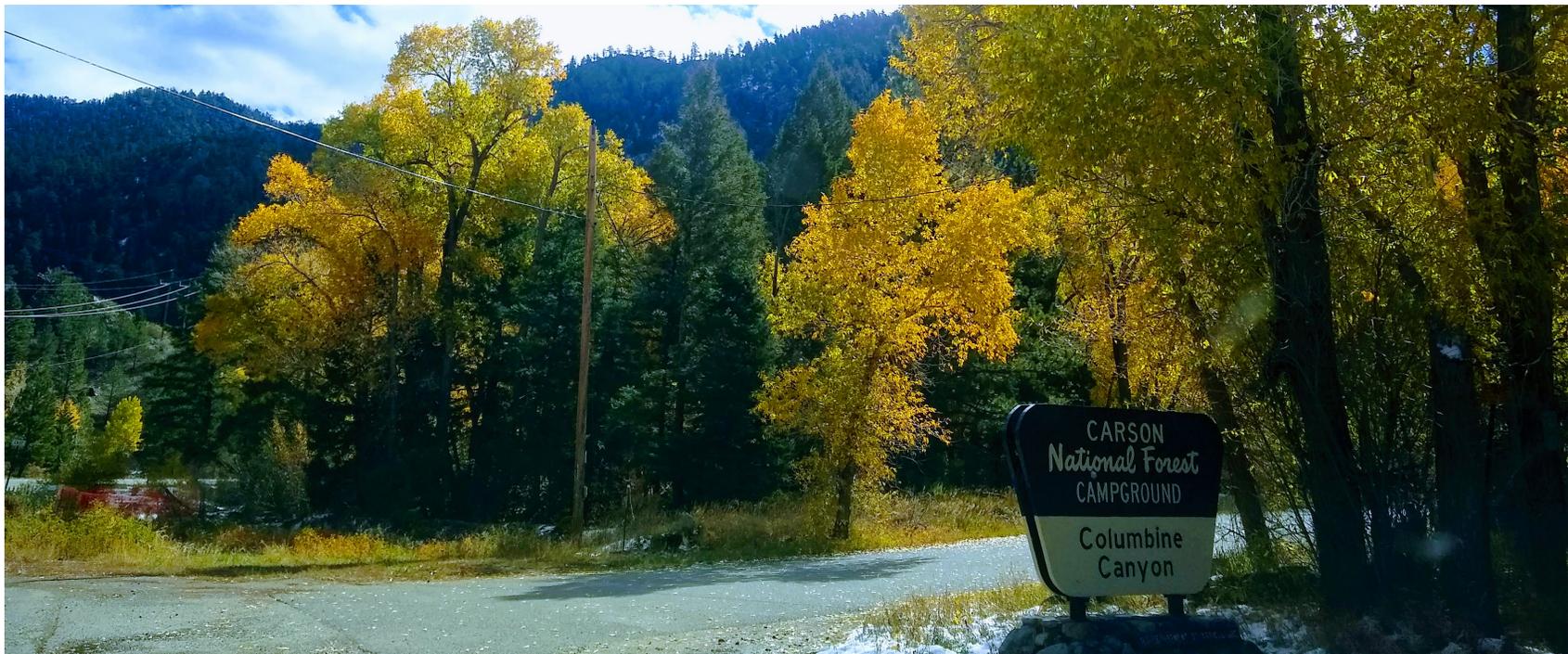
Recreation Asset: Camping Opportunities -- Additional Details

USFS: 8 developed campgrounds, 81 individual sites

Campground	Details/Notes
Goat Hill	<p>Small roadside camping area (3 sites) provides access to Red River fishing and hiking. Amenities: No Water, Picnic tables, Toilets. \$10 a night. Operated by concession. Travel 4 miles east of Questa via NM 38. Open May - September 2</p>
Columbine	<p>Facilities: Operated by concession. This campground offers 26 single sites, potable water, and vault toilets. Each site has a fire ring, picnic table, and tent pad. Please note that no water can be filled directly into a trailer, rv, or motorhome anywhere in this campground - the potable water is only for filling containers you bring back to your site.</p> <p>Natural Features: The campground is composed of two loops. One small loop at the campground entrance, has all open sites and views of the towering mountains. The other is a long loop up the canyon along the fast-flowing Columbine Creek. The campsites in this loop are tucked in among pine, spruce and some aspen providing ample shade and good privacy between campsites</p> <p>Recreation: The Columbine Twining hiking trail can be found at the south end of the campground and gives access to 14 miles of hiking trails, and leads into the Columbin-Hondo Wilderness area. The Red River runs near the campground and can be accessed near the first loop.</p>
Cebolla Mesa	<p>Cebolla Mesa has five (5) individual sites and picnicking. Fishing is nearby located 1 mile down on the Rio Grande River and Red River. This site is also used as the trailhead for Rio Grande wild and Scenic River, Trail #102.</p> <p>Amenities include Picnic tables and Toilets. There is no Water or trash service.</p> <p>Directions: Travel 8.3 miles Southwest of Questa. Take State Highway 522, 4.9 miles south from Questa to Forest Road #9. Drive west for 3.4 miles to campground. Forest Road #9 is a dirt/gravel road and is hazardous in muddy conditions.</p>

Campground	Details/Notes
Junebug	<p>Recently refurbished roadside campground sits near the historic Red River mining area and downhill ski resort. 23 sites.</p> <p>Amenities include: Picnic Tables, Toilets, Drinking Water, Parking. No electric hook ups. Can be very crowded during summer weekends. As an alternative, try BLM's Wild Rivers Recreation Area north of Questa. First Come, First Served. No Reservations. Operated by concession. \$20/Site, \$5 extra vehicle fee. Open May 21 - September 16.</p> <p>Directions: Travel 2 miles west of Red River via NM 38.</p>
Elephant Rock	<p>Facilities: Operated by concession. This campground offers 20 single sites, potable water, and vault toilets. Amenities: Each site has a fire ring, picnic table, and tent pad.</p> <p>Natural Features: Elephant Rock Campground is a single loop that meanders up a hillside with several sites featuring stone terracing. The campsites are tucked in among a mixture of ponderosa pine, aspen, fir and spruce. The Red River flows near this campground.</p> <p>Recreation: The nearest hiking trail, Fawn Lakes Trail, is located .3 miles east of Elephant Rock Campground, near Fawn Lakes Campground. This trail meets accessibility guidelines. Elephant Rock offers convenient access to State Rt. 38 and is well situated for day trips on the Enchanted Circle and to the town of Red River. The Red River is across the road from the campground but is not accessible.</p>
Fawn Lakes	<p>Facilities: Operated by concession. The campground contains 18 family overnight sites, of which three are tent-only sites. Vault toilets and drinking water are provided. Firewood is available for purchase from the host.</p> <p>Natural Features: The Red River runs adjacent to the campground. Two small fishing lakes are within a short walk from the campground. The surrounding mountains comprise a beautiful forest of ponderosa pine that blankets the campground and offers partial shade.</p> <p>Recreation: Located between Questa and Red River, many activities such as hiking and fishing are available to visitors either at the campground or a short drive away. There is fishing access for Red River and to the nearby small lakes. Columbine Trailhead is within 4 miles and starts at Columbine Campground.</p>

Campground	Details/Notes
La Bobita	<p>Overflow camping only. Ideal as a group camping site. \$8/per vehicle, \$50/group/night. Operated by concession. Open May 28th to September.</p> <p>Amenities: No water. Porta Potty.</p> <p>Directions: Travel east on Hwy 38 past Moly Mine.</p>
Cabresto Lake (No Fee)	<p>Surrounded by high peaks, this small campground of 9 sites at 9500 feet overlooks the 15-acre Cabresto Lake.</p> <p>Amenities: Picnic tables, Toilets. No Water. Cabresto Lake is approximately 7 miles northeast of the town of Questa, NM.</p> <p>Directions: Travel 5 miles northeast of Questa on Forest Road 134 then 2 miles north on Forest Service Road 134A. The last 2 miles on Forest Road 134A are on a primitive road.</p>



BLM: 13 total camping areas, 40 individual campsites

Campgrounds	Details/Notes
<p>El Aguaje Develop Campground, Red River Primitive Shelter (2), Red River Primitive campsite (2-3), La Junta Developed Campground, La Junta Primitive Campsites (3), La Junta Primitive Campsites (3), Montoso Developed Campground, Montoso Developed Campground, Little Arsenic Developed Campground, Little Arsenic Developed Campground, River Trail / Little Arsenic Primitive Campsites (3), River Trail Primitive Campsite (1), Big Arsenic Developed Campground, Big Arsenic Primitive Shelter (5), Pescado Primitive campsite (1), Wild Rivers Volunteer campsites (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are five (5) developed campground areas located in the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. Each is equipped with tables, grills, drinking water, and restroom facilities. ● There are two large group camping sites ● There are many primitive camping areas which require hiking down into the canyon to access the sites. Some of these primitive camping sites are reservable while others are first come, first serve. ● There is one (1) volunteer campground behind the Zimmerman Visitor Center. ● In total, there are 40 campsites available. ● Camping is permitted in designated sites only within Wild Rivers recreation Area. To protect vegetation, please use hardened tent sites only.

