

El Valle Sub-area Plan



March 2010. Revised July 2010

Parametrix

El Valle Sub-area Plan

Prepared for

**Residents of El Valle
San Miguel County**

Prepared by

Parametrix
8801 JEFFERSON NE, BLDG B
Albuquerque, NM 87113-2439
T. 505.821.4700 F. 505.821.7131

March 2010

Citation

Parametrix. 2010. El Valle Sub-area Plan.
Prepared by K.Carrie Barkhurst, Sarah Gilstrap,
Mariana Padilla, Nicholas Parker, and William Penner
Albuquerque, New Mexico. March 2010.

Table of Contents

ACRONYMS AND KEY TERMS	V
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1-1
1 Plan Organization.....	1-2
2 Public Participation.....	1-3
Public Meetings.....	1-3
Steering Committee Meeting.....	1-3
Stakeholder Interviews.....	1-4
3 Community Vision and Values	1-4
CHAPTER 2 COMMUNITY PROFILE	2-1
1 Historic, Cultural and Traditional Characteristics.....	2-1
2 Demographics.....	2-3
Population	2-5
Ethnicity	2-7
Household Characteristics	2-8
Employment	2-9
Economic Data.....	2-10
CHAPTER 3 AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY	3-1
1 Agricultural Industry Background	3-1
2 Issues and Concerns	3-2
3 Strategies.....	3-3
CHAPTER 4 LAND USE: EXISTING AND DESIRED	4-1
1 Introduction	4-1
2 Issues and Concerns	4-3
3 El Valle Land Use, Development, and Community Character Policy	4-3
CHAPTER 5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / SUSTAINABLE GROWTH.....	5-1
1 Introduction	5-1

ii Acronyms

2 Issues and Concerns 5-2
3 El Valle Economic Development and Sustainable Growth Policy..... 5-3

CHAPTER 6 NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES 6-1

1 Introduction 6-1
 Natural Resources 6-1
 Soils 6-3
 Water Resources 6-4
 Cultural Resources..... 6-5
2 Issues and Concerns 6-9
3 El Valle Environmental and Natural Resources Policy 6-9
4 El Valle Cultural Resources Policy 6-11
5 El Valle Scenic Resources Policy..... 6-12

CHAPTER 7 HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES..... 7-1

1 Introduction 7-1
2 Housing 7-2
 Housing Issues and Concerns 7-3
3 Transportation 7-3
 Transportation Issues and Concerns 7-4
4 Water and Wastewater..... 7-4
 Water and Wastewater Issues and Concerns 7-5
5 Housing and Infrastructure Policy Modifications to the Comprehensive Plan..... 7-7
 El Valle Housing, Public Facilities and Infrastructure Policy..... 7-7

CHAPTER 8 IMPLEMENTATION 8-1

CHAPTER 9 REFERENCES CITED 9-1

LIST OF EXHIBITS

1-1 Planning Area..... 1-1
1-2 Public Meeting for El Valle Sub-area Plan..... 1-2
1-3 Public Meeting for El Valle Sub-area Plan..... 1-3
1-4 Sena Farm 1-5
2-1 Sena Schoolhouse in 1934 2-1
2-2 Digging new ditch near Villanueva 2-2
2-3 Census Block Groups in El Valle..... 2-4
2-4 Village of San Juan 2-8
2-5 Villanueva General Store 2-9
3-1 AAA Farm, Sena 3-1
3-2 AAA Farms..... 3-2

3-3	Stone Constructed Acequia.....	3-2
3-4	Agricultural Field	3-4
4-1	Residents Harvesting Produce at AAA Farm	4-1
4-2	Existing and Desired Land Use in El Valle	4-2
4-3	El Valle Homes.....	4-3
4-4	San Jose Historic Structure.....	4-5
5-1	La Risa Café	5-1
5-2	Masonry Wall	5-2
5-3	Madison Winery	5-3
5-4	Villanueva State Park.....	5-4
5-5	AAA Farms in Sena.....	5-5
6-1	View of Las Questa de Villanueva y El Cerrito.....	6-1
6-2	Natural Resources in El Valle.....	6-2
6-3	Piñon-Juniper woodland adjacent to farming land.....	6-3
6-4	Arroyo crossing in El Curruco.....	6-4
6-5	Pecos River in Sena.....	6-4
6-6	Capilla located in Sena.....	6-5
6-7	San Miguel del Vado Church.....	6-5
6-8	Cultural Resources in El Valle.....	6-6
6-9	Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Juan.....	6-7
6-10	Acequia Associations in El Valle	6-8
6-11	Old adobe structures in El Cerrito	6-9
6-12	Owners of the AAA Farm in Sena	6-9
6-13	Acequia bordered by riparian vegetation.....	6-10
6-14	Pecos River in Sena.....	6-10
6-15	Torreon located in El Ancon.....	6-11
6-16	Campo santo in El Pueblo.....	6-12
6-17	View of a county road and open vista in El Valle.....	6-12
6-18	El Cerrito area	6-13
7-1	San Miguel del Vado Senior Center	7-1
7-2	San Jose.....	7-2
7-3	El Ancon County Road.....	7-3
7-4	Villanueva Community Well.....	7-4
7-5	Outhouse.....	7-6
7-6	Old Ribera School House.....	7-6
7-8	Baseball field.....	7-7
7-9	Ribera Public Housing.....	7-8
7-10	El Ancon.....	7-8

