



NATIVE AMERICAN FISH & WILDLIFE SOCIETY
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Native American Fish & Wildlife Society
RESOLUTION

Title: Protection of the Caja del Rio – Ancestral Lands of the Pueblo People

Resolution No. 2021-004

WHEREAS, the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society ("NAFWS") was established in recognition of the importance and respect accorded to fish and wildlife by Native American people; and

WHEREAS, the NAFWS is composed of Indian Tribes, organizations and people as well as federal and state agency representatives forming "a national Native American organization to aid in the development and protection of Native American fish and wildlife resources"; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio is located on 104,349-acres of U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service land in north-central New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio is the ancestral lands of various Pueblo peoples and contains thousands of ancient petroglyphs and significant archaeological sites as well as various Native American sacred sites; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio plateau has been inhabited by Native and Indigenous communities for over 10,000 years; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio is one of the most remarkable landscapes in the American Southwest with cactus forests, birds ranging from burrowing owls to bald eagles, herds of deer and elk and black bears and cougars; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio has been critical to wildlife for thousands of years, which have used the Caja del Rio plateau as habitat, a migratory corridor, breeding grounds and an area of relocation during changing climates; and

WHEREAS: in connecting various mountain ranges and critical wildlife habits, the Caja del Rio acts as a lynchpin of wildlife connectivity and is essential for maintaining wildlife movement throughout the Upper Rio Grande;

WHEREAS: the Caja del Rio has been essential hunting grounds for millenia and to encounter the diverse array of birds, reptiles, and mammals that live and move through the Caja is to have a sacred encounter that speaks to the incredible beauty and biodiversity of this amazing landscape; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio also serves as a critical piece in creating a historical, cultural, educational and eco-tourism corridor connecting to Bandelier National Monument and the adjacent sites of Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument, El Rancho de los Golondrinas and the Santa Fe Botanical Garden's Leonora Curtin Wetland Preserve; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance has listed the Caja del Rio as one of the "most endangered places" in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, there are many threats to the land, water, wildlife and the many cultural and archeological antiquities including petroglyph defacement; vandalism, theft, illegal shooting and poaching; unlawful OHV usage and habitat fragmentation from illegal roads; illegal dumping; unmanaged/unlawful recreation; and recent sales of federal lands by the BLM for other public purposes; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has provided little resources to patrol and protect the Caja del Rio; and

WHEREAS, the area needs permanent protection to ensure the preservation of the ecological, cultural, spiritual and archeological resources of this incredible landscape.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society hereby supports the permanent administrative and federal protection of the Caja del Rio; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society supports any and all actions that will encourage federal agency efforts to consult and directly collaborate with tribes to manage and protect the Caja del Rio and its vital ecological, wildlife, cultural and archaeological resources including sacred sites; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society supports the efforts of the Caja del Rio Coalition to advance these efforts for the protection of the Caja del Rio and the collaboration between federal agencies and tribes to achieve that goal.

Certification

This resolution was enacted by the affirmative vote of the Society membership who attended the National Business Meeting held on October 5, 2021. The vote is ____ voting in favor, ____ voting against and ____ members abstaining.

Dated this 5th day of October, 2021.

Elveda Martinez, Southwest Regional Board Member and Society President

Mike LaVoie, Southeast Regional Board Member and Society Vice-President

Attest:

Mitzi Reed, Southeast Regional Board Member and Society Secretary/Treasurer
Native American Fish and Wildlife Society