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Questa: Existing Developed Camping - West Side

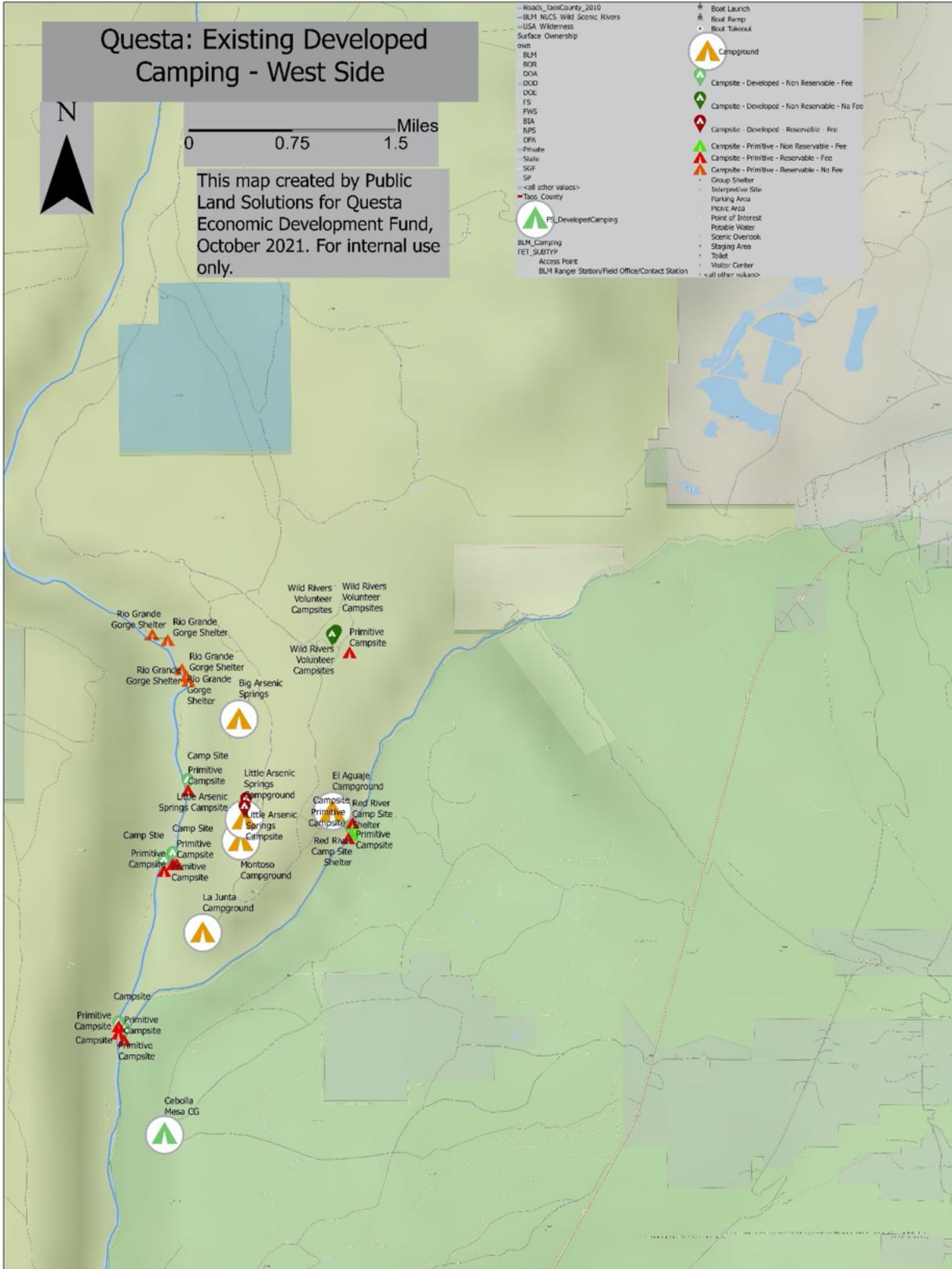


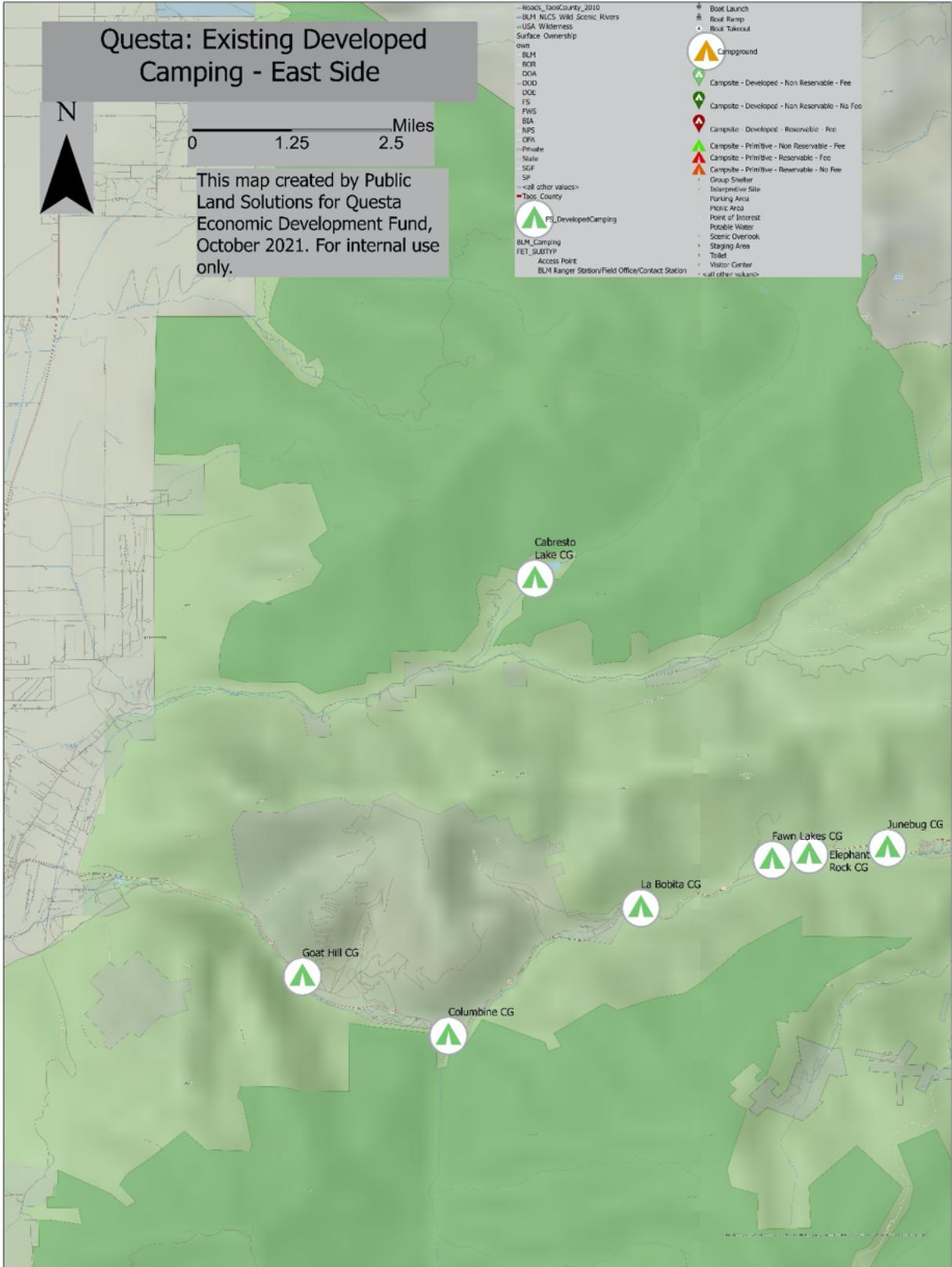
0 0.75 1.5 Miles

This map created by Public Land Solutions for Questa Economic Development Fund, October 2021. For internal use only.