Acronyms and Key Terms

	B			U
BBER	Bureau of Business and Economic Research		USDA	US Department of Agriculture
	C			
cemeteries	campo santos			
chapel	capilla			
church	iglesia			
County	San Miguel County			
crossing	vado			
	D			
ditch boss	mayor domo			
	F			
F	Fahrenheit			
farmers	parcientes			
FRPP	Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program			
	I			
irrigation ditches	acequias			
	M			
MDWCA	Mutual Domestic Water Conservation Association			
	N			
NERPO	Northeast Regional Planning Organization			
NMOCC	New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission			
NMOCC	NM Organic Commodity Commission			
NMSU	New Mexico State University			
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service			
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places			
	P			
PIP	Public Involvement Plan			
	S			
SARE	Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education			
	T			
the hill or slope	La Cuesta			

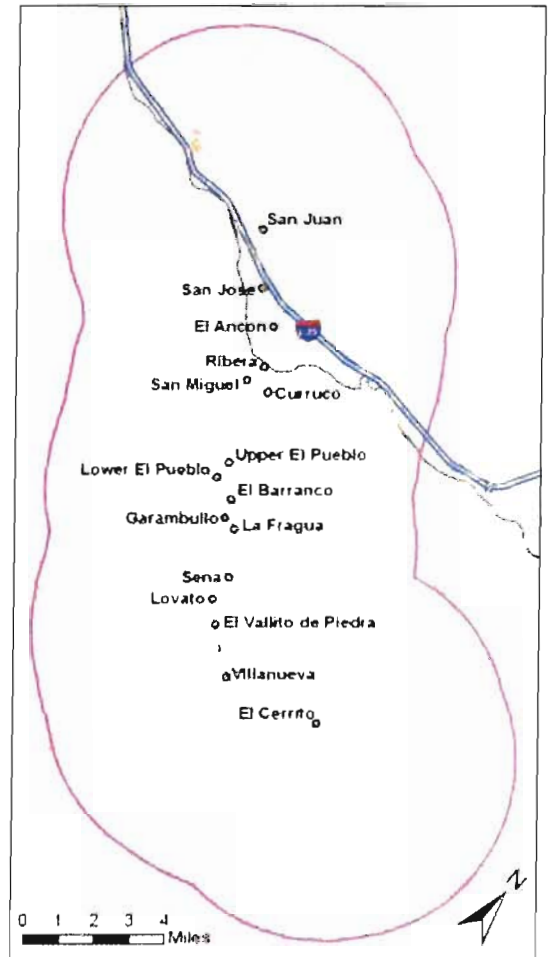
Chapter 1 Introduction

The purpose of the San Miguel County El Valle Sub-area Plan is to address the policies and objectives of the current San Miguel County Comprehensive Plan as it pertains to El Valle area. This plan will be used to supplement the existing County Comprehensive Plan and is meant to define the residents' values, goals, and objectives for their community. This document will establish policy recommendations which will eventually inform San Miguel County (County) ordinances.

The project area is commonly referred to as "El Valle," which is Spanish for "the Valley." The Sub-area Plan for El Valle area includes the communities of San Juan, San Jose, El Ancon, Ribera, San Miguel, Currucó, Upper El Pueblo, Lower El Pueblo, El Barranco, Garambullo, La Fragua, Sena, Lovato, El Vallito de Piedra, Villanueva, and El Cerrito. The study area also encompasses a 5-mile buffer around the communities along the Pecos River.

The study area limits were decided upon as a collaborative effort that took into account the historic boundaries of the San Miguel Del Vado Land Grant, the natural features of the valley, and El Valle community land uses. The prominent land feature of the mesa tabletops to the east and west of the Pecos River Valley were part of the reason for the eastern and western extents of the study limits. Further, El Valle community grazing land use dictated the northern, eastern, western, and southern extent of the study limits except for the area directly east of San Juan, San Jose, Lucero, Ribera, and Currucó that was designated as the I-25 development area.

Exhibit 1-1
Planning Area



1 Plan Organization

El Valle Sub-area Plan is intended to be consistent with the 2004-2014 San Miguel County Comprehensive Plan and is organized in seven main sections; the first chapter provides an overview of the planning process and community vision. The second chapter outlines the community profile including community history, and demographic data and analysis. Agriculture is a deeply rooted practice in the area and residents have expressed an overwhelming desire to emphasize the significance of agriculture in their community. In order to properly address the importance of agriculture in El Valle, it is discussed separately in Chapter 3 and then is addressed as policies under each issue topic. Each section begins with a discussion of the chapter topic and associated community concerns and interests, followed by goals, policies, and strategies. Chapters four through seven reflect the policy issues addressed in the plan and include: Land Use, Economic Development and Sustainable Growth, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Housing and Community Infrastructure.

The approach for this planning effort was designed as an inclusive process that allowed residents to define their values, concerns, needs, and wants for El Valle, so that they may ultimately influence the future of their community as it relates to land use, economic development, natural and cultural resources, and community infrastructure. San Miguel County is utilizing this planning process to seek input from residents so that staff and elected officials may make decisions that support El Valle's desired way of life. There was a great deal of interest and participation on the part of area residents, businesses, community organizations and County staff which enriched the overall planning process.

Work began in June 2009 with the development of the purpose, objectives and associated planning tasks. In addition, a public involvement plan was created which identified the strategies for soliciting stakeholder input. The first public meeting was held on July 21, 2009 in San Miguel del Vado, followed by stakeholder interviews which were conducted over several months. The input gathered from residents was utilized to

Exhibit 1-2
**Public Meeting for El Valle
Sub-area Plan**



El Valle residents identifying areas of interest on planning base maps.

develop the goals, policies and objectives outlined in this planning document. Parametrix staff made every effort to develop policies that closely reflect the views and opinions of residents.

2 Public Participation

At the project initiation, a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed by Parametrix and San Miguel County staff to guide the planning process. The PIP included a description of the approach to soliciting public input throughout the planning process in order to ensure an inclusive process that would meet the unique needs of the community. The PIP also identified community stakeholders and organizations that would be invited to participate in the planning process. It also outlined the number of meetings that would take place, potential locations, as well as the methods for advertising meetings within El Valle. The three main aspects of citizen involvement included public meetings, development of a steering committee, and stakeholder interviews. Each of these is described in more detail below.

Public Meetings

Two public meetings were conducted as part of this planning process. The first meeting was held at the San Miguel del Vado Senior Center in July 2009. This meeting offered an overview of the planning process including its purpose and planning schedule. Parametrix staff also presented the mission, vision and policies outlined in the current County Comprehensive Plan in order to receive input from residents regarding how the County's current policies pertain to El Valle area.

Approximately 50 residents, County staff, elected officials, and project team members were in attendance. The second public meeting will be held on April 13, 2010 at the County Commission Meeting in order to present the draft plan.

Steering Committee Meeting

Participants of the first public meeting were offered the opportunity to become part of the steering committee. The steering committee served as the point of contact for ongoing input throughout the duration of the planning process. The committee included County staff, elected officials and

Exhibit 1-3

Public Meeting for El Valle Sub-area Plan



El Valle residents viewing information regarding the history of the area.

Steering Committee Members

Peter Sena
 Shelly Cohen
 Rudy Villanueva
 Oliver Perea
 Caroline Cobos
 Albert Gonzales
 Carlos Garcia
 Ben Flores
 Melanie Lohmann
 Commissioner David Salazar
 Richard Rivera, Planning and Zoning Commission
 Les Montoya, SMC County Manager
 Alex Tafoya, SMC Planning and Zoning
 Harold Garcia, SMC Public Works

members of the public representing the various villages and interest groups within El Valle. The steering committee met twice during the planning process. The role of the steering committee was to serve as a working group that coordinated closely with Parametrix staff to identify issues, designate future land use, and to assist with the development of policies and potential strategies.

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with residents, businesses, and organizations within El Valle area in order to further gather input on community needs and issues. The interviewees were identified by the County and also included individuals who volunteered at the first public meeting. The interviews were conducted with individual residents as well with groups of people that represented specific interest groups such as local farmers and youth. A total of seven interviews were conducted. Interview questions were designed to gather information about general concerns and issues as well as collect input on perceptions related to how the area has changed. Community members were asked to identify characteristics of life in El Valle today, as well as the aspects of their community that they want to sustain in the future. The interview with area farmers and ranchers focused largely on agriculture and the challenges they face in making it a sustainable practice in El Valle. The interviews were used to gather very detailed information and observations from residents which aren't typically achievable in larger meeting formats.