--Roads_1996County_2010
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 --USA_Wilderness
 Surface Ownership
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 BLM
 BCR
 DOA
 DOD
 DOL
 FS
 FWS
 BIA
 NPS
 OPA
 Private
 State
 SGF
 SP
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 --Tabor_County
 PSL_DevelopedCamping
 BLM_Camping
 FET_SUBTYPE
 Access Point
 BLM Ranger Station/Field Office/Contact Station

- Boat Launch
- Road Ramp
- Road Takeout
- Campground
- Campsite - Developed - Non Reservable - Fee
- Campsite - Developed - Non Reservable - No Fee
- Campsite - Developed - Reservable - Fee
- Campsite - Primitive - Non Reservable - Fee
- Campsite - Primitive - Reservable - Fee
- Campsite - Primitive - Reservable - No Fee
- Group Shelter
- Interpretive Site
- Parking Area
- Picnic Area
- Point of Interest
- Possible Water
- Scenic Overlook
- Staging Area
- Toilet
- Visitor Center
- <all other values>





Recreation Asset: Motorized and Non-motorized Trails

There are a diverse variety of roads and trails within the study area on USFS and BLM managed lands with the following approximate total miles:

- 208.7 miles of motorized roads
- 18.68 miles of motorized trails (60 inches or less)
- 188.11 miles of non-motorized trails
- For more details on these roads and trails please review the following subsections.

USFS Motorized Roads and Trails: 138.7

miles of USFS roads, 18.68 miles of USFS motorized trails

- Elephant Rock Motorcycle Network: 18.68 miles (or 20.74 miles if 195B open to motorcycles); #195, 18.68 miles
- Access to Chevron Moly Parce south of Questa: 0.57 miles; 97055, Seasonal Aug 16 - Dec 31, 0.57 miles
- Largo-Lama Canyons area: 25.06 miles
- Cebolla Mesa: 38.89 miles
- Rito del Medio Road Access: 3.51 miles; 9701A, 3.3 miles, Seasonal May 1 - Dec 31, high clearance, (access to Rito del Medio Trail - Latir Peaks Wilderness)
- Greenie Peak / Midnight Meadows Network: 35.46 miles, scenic vistas, mining history, wildlife
- Pioneer Creek: 3.34 miles, mining history, near Red River ski resort; Pioneer Creek, 485, 3.34 miles, May 1 - Dec 31
- Goose Creek: 7.09 miles, near Red River ski resort
- Old Red River Pass: 5.62 miles, near Enchanted forest xc area
- Lost Lake Motorized: 2.53 miles

USFS Non-motorized Trails: 122.48 miles

- USFS near Questa: 0.5 miles, Eagle Rock Lake
- USFS Latir Peaks Wilderness: 24.58 miles, Hike/ Horse only
- USFS Columbine Hondo, Questa Side: 46.61 miles, Hike / Horse only
- USFS Columbine Hondo, Taos Side (North of Hwy 150 only): 14.99 miles, Hike /Horse only
- USFS Red River town area: 17 miles
- USFS Lost Lake area: Hike/Horse only; Sawmill Park (55) 3.01 miles (Wilderness)
- USFS, Red River Resort Downhill Trail, 1.5 miles. Open to MTB
- USFS Lost Lake Area: 8.74 miles, Open to MTB/Hike/Horse
- USFA Enchanted Forest XC Area --Summer Trails: 5.5 miles

BLM Motorized Roads: approximately 70 miles

- Guadalupe Mountain area:
Approximately 38 miles
- Sunshine Trailhead / Lee Trailhead area:
Approximately 14 Miles
- Horsethief Mesa area: Approximately 18 miles

BLM Non-motorized Trails: 65.63 miles

BLM open to MTB: 39.33 miles

- Red River Fault (MTB / horse / hike), 5.2 miles, moderate
- Pescado (MTB / Hike), 1.7 miles, moderate, 795 ft
- Guadalupe Mountain (MTB / horse / hike), 2.1 miles, hard, 1000 ft
- Las Vista De Questa (MTB / horse / hike), 6.9 miles, moderate, 300-500 ft
- Punto de Coyote Loop (MTB / horse / hike), 3.7 miles, moderate, 500 ft
- East Rim Trail (MTB / horse / hike), 3.5 miles, easy two track
- Rinconada, (MTB / hike) 6.1 miles, easy
- Horsethief Mesa (MTB / horse / hike), 10.13 miles, moderate (3.63 miles 2.72 miles 0.29 miles 0.59 miles 0.92 miles 0.98 miles, 1 mile for singletrack access trail along county road B-008)

BLM Hike Only: 3.3 miles

- La Junta, 1.2 miles, hard, 800 ft (Closed June 2021 until further notice)
- Big Arsenic Springs, 1 mile, moderate, 680 ft
- La Aguaje, 0.7 miles, moderate, 500 ft
- Chiflo, 0.4 miles, moderate, 320 ft

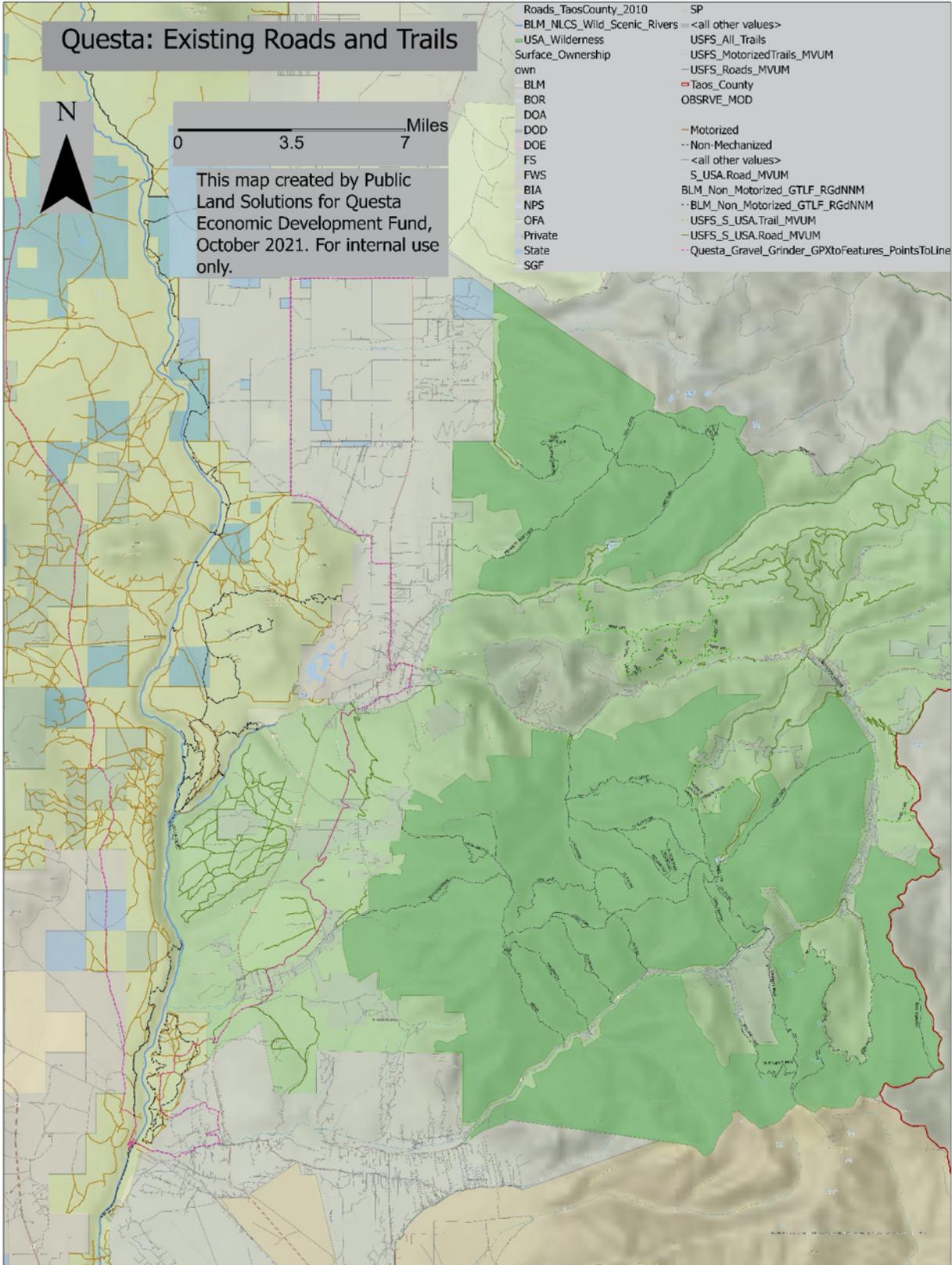
BLM Horse / Hike: 3.5 miles

- Little Arsenic Springs, 1 mile, moderate, 760 ft
- River Trail, 2.5 miles, moderate

BLM Sheep Crossing TH to Lee TH to Sunshine TH:

- 19.5 miles, double track, listed as non-motorized





Conclusion and Next Steps

PLS presents recommendations/proposals in the following six (6) tier 1 or “Topline” areas as result from our analysis using the methodology described in this report and extensive input from stakeholder engagement:

1. Guadalupe Mountain Trail and Road Network
2. Largo-Llama Canyons Trail Network
3. Chevron Mine Site 1
4. Questa Climbing
5. Questa Fishing
6. Cebolla Mesa Road and Trail Networks

Note that some areas that were analyzed separately during the draft report were later combined with other areas for logistical purposes in this final report. This includes recommendations for a) Questa climbing and via ferrata areas and b) Questa fishing areas. This final report has been amended to reflect and follow these changes.