3 Community Vision and Values

During the first public meeting residents defined their community vision and values which are stated below.

Interviewees

Arturo "Tudy" Gallegos
Gabriel "Chillo" Gallegos
Carlos Garcia
Julia Villanueva
Timoteo Aguilar
Bill Madison
Peter Sena
Mark Carroll
Keely Meagan
Gloria Gonzales
Oliver Perea
Nacasio Romero
Janet Romero
Roberto Rios
Ed Gil de Rubio
Caroline Cobos
Albert Gonzales
Jaime Gonzales
Rosemary Rivera
Esperanza Saiz

Our vision for El Valle is:

- To create a better quality of life for our citizens and to preserve our rural lifestyle and traditional cultures.
- To seek out higher education opportunities and local jobs in order to retain our children in the community.
- To encourage growth that fits our area and is not in conflict with our community values and rural lifestyle.
- To include all stakeholders in the decision-making process.
- To preserve agriculture, this is essential to our culture and heritage.
- To protect our natural resources including water quantity and quality, open landscapes, and biological diversity.

Exhibit 1-4
Sena Farm



Agricultural field located in Sena

Chapter 2 Community Profile

1 Historic, Cultural and Traditional Characteristics

In 1794, settlers from Santa Fe came to the valley of the Pecos River and established the San Miguel del Bado land grant. They started farming and ranching. They founded communities that survived through the rugged life on the Spanish and Mexican frontiers, and the eventual loss of their grant's common lands in the 1800s (Hall 1991).

Today, 16 villages form El Valle, one of the largest agricultural areas in San Miguel County. Certain El Valle towns, such as Villanueva and San Miguel, are well-known and have many residents; others like Curruco or Garambullo remain obscure and are mostly remembered by long-time locals. The shared history of El Valle provides a glimpse of New Mexico at the beginning of the nineteenth century as populations and trade began to expand into new areas. Each village's story exemplifies some of the influences and events that shaped the region and together describe how El Valle evolved into its present incarnation.

San Miguel is the oldest community in the area, first settled in 1794 at a *vado* (crossing) of the Pecos River. The town's importance rose soon after travel began along the Santa Fe Trail. Officials established a customhouse to collect taxes on transported goods, and San Miguel grew in response to the commercial traffic, reaching nearly 2,000 residents in the mid-nineteenth century. Construction of the railroad in 1880 resulted in the county seat and majority of trade moving to Las

Exhibit 2-1
Sena Schoolhouse in 1934



Photo Courtesy of the Benson Latin American Collection of The University of Texas at Austin, George I. Sánchez Papers.

Vegas, eventually diminishing the village's regional significance (Baca 1990).

Villanueva was originally named *La Cuesta* (the hill or slope) for its strategic location that villagers could easily defend from attacks. The southernmost fortified plaza on the Pecos River in the early-to-middle nineteenth century, Villanueva provided a base for later settlement of the downstream communities of El Cerrito and Anton Chico. When the post office was established in 1890, the Villanueva family successfully petitioned to have the village's name changed. Most travelers today know Villanueva from visiting the nearby state park.

At the southernmost limit of the land grant is El Cerrito. This small village, little visited but well-studied, that is located above three tight meanders on the Pecos River. Settlers came to the area in the 1820s and built a fortified adobe plaza and church. Never an extensive settlement, El Cerrito probably had fewer than 30 families at its height. The changes experienced by much of El Valle have largely bypassed El Cerrito, due to its isolation. This quality attracted Richard Nostrand (2003), a cultural geographer from the University of Oklahoma, to write a history of the village documenting the eight generations of Cerriteño life since its founding.

San Juan is the northernmost community in El Valle. It was first settled some time between 1900 and 1910 when people moved from other portions of the land grant. Residents did not practice irrigation agriculture, relying instead on ranching and logging for their livelihoods. Settlement and activity in San Juan was at its high point during the 1930s to 1950s, a pattern similar to other villages that experienced maximum population at this time (Forrest 1998).

Ironically, El Cerrito—one of the smallest of the 16 land-grant villages—now has the best documented history of any local community. El Valle still waits for its complete story to be told, uniting the multiple perspectives and lives that persevered through adversity to form this region.

Exhibit 2-2
Digging new ditch near Villanueva



Works Progress Administration employees digging new irrigation ditch and moving road above Villanueva after the record floods of 1937. Photograph courtesy of New Mexico State University Archives Photographic Collections.