Next Steps:

- Apply for funding to complete “Shovel Ready” projects in this study area (listed in this report)
- Discuss the six (6) conceptual recommendations/proposals in this report with the appropriate land management agency to determine feasibility including:
 - For projects on federal lands, determine the priority rank of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for each project proposal and determine NEPA schedule. Determine if NEPA will be conducted by the agency (internal) or contractor (external).
 - For projects on State lands or jurisdictions, determine project priority and compliance needs.
 - Check the recommendation/proposal for Land Use Plan Compliance. All recommendations/proposals in this report were reviewed and comply with existing LUPs. However, LUPs plans can be revised or amended and could change the compliance status of a recommendation/proposal.
 - Develop a comprehensive project proposal including design, costs, funding and implementation. which may be performed by the following:
 - Local club or Organization: This option may cost less, but sometime less experience resulting in reduced user experience and less sustainable product. These organizations often hold non-profit status which allows them to apply for more grant funding.
 - Design Contractor: May cost more, but more experience can lead to increased user experience and a more sustainable product.
 - Land Management Agency: Typically, agency staff (recreation, engineering/landscape architect) can perform this work, but they may need to obtain supervisor approval as a work priority and/or internal funding/job codes. This staff can design entire recreation plans/assets or review these plans/assets after receiving proposal from one of the above groups.

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Jay Foley, Mountain Skills Rock Guides

Lindsay Mapes, Turquoise Timing

Christian Isely, Chevron

And many other members of the local community

Thank you!

Analysis By Area

#	Area	Recommendation	Economic Value	Recreation Value	Feasibility	Community Support	Average Score
Tier 1 Recommendations							
1	Guadalupe Mountain Trail Network	Non-motorized trail network and existing motorized road network with connectivity to other areas including the Village of Questa	5	5	5	5	5
2	Largo - Llama Canyons Trail Network	Non-motorized trail network with connectivity to other areas including the Village of Questa	5	5	5	5	5
3	Chevron Mine 1	Motorized and non-motorized trails. Highly developed recreation opportunities such as Challenge courses and primitive lodging.	5	5	5	5	5
4	Bear Canyon and Lion's Den Climbing (combined into "Questa Climbing")	Rock climbing and non-motorized use	4	5	5	5	4.75
5	Red River Corridor through (Combined into "Questa Fishing")	Fishing and other non-motorized river related activities	5	5	3	5	4.5

6	Cebolla Mesa	Motorized trail reroutes and designate non-motorized trail network.	4	5	5	3	4.25
Tier 2 Recommendations							
7	Cabresto Lake	Motorized road maintenance and designate a short non-motorized trail to lake	3	3	4	4	4
8	Questa to Red River Corridor	Non-motorized paved trail between towns	4	5	2	5	4
9	Cebolla to Horsethief Mesa Corridor	Non-motorized connector trail	2	3	4	3	3.5
10	Eagle Rock (North of Hwy)	Non-motorized trail network	5	5	3	1	3.5
11	Horsethief Mesa Area	New trailhead on USFS lands near Hwy 522	2	2	4	5	3.25
12	Pinabete Peak Trailhead	Non-motorized trail and trailhead re-route	2	3	5	2	3
13	Elephant Rock Network	Improvements to trail network and trailheads	2	3	4	3	3
14	Rio Grande Trail Corridor	Section of a proposed linear long-distance trail through New Mexico (North/South)	2	3	1	5	2.75

Detailed Analysis of Tier 1 & Tier 2 Recommendations

The following subsections provide more details for each area and provides ranking/sub-ranking for each criteria in the methodology the resulted in the scores found in the table above.

Guadalupe Mountain Trail and Road Networks

Description of Geography: This area is located west of Questa. There are multiple potential access locations. The most logical include:

- A trailhead just north of the village (5 minutes' drive / 3 miles).
- A second trailhead near the Wild Rivers Recreation (15 minutes / 10 miles).
- An opportunity to develop a trailhead to directly access this location from the village.

The area is managed by the Taos FO BLM. The elevation ranges from 7000-8000 feet. The vegetation is predominantly pinon-juniper. There are opportunities for views of Questa and the Sangre de Cristo/Taos Mountains.

Description of development/nature of recommendation: The BLM Taos Field Office Resource Management Plan (RMP) calls for a trail to be constructed from the Wild Rivers Recreation Area to Questa. This trail would be located along the southern zone of the Guadalupe Mountain RMZ and provide additional connectivity to this area. The Guadalupe Mountain RMZ is open to new trail development. There are already existing non-motorized trails in this area: Las Vistas de Questa is the primary trail, Guadalupe Mountain Trail. Additional non-motorized trails should be added to provide stacked loop opportunities and a range of difficulty for the users.

There are also existing roads open to various sizes of motorized vehicles in this area. These areas should be mapped, named, rated for difficulty and promoted to attract motorized users to the area.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This area is in close proximity to Questa. If a trail connects this area to Questa, there is increased economic value use to users staging in town which results in more time spent in town. Users would likely participate in lodging, restaurants/taphouses, groceries, gas, gift shops, etc

Economic Value: High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): High

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): While some trails already exist in this area, there are more opportunities for easy (green) and intermediate (blue) trails to complete the product mix. This mix will cater to all user types and abilities.

Connectivity to other assets: High connectivity to Wild Rivers recreation Area to the South and a proposed non-motorized trail to the Village of Questa to the East.

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): High by all non-motorized users

Likelihood of destination status: Medium/High

Uniqueness of asset: Medium/high

Scenery: High

Feasibility: High

LUP Compliance: This area is located within the Guadalupe Mountain RMZ (BLM RMP 2012) and the proposal for additional non-motorized trails is in compliance with this Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) designation

Estimated cost: Medium

Estimate time to complete: Medium

Two years

One year or less for NEPA

One year/season for construction

Conflict with other user groups: None identified

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High

How often mentioned in other community proposed plans: High

Largo-Llama Canyons Trail Network

Description of Geography:

This area is located immediately south of Questa on the Carson National Forest (CNF), Questa Ranger District (QRD). The vegetation is mixed forest of pinyon-juniper. There is evidence of old/closed roads in this area. The elevation is 7500 feet, and the terrain is a series of ridges and arroyos coming off the higher peaks to the south in the Columbine-Hondo Wilderness.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

The proposal for this area is to have a stacked loop system open to non-motorized users. This use is in compliance with the current Forest Plan. More specifically this recommendation is in compliance with the designated Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) areas (Roaded Natural and Motorized)

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This location is located very close to the center of Questa. It's also near the Moly Field area which could be used as a staging area / trailhead for use of the trails and events staging (i.e. gravel grinder). Vending is an option here too. This area also provides important value for it's connections to many other existing and recommended recreation assets including: Columbine Hondo Wilderness, Chevron Mine 1, Bear Canyon, Cebolla Mesa and Guadalupe Mountain.

North facing terrain is less ideal for dry slopes/more user days, but the pinon-juniper is dispersed and the slopes will likely dry reasonably well.

Economic Value: High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): High

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult):

The non-motorized trails proposed in this area would provide a high value to the existing product mix of recreation near Questa. The terrain in this area is conducive to easy, medium and difficult trail difficulty.