2 Demographics

An analysis of population trends and economic indicators is vital to determine how to plan for future growth and change within San Miguel County. San Miguel County is a rural area in northeastern New Mexico (4,717 square miles with 6.4 persons/square mile) located to the northeast of Santa Fe and southeast of Taos. The population is predominately of Hispanic origin (78 percent) and over half of the population speaks a language other than English at home (60 percent). The population of San Miguel County, based on 2000 U.S. Census data, was estimated to be 30,126 people, and the population of El Valle study area is estimated to be 5,472 people. The 2010 population of San Miguel County, as projected by the University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), is estimated to be 31,827 people.

Since the communities of El Valle are unincorporated, the U.S. Census does not collect information specifically for towns of San Juan, San Jose, El Ancon, Ribera, San Miguel, Curruco, El Pueblo, El Barranco, El Garambullo, La Fragua, Sena, Lovato, Villanueva, El Vallito de Piedra, and El Cerrito. These areas are documented in Census Tracts. Each tract may be broken down further into Block Groups. For this study area, Block Groups were used to interpret demographic data for the plan.

The community of San Juan and the northern extent of the study area are located within the Block Group 4, Census Tract 9576, which is located north of Interstate 25. The communities of San Jose, El Ancon, Ribera, San Miguel, Curruco, Upper El Pueblo, and Lower El Pueblo are located within the Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577. The communities of El Barranco, Garambullo, La Fragua, Sena, Lovato, Villanueva, and El Cerrito are located within Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577. The southeastern extent of the study area, including El Vallito de Piedra and El Cerrito is located within Block Group 4, Census Tract 9575 (see Exhibit 2.3 Census Boundaries in El Valle Study Area).

Demographic Data Sources

The U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States, and is required by the Constitution to take place every 10 years.

The University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), established in 1945, provides demographic and economic information, analysis, and projections to New Mexico businesses, state and local government agencies, and the general public.

The following demographic analysis is separated into four main sections consisting of population, household characteristics, employment and economic data.

Population

The population in San Miguel County saw a 22 percent growth between the years of 1910 and 1940. The Second World War changed the community, and it marked the beginning of a population decline. After a peak population of 27,910 residents in 1940, the population began to decline through the 1970s. By 1990, the population had turned back around and increased by 17 percent since 1980 to 25,743 people.

Table 1. Historic San Miguel County Population Totals from the U.S. Census Bureau

	1990	1980	1970	1960	1950	1940	1930	1920	1910
NM	1,515,069	1,303,303	1,017,055	951,023	681,187	531,818	423,317	360,350	327,301
SMC	25,743	22,751	21,951	23,468	26,512	27,910	23,636	22,867	22,930

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Table prepared by: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, UNM. Accessed at <http://bber.unm.edu/demo/ctyshist.htm>

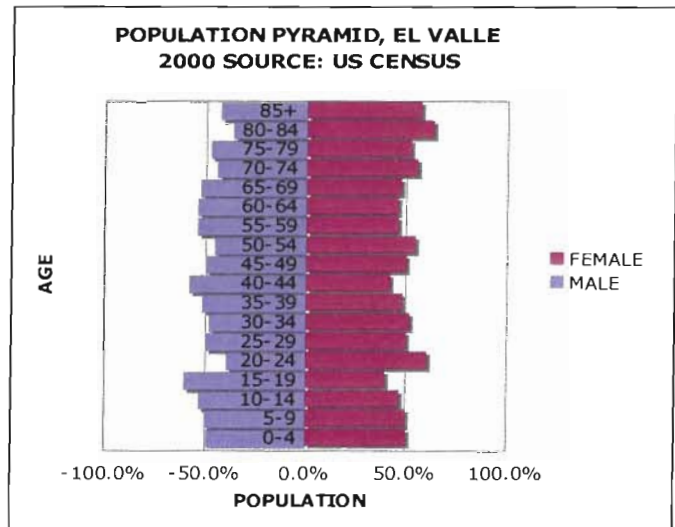
According to 1990 and 2000 Census data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the San Miguel County population grew from 1990 to 2000 by approximately 4,383 individuals to 30,126 residents. The U.S. Census indicates a population decrease between 2000 and 2008 of 1,568 people, or approximately 5 percent of San Miguel County residents. However, BBER has developed population projections that show a small, but steady increase in the population in San Miguel County over the next 25 years. BBER's research is based on other economic and demographic indicators for the state, which are not included in the U.S. Census analysis. According to BBER estimates, between 2000 and 2010, the population in San Miguel County has increased by an estimated 5.6 percent. This compares with an 18.9 percent increase across the State of New Mexico. BBER's population projection estimates over the next 25 years, there will be approximately 40% overall growth in New Mexico and 14 percent population growth in San Miguel County by 2035.