Connectivity to other assets: High. This area is directly south of Questa providing easy access from the recreation assets to local businesses. This should result in higher spending and economic impact to the community. This area connects to the following other recreation assets:

- Columbine Hondo Wilderness
- Chevron Mine 1
- Cebolla Mesa
- Red River Corridor (i.e. Eagle Rock Lake)

Questa to red River Corridor

Bear Canyon Corridor

Eagle Rock

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): High. The proposed trails would be open to all non-motorized users.

Likelihood of destination status: High

Uniqueness of asset: medium/high

Scenery: High

Feasibility: High

LUP Compliance: This area is classified within the motorized ROS of the Forest Plan for the Carson National Forest (See Forest Plan). Non-motorized trails are an appropriate use within this classification.

Estimated cost: Medium (depends on number of miles)

Estimate time to complete:

2-3 years

1 year for NEPA

1-2 years for construction

Conflict with other user groups: None

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: High

Chevron Mine 1**Description of Geography:**

This area is located just south of town. It is old mine lands that have been transferred to Questa. There is opportunity for recreation here that would otherwise be challenging to have on adjacent public lands. There is a proposal from the community to use these lands for mixed use.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

This area has previously been disturbed and it a good candidate for intensive use types of recreation including: a via ferrata or ropes course, motorized use and access to non-motorized trails in the Largo-Llama canyons area. This area would serve as a hub for various forms of recreation and would connect to nearby recreation assets.

- Activities in this area are unique due to their ownership/management (transfer from Chevron to Questa).
- No NEPA is required to perform actions on these lands.
- Permits to use or guide on these lands may require a permit from Questa. Separate insurance requirements may be needed for recommended activities in this area.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This location is very close to the center of Questa. This area provides an important value for its connections to the Largo-Llama Canyons area.

Economic Value: High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): High

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High

There is also an opportunity to gain direct economic value from recreation assets since this area is owned/managed by the Village of Questa.

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e. opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): High.

This area has opportunity to provide recreation opportunities which are typically more challenging to offer on nearby federal lands due to fewer restrictions from LUP compliance and NEPA requirements.

Connectivity to other assets: High. This area is directly connected to the following other areas:

- Eagle Rock area
- Questa to Red River Trail
- Elephant Rock Trail Network

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): High. The recreation assets in this area would be open to all users, except motorized.

Projected number of additional users: High. This is an opportunity that is unique or does not currently exist near the town

Likelihood of destination status: High

Uniqueness of asset: High

Scenery: Medium

Feasibility: High

LUP Compliance: No federal land use plan. More research is needed to determine if zoning would need to be modified to permit the recommended actions. Also, as a former property owned by the Chevron mining company, the public health assessment may be required to determine the area is safe for the public to visit and perform the recommended activities.

Estimated cost:

Motorized roads/trails: Medium

Non-motorized trails: Medium

Via Ferrata: Medium (A via ferrata is Italian for "Iron Road" and is a common recreation asset in Europe that involves iron rungs bolted into rock that is used to more easily travel up and along cliff walls while tethered to a safety device.

Estimate time to complete:

1-2 years for construction

No environmental analysis needed (state or federal)

Conflict with other user groups: None

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High
How often mentioned in other community proposed plans: Not Applicable

Bear Canyon / Lion's Den / Roadside Distraction Climbing
(*Combined to "Questa Climbing and Via Ferrata")

Description of Geography:

This area is located very near Questa. Aside from Roadside Distraction, this is the nearest climbing area to the center of Questa. The climbing is located in the Questa RD. The terrain is rugged with elevations ranging from 7500 feet to 8500 feet. The rock type is granitic in nature.

The Lion's Den is located just south of Goat Hill campground (USFS). The climbing is characterized as sport climbing on steep granite rock. Approximately 30 routes are already established. The quality of the climbing is very good.

Bear canyon is a larger climbing venue. There are approximately 30 routes already established here. The canyon holds a mix of single pitch sport climbed and long multi-pitch moderate climbing. The quality of the climbing is very good. There is potential for many additional routes estimated in the hundreds to perhaps one thousand.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

The recommendation is to promote continued new route development, especially to offer a diverse product mix of easy and moderate climbs. The multi-pitch climbing is also a unique and valuable asset that should be promoted.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

The area is very near Questa and one of the nearest climbing areas to the center of town. It is likely that visitors will patronize Questa businesses.

Economic Value: High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Medium/High
Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): High. Steep sport climbing (difficult) and long multi pitch traditional climbing (easy to difficult) in the same climbing area is an extremely rare recreation asset.

Connectivity to other assets: Medium. This area connects directly to the follow areas:

- Questa to Red River Corridor
- Largo - Llama Canyon

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): High. This recreation asset is open to climbing and other non-motorized uses.

Projected number of additional users: High

Likelihood of destination status: High

Uniqueness of asset: High

Scenery: High

Feasibility: High

LUP Compliance: High. This area is within the Carson NF Forest Plan as “roaded natural” in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS). The recommendations for this area are in compliance with this designation.

Estimated cost: Low

Miles of trail and water crossings: Low

Hardware for new routes: Low

Estimate time to complete: Low/medium

To designate approach trail and connect to other trail networks:

2 years

1 year NEPA

1 year construction

Conflict with other user groups: None

Resource analysis/protection: Need to consider potential archeology and nesting birds near cliffs

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High

How often mentioned in other community proposed plans: Medium/High

Rio Grande Climbing (*Combined to “Questa Climbing and Via Ferrata”)

Description of Geography:

The Rio Grande Gorge is located 10 miles / 15 minutes west of Questa on the way to Wild Rivers Recreation Area. The gorge is a naturally occurring rift further formed by the erosion from the Rio Grande River leaving an elevation change of 800 feet Basalt lines the walls of the gorge. Vegetation is mixed piñon-juniper with other vegetation species near the river. Elevations range from 7600 feet at the top of the gorge to 6800 feet at the river in the bottom of the gorge.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

The Rio Grande Gorge has miles of basalt cliffs that range in quality to rock climbers. The area of highest quality to climbers is located north of the Wild Rivers Recreation pay location. This area already has a few crags collectively known as the “Wild and Scenic” area: Redtail wall, The Candy Store, Ground Up Wall, Flowing Chai Wall, Deep Water Horizon. Collectively there are currently approximately 50 routes in this area. However, according to local climbers, this area has the potential to offer over 1000 routes. Many of these routes would likely be very high quality. This would result in a national destination climbing area with visitors likely visiting from outside New Mexico.

Access trails would also be used by fishermen, hikers and river boaters to provide for more recreational benefits.

Infrastructure needs:

Coordination is needed with the BLM Taos Field Office (FO) to improve access trails. Improve Bears Crossing. Designate additional access trails near the Red Tail wall area to provide safer access to crags in this area.

Fixed hardware: A local climbing guide proposes funding to begin reroute development. The goal would be to first fund development of easier climbs to allow more people to participate in the activity. Then, harder climbs would be established as more people visit the area to provide a well rounded product mix for climbers.

Coordination with the BLM for approval process set forth in the RMP

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This location is 20 minutes west of Questa. The area is easy to access by vehicle.

Most climbers are likely to camp in either Wild Rivers Recreation Area or other public lands.

Climbers are most likely to spend money on restaurants/taphouses, groceries, gasoline, gift shops and guide services.

Economic Value: Medium/High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): High, hundreds to thousands per year.(this shouldn't be in parenthesis because it is answering the question and is key info.)

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): Approximately 20 minutes.

Identify businesses likely affected:

Business types: High. Restaurants, taphouses, groceries, gas, gifts, guide services. No Lodging

Number of businesses: High, 5-10

Projected economic value to businesses: Medium

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix: There is currently a lack of easy climbs (5.5-5.9) in the Questa regions. This asset would provide more rounded product mix to the climbing in the area. It would also allow for many new climbs that currently do not exist.

Connectivity to other assets: The access or approach trails for climbing crags would likely be connected to other planned recreation assets including: Rio Grande Trail, fishing access, river boating access, potential bridge to cross the Rio Grande and provide non-motorized traffic to west side of the river. This would provide connectivity to a variety of recreation assets including long distance racing events (i.e. gravel grinder).

Used by multiple user types: The recreation assets proposed in this area would be used by climbers, fishermen, river boaters, hikers, and events.

Projected number of additional users: High

Likelihood of destination status: High

Uniqueness of asset: High

Scenery: High

Feasibility: High

Land Use Plan (LUP) Compliance:

Access trails to the climbing areas and river are in compliance with this Resource management Plan (RMP). Most of the east side of the gorge is located within the Guadalupe Mountain Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) which allows for the construction of trails and associated infrastructure.

Per the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Taos Field Office's (blm.gov/office/taos-field-o...) 2012 Taos Resource Management Plan (RMP) (bit.ly/2Kab3HO), "Installation of new rock climbing routes or hardware will require pre-approval by the BLM." Climbers are asked to respect this guidance and not install new bolts or fixed hardware on Taos Field Office BLM land without pre-approval from the BLM. Local outfitters and the state climbing advocacy group NM CRAG (nmcrag.org/) is currently working with the BLM Taos Field Office to establish specific guidance for new route development in the district and they hope to have a formal process in the near future. It is also recommended that these entities work with the Village of Questa to coalesce and urge the BLM to develop a reasonable fixed anchor approval process.

Estimated cost: Low/Medium

Estimate time to complete: Medium. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for new trails and bridge across river.

Conflict with other user groups: None

Resource analysis/protection issues: Cultural sites, raptors, wildlife

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High/medium

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: Low

Red River Corridor through Questa
(*Combined with other fishing recommendations as “Questa Fishing”)

Description of Geography:

This section of the Red River travels on the south side of the village of Questa. It passes many residential areas and two parks managed by the Village of Questa.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

The recommendation is to support river stream bank stabilization and aquatic habitat improvements. This project was already supported by NM Fish and Game and Trout Unlimited. This project would be similar to improvements just upstream on the Red River adjacent to Eagle Rock Lake. These improvements would support increased fishing opportunities. There may also be improved access for other river-based activities such as tubing or rafting. A non-motorized trail parallel to the river would be ideal, but may be problematic due to passage through many parcels of private land. At the least, easements should be pursued for ingress/egress to specific locations along the river in this corridor.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This area is very near the center of Questa.

Barriers include many assessments likely required due to the number of private lands adjacent to the river. This also provides a challenge for user access too.

Project costs are expected to be high.

Economic Value: High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Medium/High. Potential is similar to Eagle Rock Lake. There is potential for improved fishing and tubing/boating.

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High. This project would provide fishing and river related activities closer to town than currently exist.

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult):

Low/Medium. Similar recreation opportunities are found nearby upstream on the Red River and at Eagle Rock Lake.

Connectivity to other assets: High. This corridor provides high direct connectivity to the following other areas:

- Village of Questa (Businesses and local parks)
- Questa to Red River Trail Corridor
- Largo - Llama Canyons
- Guadalupe Mountain

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium. Fishing, boating, short hiking.

Projected number of additional users: Medium

Likelihood of destination status: High (similar to Eagle Rock Lake)

Uniqueness of asset: Medium

Scenery: Medium

Feasibility: Medium

LUP Compliance: No LUP, but likely have to follow state regulations for river habitat improvements. Lots of private land that may require access easements.

Estimated cost: High. River habitat work is typically expensive and requires the use of machines to manipulate the riverbank and habitat features.

Estimate time to complete: Multi-year (3-5 years) fundraising and construction according to state New Mexico Department of Game and Fish staff.

Conflict with other user groups: High. Private landowners.

Resource analysis/protection: Long-term improved water quality health.

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: High. NM Department of Game and Fish

Cebolla Mesa

Description of Geography:

This area has an unofficial trailhead located south of the village of Questa along highway 522 (6 minutes or 5 miles). The area is managed by the USFS (Questa ranger district). The terrain is relatively flat on top, a mesa above the Red River and confluence with the Rio Grande River. The vegetation is mixed open grasslands and pinon juniper.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

GPS existing social trails and designated for non-motorized use

Improve motorized user experience:

Grading roads more often to reduce rutting and rough roads

Reducing redundant roads that go to the same locations

Lack of trees in this area results in additional mitigation measures to keep users on roads including bollards and boulders

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This area is located southwest of Questa. Motorized use is typically UTVs, ATVs and off road vehicles. State highway 522 also provides access to this area. A 5 minute drive from town.

One of the few areas which motorized users can stage from Questa to participate in their activity (other is Cabresto Lake but requires riding along shared vehicle road) An equestrian business is located nearby which will benefit from non-motorized trails here.

The scenery in this area improves as users approach the rim of the Red River and the confluence of the Rio Grande River. Otherwise, it's fairly flat and open grasslands.

This lack of terrain and scenery may make it harder for this area to become an important draw to visitors outside the region or state.

Improved access for hunting and fishing (recent bridge installed near the confluence of the Red River and Rio Grande River)

Economic Value: Medium/High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): High

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): High.

Improvement to the motorized roads would bring additional value to this recreation asset and improve the recreational experience here. This area is currently the nearest motorized road network in proximity to Questa. The non-motorized user created trails in this area show there is a demand for this product.

Connectivity to other assets: High

This area is already accessible to Questa via USFS and County maintained roads. This allows users the ability to more easily visit and spend money at local businesses.

Spatially, this area is directly connected to the following other areas:

- Wild Rivers recreation Area (via new non-motorized bridge)
- Horsethief Mesa (South)
- Largo - Llama Canyons (East)
- Rio Grande Trail Corridor
- Village of Questa (Northeast)

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): High. This area and the proposed recommendations would have recreation assets open to all user types.

Projected number of additional users: High

Likelihood of destination status: Medium

Uniqueness of asset: Medium

Scenery: Low – High, highly dependent on location

Feasibility: High

LUP Compliance: This area is within the motorized recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) zone for the Questa Ranger District, USFS. The proposal for improvements to exciting motorized trails and new non-motorized trails is in conformance with the Forest Plan. Note the Carson National Forest is currently undertaking a Forest Plan Revision which could change this compliance.

Estimated cost: Medium

Estimate time to complete:

2 years

1 year for national Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

1 year for Construction / heavy maintenance

Conflict with other user groups: Medium. There may be conflict with motorized and non-motorized users sharing the same trails. Care should be taken to separate these uses if possible for a more enjoyable experience for all.

Community Support: Medium

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: Medium

How often mentioned in other community proposed plans: Medium

Tier 2 Recommendations:

Cabresto Lake

Description of Geography:

This area is located in the Questa RD. Cabresto Lake is a small water body that provides opportunities for water-based activities. Motorized use is also popular on the approach road to the lake and adjacent road and trail networks. The elevation of the lake is 9255 feet.

There is also a trailhead located next to the lake that provides access to the Latir Peaks Wilderness which offers opportunities for hiking, horse use, and non-motorized winter sports (xc skiing, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing).

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

Improve road via regularly scheduled grading.

Designate an official hiking trail from the parking location to the lake. The length of this trail would be approximately ¼ mile. This trail may be made ABA/ADA accessible to provide higher accessibility to more visitors. Currently there are user

created social trails over rocky terrain. This trail would provide improved access and user experience for all water activities including fishing, boating, and swimming.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

Visitors currently stage from both Questa and Red River while visiting this area. It may be challenging to pull visitor market share from Red River to Questa, but marketing may help a small degree.

Economic Value: Medium

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Medium

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): Medium

Recreation Value: Medium

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): Low/Medium. The proposed recommendations add a short official trail near/to the lake. This trail difficulty is expected to be easy. There are other easy trails in the study area, so it's value to the product mix is only low/medium. The improvements to the road also do not add to the product mix, but rather are needed due to the poor existing conditions of the road to improve the user experience.

Connectivity to other assets: Medium. The area provides important trailhead access to the Latir Peaks Wilderness. While there are other access points to this Wilderness, this is the most common. The recommendations preserve and improve this access so less capable vehicles may access the Lake and trailhead. This area is directly connected to the following areas:

- Elephant Rock trail Network
- Latir Peaks Wilderness

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium/High. The new trail near/to the lake would be open to non-motorized users. The access road would be open to motorized use, as well as non-motorized use.

Projected number of additional users: Medium. The improved road would allow less capable vehicles to access the Lake and trailhead. The new trail to the Lake would likely be popular for visitors seeking an easy hike to a destination, fishermen and boaters.

Likelihood of destination status: Medium

Uniqueness of asset: Medium. The Lake is a unique asset, and the improved access and new trail would likely increase visitation to the site.

Scenery: High

Feasibility: High

LUP Compliance: The recommendations are in compliance with the Forest Plan for the Carson NF as it's listed as roaded natural.

Estimated cost:

- Improved road access: Medium. Regular maintenance required.
- New non-motorized trail: Medium. ABA/ADA accessibility would increase costs.

Estimate time to complete:

- Improved road access: No NEPA required. Available for immediate improvement. Schedule for annual maintenance.
- New non-motorized trail: 1 year for NEPA, 1 month for construction

Conflict with other user groups: Low. None expected or discussed during stakeholder meetings.