Table 2. Projected Population for San Miguel County from BBER

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
NM	1,819,046	1,969,292	2,162,331	2,356,236	2,540,145	2,707,757	2,864,796	3,018,289
SMC	30,126	30,719	31,827	33,137	34,284	35,067	35,677	36,337

Source: UNM BBER Population Estimates, New Mexico Counties, 2000 – 2008. Accessed at <http://bber.unm.edu/demo/bberpopest.htm>

The population in El Valle Project Study Area is distributed in a stationary population pyramid. A stationary population pyramid has roughly the same number of people in each age group, although it will typically taper down in the older age brackets. This chart shows a slightly higher number of women in the older age groups, which reflects their longer life expectancy. This type of population pyramid is often seen in stable places, with relatively low but constant birth rates. It also reflects a relatively high quality of life, and a lower percentage of out-migration by the youth.



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Table P8

The population in El Valle study area is geographically stable, compared with the County and state. Seventy three percent of residents have lived in the same house for the past five years. Of the 27 percent of residents who did not live in the same house for the past five years, about half moved from elsewhere in San Miguel County and approximately 40 percent moved from elsewhere in New Mexico. Only 3 percent of residents moved to El Valle from another state.

Table 3. Residence in 1995 for the Population 5 Years and Older

	New Mexico	San Miguel County	El Valle Study Area
Same house in 1995	54%	63%	73%
Different house in 1995:	46%	37%	27%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Table P24

Ethnicity

The majority of San Miguel County’s population consists of individuals who are of Hispanic or Latino origin. In the 2000 US Census 78 percent of residents identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Fifty-eight percent of area residents identify themselves as white, and 38 percent of the residents identify as “some other race.” The demographic characteristics for San Miguel County are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4. Project Area Demographic Characteristics

Racial Characteristics	San Miguel County
White	16,938 (56.2%)
Black	236 (0.8%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	163 (0.5%)
American Indian/Alaska Native	549 (1.8%)
Hispanic or Latino*	23,487 (78%)
Some other race	10,910 (36.2%)
Total Population	30,126 (100%)

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census data

**Percentages do not add up to 100% because some individuals may be counted in multiple categories*

**Hispanic or Latino is a separate category of the population because the Hispanic or Latino population has both cultural and racial identifications*

The majority of the population for El Valle communities consists of Hispanics or Latinos with 940 individuals represented in Block Group 4, Census Tract 9575 (87 percent Hispanic), 1,582 individuals represented in Block Group 4, Census Tract 9576 (73 percent Hispanic), 983 individuals in Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577 (80 percent Hispanic), and 873 individuals in Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577 (85 percent Hispanic). The white population makes up the next largest demographic group for the communities with 186 individuals represented in Census Tract 9575, 859 individuals represented in Census Tract 9576, and 350 individuals represented in Census Tract 9577. The percentage of Hispanic individuals in El Valle is over twice the statewide rate for self-identified Hispanics.

Household Characteristics

The majority of the individuals within all of the Census Tracts live in family households including 92 percent for Block Group 4, Census Tract 9575, 85 percent for Block Group 4, Census Tract 9576, 93 percent for Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577, and 87 percent for Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577. The project area housing characteristics for El Valle communities are represented in Table 5. The majority of the family households represented within El Valle are a two-person household; three-person households are the second most represented household.

Approximately a third of the family households for all three Census blocks consist of households with children under 18 years old including 34 percent for Block Group 4, Census Tract 9575, 45 percent for Block Group 4, Census Tract 9576, 37 percent for Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577, and 39 percent for Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577.

Approximately a tenth of the family household within the three census blocks consist of households with populations 65 years old and over including 13 percent for Census Tract 9575 and Census Tract 9576, 10 percent for Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577, and 14 percent for Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577. This relatively high percentage indicates a large number of multi-generational households.

**Exhibit 2-4
Village of San Juan**



A home located in the village of San Juan

Table 5. Project Area Housing Characteristics

Housing Characteristics	Block Group 4, Census Tract 9575	Block Group 4, Census Tract 9576	Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577	Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577
In family households	993	1,832	1,139	899
In nonfamily households	78	316	74	124
Household size with children under 18 yrs old	339	826	432	353
Household size with population 65 yrs and over	134	246	123	128
Household units	461	967	593	458

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3

Employment

In El Valle, 56 percent of males and 49 percent of females are in the work force. This rate is slightly less than both in San Miguel County and in New Mexico as a whole. This indicates a higher proportion of youth and adults over 65, which is also demonstrated in the population pyramid for El Valle. With close to half of the population not in the labor force, El Valle should focus on community service provisions and economic development opportunities to address the large numbers of elders and youth in the community.

In 2000, there were eight percent of males and nine percent of females that were currently unemployed. This rate is marginally higher than the County and State. It has been suggested in individual interviews for this study that there are a number of families who live and work in nearby cities during the week, and return to El Valle on the weekend. In fact, over 55 percent of El Valle residents travel for 30 minutes or more to get to work each day.

**Exhibit 2-5
Villanueva General Store**



The Villanueva General Store is the primary store for food and household goods in the area.

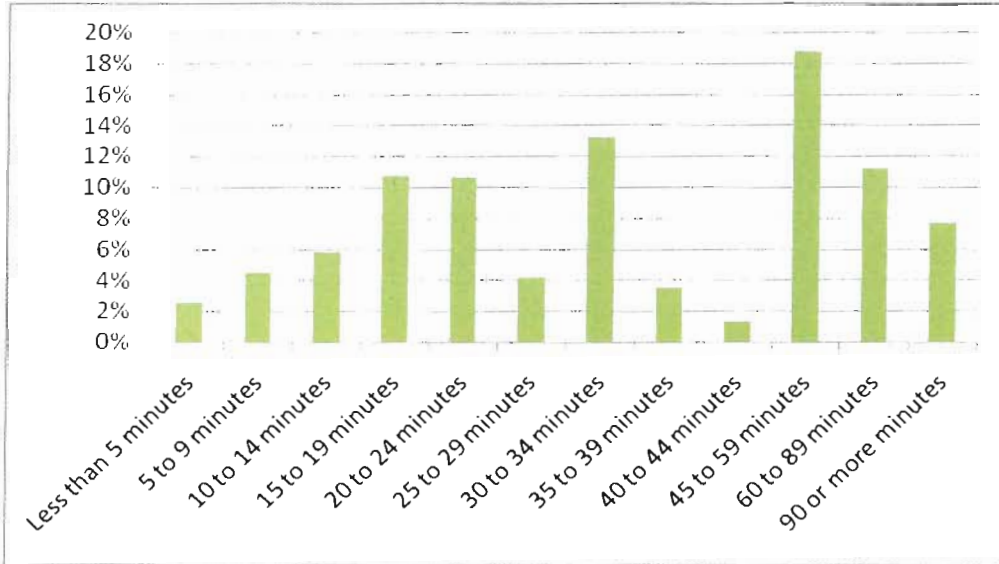
Table 6. Employment Status for the Population 16 Years and Older

	New Mexico	San Miguel County, New Mexico	El Valle Project Study Area
Male:	48%	49%	51%
In labor force:	68%	58%	56%
Employed	93%	91%	92%
Unemployed	7%	9%	8%
Not in labor force	32%	42%	44%
Female:	52%	51%	49%
In labor force:	55%	51%	49%
Employed	93%	92%	91%
Unemployed	7%	8%	9%
Not in labor force	45%	49%	51%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Table P43

Fourteen percent of surveyed residents in El Valle traveled less than 15 minutes to get to work. Forty-six percent of residents traveled between 15 and 44 minutes and 38 percent of residents

traveled over 45 minutes. These data indicate that a high proportion of the work force travel outside of El Valle for employment opportunities.



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Table P31

Economic Data

Incomes in El Valle are substantially lower than both the County and state. Per capita income in New Mexico is \$17,261, while the average in El Valle is only \$12,206. Poverty levels in El Valle are slightly lower than in the County as a whole, but they are higher than the state rate of 18 percent.

Income	San Miguel County	El Valle
Median Household Income	\$26,524	\$24,626
Per Capita Income	\$13,268	\$12,206
Individuals below poverty level	7,110 (24.4%)	\$1,161 (21%)

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3

The employment sectors in El Valle roughly correspond to the proportions seen in the area and the state. There is a higher proportion of individuals in construction and transportation-related trades. There are fewer manufacturing jobs in both El

Valle and San Miguel County relative to the state. The tertiary sector service is under-represented in the study area. El Valle has fewer retail, financing, insurance and real estate jobs than the State rates. One interesting exception to this is the high number of individuals in education and in health and social services. This is likely the result of colleges and hospitals located in the Las Vegas area, which would draw employees from the region.