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High

How often mentioned in other community proposed plans: Medium/High

Questa to Red River Corridor Trail

Description of Geography:

This corridor, which runs along the Red River and highway 38 is approximately 12.2 miles long. The lands are managed by the USFS, Questa RD and private/Chevron mine 2. Elevations range from 9000 feet in Red River to 7500 feet in Questa.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

This trail was already proposed before this project began. It is included in the Enchanted Circle Trails Association master plan. The trail has high local support. The proposed trail would be non-motorized, multi-modal and crusher fine surface. Stakeholders noted the paving would be cost prohibitive, and a compacted crusher fine service is what is recommended. The trail would need to cross water (rivers and tributaries) many times. The overall cost of the project is estimated as high. This recommended trail would provide important connectivity to many other existing and recommended recreation assets including Questa businesses, Largo-Llama Canyons, Eagle Rock Lake, Eagle Rock area, Questa RD, many USFS campgrounds and trailheads and the businesses of Red River. Most of this trail will cross USFS lands. Chevron has committed to transfer private land ownership in the trail corridor to a local non-profit dedicated for this trail in perpetuity. The trail will be managed as a USFS system trail.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This trail would provide a non-motorized egress to Questa and its businesses. Trail users are likely to be varied to the connectivity to many other recreation assets. Users would likely stage in Questa, campgrounds, or Red River.

Economic Value: Medium/High The expected value of a crusher fine trail is medium/high because it is expected to act as a conduit to connect many other recreation assets along Hwy 38 to Red River including camping and lodging. This trail would help get people camping along the corridor to visit into town and patronize businesses. Some visitors may lodge in Questa and travel up and down the corridor. This project does have a significantly high cost for construction compared to other recreation assets in this report.

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): High

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e. opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): High. Currently, there are no Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)/ Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) accessible trails in the Questa area. This trail also provides an easier outdoor experience.

Connectivity to other assets: High. This trail would connect to many other areas including:

- Village of Questa
- Red River Corridor (i.e. Eagle Lake)
- Bear Canyon
- Chevron Mine 2
- Elephant Rock Trail Network

There would also be important connections to many existing camping opportunities. Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium/High. This trail would be open to non-motorized use. If the trail is paved, it may not be well used by equestrian groups. A parallel natural dirt trail may be an alternative option to improve equestrian and other user experiences.

Projected number of additional users: High. ADA/ABA, Large groups, Families

Likelihood of destination status: High

Uniqueness of asset: High

Scenery: Medium/High. Some road and mine views in the middle sections that may detract from the scenery slightly. This can be mitigated with careful trail corridor/prism placement.

Feasibility: Low/Medium

LUP Compliance: High. Most of the lands for this area are part of the Carson NF or private/Chevron Mine. The trail corridor is in compliance with the Forest Plan since it's proposed in the "roaded natural" Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS).

Estimated cost: High. This project is one of the most expensive in this report due to the length of the trail, materials to construct and number of water crossings that require mitigation. However, many steps have already taken place to prioritize and fund this project including:

- The Enchanted Trails Association was successful in securing a state capital outlay grant for engineering for the river crossings and slope instability section near Red River for FY 2022.
- The Town of Red River has also submitted a proposal to fund third party NEPA compliance through the recent Recreation Trails Program (RTP) call for proposals by the state, and the proposal was ranked #1 by the RTP Office.
- The Carson National Forest identified this trail as a priority and contracted with the National Forest Foundation to facilitate two years of community meetings to initiate planning.

Estimate time to complete: High

5 years

3 years for NEPA

2 years for construction

Conflict with other user groups: None

Resource analysis/protection: Medium. No major resource barriers. Many culverts and bridges needed at creek crossings to mitigate water quality issues.

Community Support: High

- How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High. This project is driven by the collaboration between the Forest, Chevron and the communities of Questa and Red River.
- How often mentioned in community proposed plans: High

Cebolla to Horsethief Mesa Corridor

Description of Geography: This area connects Cebolla Mesa (north) to Horsethief Mesa (south) along and to the east of the Rio Grande River. It is located south of Questa and approximately halfway between Questa and Taos. The elevation is around 7500 feet.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

The recommendation is to develop a non-motorized trail to connect these two areas. The trail would be located east of the Rio Grande River on USFS lands. A short connector trail to the Horsethief Mesa trail network would be required on BLM lands on the south end. This trail priority has been changed to a Tier 1 priority (originally a third/fourth tier) with the energy behind the Rio Grande Trail with the aim to establish Questa as a gateway trail community. The ETA plans to initiate formal action on this segment of trail once BLM Horsethief Trail decision is complete. This corridor also overlaps the area proposed for the Rio Grande Trail corridor and is likely to be part of this larger trail through the state (north/south).

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This proposed trail is near Questa. A few users may access this trail from town; most users would likely drive to a more local trailhead to gain access to this trail.

Economic Value: Low/Medium

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Low/medium

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): Medium

Recreation Value: Medium

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): Low/Medium.

Connectivity to other assets: High. This area directly connects other areas described in this study including:

- Rio Grande Trail Corridor
- Horsethief Mesa
- Cebolla Mesa
- Wild Rivers Recreation Area

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium/High. This proposed trail would be open to non-motorized users. It may or may not provide access to the river for boating and fishing.

Projected number of additional users: Medium.

Likelihood of destination status: Medium

Uniqueness of asset: Medium

Scenery: Medium/High

Feasibility: Medium/High

LUP Compliance: This proposed non-motorized trail would be on USFS lands and is in compliance with the Forest plan (Carson NF) designation as “roaded natural/semi primitive” in the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS). A short connector trail on BLM is also in compliance with the Horsethief Mesa Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)/ Recreation Management Zone (RMZ).

Estimated cost: Medium. Trail construction would be by either hand crew and/or machine built construction. The trailhead at the northern terminus near Cebolla Campground may require improvements to parking and signage.

Estimate time to complete:

- 2 years
- NEPA 1 year
- Construction 1 year

Conflict with other user groups: None

Community Support: Medium

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: Low

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: Medium/High (See ECTA Master plan)

Eagle Rock (North of Hwy)

Description of Geography:

This location is located very near Questa just north of Eagle Rock Lake on the Questa Ranger District. The terrain is relatively steep and the soils may be highly erodible. This should be field verified. If true, construction of trails in this area may have to follow strict design guidelines and incur more costs to build. It may also make this area less suitable to higher intensity and/or higher impact activities.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

Recommend a non-motorized stacked loop trail system. The steep terrain may provide more challenging trail use options not found as easily in other areas. The terrain has many aspects, with most south and west facing which is conducive to fast drying and more user days. (See steep/soil above.)

C. Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This area is very near the center of Questa and has a high value for economic benefit to businesses.

Economic Value: High

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): High

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High. Very near Questa. Just northeast on USFS lands.

Recreation Value: High

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): High. The steep terrain makes difficult trails easier to construct, while allowing for intermediate/easy trails through sidehill contouring and full bench construction. Connectivity to other assets: High. This area connects directly to the following other areas:

- Questa to Red River Trail Corridor
- Village of Questa
- Largo- Llama Canyons
- Bear Canyon
- Chevron Mine 2

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium/High. Trails would be open only to non-motorized users.

Projected number of additional users: High

Likelihood of destination status: High

Uniqueness of asset: High

Scenery: High

Feasibility: Medium

LUP Compliance: this area is on the Questa Ranger District and listed as “roaded natural” in the Forest Plan. The proposed activities are in compliance with this ROS designation in the Forest Plan.

Estimated cost: Medium. Similar to Largo - Llama canyons, but slightly more expensive due to steeper terrain.

Estimate time to complete:

2-3 years

1 year for NEPA

1-2 years for construction

Conflict with other user groups: None

Resource analysis/protection: Medium. Suspected highly erodible soils in this area could be an environmental concern in this area given the steep slopes. The southern and western orientation would allow the soils to dry easily, prevent muddy trails and increase the season of use.

Community Support: Low

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: Low

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: Low

Horsethief Mesa Network

Description of Geography: This area sits on Horsethief Mesa along and to the east of the Rio Grande River. It is located south of Questa and approximately halfway between Questa and Taos. The elevation is around 7500 feet.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

The recommendation is to support collaboration between the USFS Questa RD and BLM Taos FO to design and build an official trailhead on the east side of the network. BLM lands near highway 522 have already been identified as a likely location due to current use patterns of the trail network and ease of access for visitors. Access is through USFS lands, but the trailhead site is on BLM lands.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

While this trail network is a high-quality asset near Questa, most visitors travel from Taos or points south. Questa will likely need other similar recreation assets (i.e. Largo-Llama Canyons or Guadalupe Mountain) closer to the village in order to attract some of the market share. Improvements made to this network alone are unlikely to draw substantial visitors to Questa as they are likely to continue visiting Taos and points south.

Economic Value: Low/Medium

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Low. It is expected most users will still access this trail network from the south (Taos) and may not continue to travel north to Questa. Marketing may help mitigate this to some degree.

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): Medium

Recreation Value: Low/Medium

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): Low. The proposed recommendations would not significantly improve the product mix. Connectivity to other assets: Low. This area directly connects to the following other areas:

- Cebolla to Horsethief Mesa Connector
- Rio Grande River Corridor

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium/High. This recommendation would be open to many users (all except motorized) however, marketing will be needed to inform visitors that Questa is as near to this trailhead as Taos.

Projected number of additional users: Low/Medium

Likelihood of destination status: Low/Medium The recommendation would likely slightly improve the likelihood of the area as a destination since it currently does not have an official trailhead.

Uniqueness of asset: High

Scenery: High

Feasibility: Medium/High

LUP Compliance: The recommended actions would occur on USFS lands designated as “roaded natural” in the Forest plan. The recommended actions are with compliance with the recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) designation.

Estimated cost: Medium

Estimate time to complete: 1.5 years

- 1 year for NEPA
- 6 months for construction

Conflict with other user groups: None

Resource analysis/protection: None

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: Medium/High

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: High

Pinabete Peak Trailhead Area

Description of Geography: This area is located northeast of Questa. There are residential homes surrounding this area on the west and south. It provides access to the Latir Peaks to the east.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

There are illegal motorized trails in this area. The Latir Peaks Wilderness is nearby to the East. The Pinabete peak Trail is a legal USFS trail and provides access to the Wilderness. Current trailhead leaves from a residential area. It is recommended to relocate the trailhead to the south along the Cabresto road to provide improved ease of access for visitors and reduce resource impacts due to user created trails.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group: This area is very near the center of Questa.

Economic Value: Low/Medium

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Low

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): High

Recreation Value: Medium

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): Low. This is due to other similar recreation assets (i.e. trails that access Wilderness) already in the study area. A reroute would likely also not change the difficulty of the trail to the user.

Connectivity to other assets:

- Village of Questa
- Cabresto Lake
- Latir Peaks Wilderness

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Low/Medium. This trailhead/trail would be open to foot and horse traffic only.

Projected number of additional users: Low

Likelihood of destination status: Low

Uniqueness of asset: Low

Scenery: Medium/High

Feasibility: High

LUP Compliance: Relocating this trailhead would be in compliance with the Carson NF Forest Plan designation as “roaded natural” in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) compliance by the USFS would likely be required either as a Categorical Exclusion or Environmental Assessment, and may depend on the length of the reroute, naturalization of user trails and ground disturbance at the new trailhead.

Estimated cost: Medium. The cost to relocate the trail is low due to relatively short length. However, the cost for the new trailhead would be medium to design and construct parking, toilet, and kiosk.

Estimate time to complete:

1 year

6 months for NEPA

6 months for Construction

Conflict with other user groups: Low. None expected or mentioned during stakeholder engagement.

Community Support: Low/Medium

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: Low/Medium

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: Low/Medium

Elephant Rock Network

Description of Geography: This area is located between Questa and Red River on USFS lands. The main trail access points are off Hwy 38 and off Cabresto Canyon Road. The area has steep terrain.

Description of development/nature of recommendation:

There has been recent trail grant funding and rehabilitation performed by USFS staff and crews within the last 2-3 years. Continued maintenance needed for steep and highly erodible soils especially on the northern side of the network. Provides connectivity to Chevron Mine 2 lands recommended trails/roads. Consider adding an additional trailhead along Hwy 38 west of the current location to improve parking and allow direct access via the Elephant Rock Campground (USFS).

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group:

This area is closer to the Red River, but still near Questa. It may be challenging to get users to visit Questa since many already stay in Red River. Marketing, especially access via the Cabresto Road on the north end of the network, may allow some additional visitors to patronize Questa businesses, but not likely to a high degree. There is an opportunity for motorcycle rentals in Questa. Motorcycle rentals are currently not offered within the study area and liability may be a factor or barrier to entry for businesses.

Economic Value: Low/Medium

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Low/Medium. Most visitors will likely continue to use Red River as their hub for this activity.

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): Medium. 10 miles, 12 minutes to the main trailhead behind the Red River water treatment plant. Adding an additional trailhead west along Hwy 38 near Elephant Rock Campground (USFS) would improve proximity to Questa.

Recreation Value: Medium

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult): Low/Medium. The recommendations would not add additional recreation opportunities or improve the range of difficulty on the trail network.

Connectivity to other assets: Medium. This area is directly connected to the following other areas:

- Cabresto Lake
- Questa to Red River Trail Corridor

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium. The trails are open to motorized use. Non-motorized use is allowed but not popular to reduce conflict with users. No other uses are known to occur in this area.

Projected number of additional users: Low/Medium

Likelihood of destination status: Low/Medium (score given to indicate growth from current baseline)

Uniqueness of asset: Medium

Scenery: Medium/High

Feasibility: Medium/High

LUP Compliance: Motorized motorcycle use already occurs in this area and is in compliance with the Carson NF Forest Plan .

Estimated cost: Low/Medium

Relatively high costs for maintenance of trails due to steep and erodible soils with heavy motorized use.

New trailhead and connector trail would be a medium cost relative to other investment options.

Estimate time to complete:

Trail maintenance is likely needed every 1-3 years.

New Trailhead and connector trail would require NEPA for new ground disturbing activities.

- 1 year for NEPA
- 6 months for construction

Conflict with other user groups: None, however the network is not popular with non-motorized users to avoid conflicts.

Resource analysis/protection: Steep slopes and erodible soils should be considered when designing and constructing the new connector trail at the new trailhead to the trail network.

Community Support: Medium

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: Medium

How often mentioned in community proposed plans: Medium

Rio Grande Linear Trail Corridor

Description of Geography: The Rio Grande river is very rugged in this section defined mostly by a deep (800 ft) basalt canyon approximately 25 minutes west of Questa.

Description of development/nature of recommendation: It's recommended to develop a trail in this segment that runs north-south and connects with the larger proposed Rio Grande Trail. The Rio Grande Trail is a proposed trail that would run north-south through the entire state of New Mexico. The trail corridor has been defined, and the BLM completed an EA in 2018 for the incomplete segments. Some

sections of the trail are already completed. Connecting south from Cebolla Mesa through Garapata Canyon is the last to be mapped and formally added to the program of work. This Garapata Canyon section is scheduled post BLM Horsethief Mesa decision.

Proximity to town/accessibility/economic benefit/user group: Low. This corridor is further from town than most other recommended or existing assets in the project area. While it will be a nice asset for connectivity reasons, it is less likely to draw many users to town to spend tourism dollars. This may be mitigated if the trail travels through town compared to miles away along the rims of the Rio Grande Gorge.

Economic Value: Low/medium

Projected additional number of visitors in town(s): Low/medium

Proximity of asset(s) to town(s): Low/medium

Recreation Value: Medium

Value to product mix (i.e opportunity currently does not exist, easy vs difficult):

Medium/High. This trail would likely provide a range of difficulty over its course.

Connectivity to other assets: This linear trail corridor (north to south) provides connectivity to many other nearby areas including:

- Horsethief Mesa
- Cebolla to Horsethief Corridor
- Cebolla Mesa
- Rio Grande Gorge Climbing
- Wild Rivers Recreation Area
- Guadalupe Mountain

Used by multiple user types (i.e. foot, horse, bike, fish, climb, etc): Medium/High. This proposed trail would be open to all non-motorized use.

Projected number of additional users: Medium

Likelihood of destination status: High

Uniqueness of asset: High. This trail is one of the few long-distance trails of its type in the region or in New Mexico

Scenery: High

Feasibility: Low

LUP Compliance: A non-motorized use trail is in compliance with both the Carson National Forest Plan ("roaded natural" recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) designation) and the BLM Taos Field Office Resource Management Plan (RMP) which allows for non-motorized trails in all Special Recreation Management Area (SRMAs) and Recreation Management Zones (RMZs).

Estimated cost: High. The cost of this proposed trail would be high, mostly due to the varied and steep terrain and the length of the trail, approximately 30 miles in the Questa area.

Estimate time to complete: Medium

Conflict with other user groups: High. None expected

Community Support: High

How often mentioned by stakeholders during meetings: High

How often mentioned in other community proposed plans: High