Table 7. Industry for the Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Older

	New Mexico	San Miguel County, New Mexico	El Valle Study Area
Total	763,116	11,372	1963
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining:	30,529 (4%)	323 (3%)	93 (5%)
Construction	60,602 (8%)	996 (9%)	229 (12%)
Manufacturing	49,728 (7%)	241 (2%)	86 (4%)
Wholesale trade	20,747 (3%)	185 (2%)	43 (2%)
Retail trade	92,766 (12%)	1,490 (13%)	174 (9%)
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	35,710 (5%)	379 (3%)	114 (6%)
Information	18,614 (2%)	144 (1%)	18 (1%)
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing:	41,649 (5%)	458 (4%)	60 (3%)
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services:	71,715 (9%)	690 (6%)	165 (8%)
Educational, health and social services:	165,897 (22%)	3,771 (33%)	540 (28%)
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services:	74,789 (10%)	998 (9%)	177 (9%)
Other services (except public administration)	38,988 (5%)	522 (5%)	112 (6%)
Public administration	61,382 (8%)	1,175 (10%)	152 (8%)

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Table P49

Data on the total percentage of farming individuals and non-farming individuals by the Census was also collected. Out of 5,472 people, 108 were identified as farmers. This is two percent of El Valle population. The Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577 (San Jose, Lucero, El Ancon, Ribera, San Miguel,

Carruco, Upper El Pueblo, and Lower El Pueblo) had the highest number of farming individuals at 52 and the Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577 (El Barranco, Garambullo, Las Fraguas, Sena, Lovato, and Villanueva) had the second highest number of farmers at 29 persons.

Table 8. Project Area Farming and Non-farming Population

Population Characteristics	Block Group 4, Census Tract 9575	Block Group 4, Census Tract 9576	Block Group 1, Census Tract 9577	Block Group 2, Census Tract 9577
Total population	1,079	2,148	1,222	1,023
Rural total population	1,079	2,148	1,222	1,023
Rural population: Farm	20	7	52	29
Rural population: Non-farm	1,059	2,141	1,170	994

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3

Chapter 3 Agricultural Industry

1 Agricultural Industry Background

El Valle consists of traditional farming communities who have a strong connection to the land and to the acequias that nourish the agricultural fields. Historically, El Valle communities grew their own food and raised their own animals, and they were able to harvest enough food to sustain the population. The Pecos River floodplain consists of fertile and prime farmland that can support a high yield of production. The land has the potential to feed all of the communities who live amongst its banks. This is one of the main reasons why this area was settled and continues to support viable farming and ranching communities. However, these traditional agricultural communities now face many threats to their industries, as well as to their land and water due to multiple local, regional, and national factors.

Based on interviews with local farmers and community members, it is clear that making a living through agriculture is difficult everywhere within El Valle. It was also clear from these interviews that all El Valle communities consider their rich agricultural traditions to be their best asset. There is a strong desire to preserve this practice into the future. In order for this to occur, residents indicated that there needs to be changes in how they farm including the types of crops grown, incorporating new technologies, minimizing the associated costs, as well as finding better ways to market their products. Residents are eager to access outside assistance in order to address these challenges.

Exhibit 3-1
AAA Farm, Sena



AAA Farm located in Sena grows a variety of produce including corn, chile, squash, tomatoes, and greens.

The communities of El Valle want to preserve and conserve their agricultural traditions and land as well as maintain a dependable and high-quality water source. The resounding response from the community interviews was that agriculture is one of the most important aspects of El Valle. The communities don't want their agricultural traditions or land to be compromised by irresponsible development, but rather want growth to support agricultural industries and farming opportunities. Some of the most valuable and sought after property for development is agricultural lands. It will take commitment on the part of residents to protect and sustain agriculture in El Valle.

2 Issues and Concerns

Common challenges that farmers experience within El Valle include increased property taxes, high operating costs, expensive equipment, and insufficient labor. Farmers who need to purchase equipment often get into debt, making it difficult to earn a profit. Further, the federal subsidization of industrial agriculture negatively impacts small-scale farmers because it creates an uneven economic playing field. There is also a need for marketing assistance to local farmers in El Valle to assist with growing niche products and finding markets that would provide the best profit. Due to these economic factors, farmers in El Valle are struggling to make a living, have health care, and save for retirement.

Another threat to farming in El Valle deals with the disinterest and lack of involvement of the youth in agriculture. The majority of young people are not interested in farming because they do not see it as a viable occupation. Currently the majority of farmers in El Valle are retirees growing small-scale crops to supplement incomes through selling produce at local farmers markets, or families growing food for their personal consumption.

Competing interests for water is yet another threat to small-scale farming in El Valle. A priority for farmers in this region is to preserve these rights. Landowners are in jeopardy of losing water rights due to a lack of use, and to the transfer of agricultural water rights to new development. There are also acequia water quality

Exhibit 3-2
AAA Farms



Gabriel "Chillo" Gallegos, co-owner of AAA Farms

Exhibit 3-3
Stone Constructed Acequia



Rock constructed acequias located at a farm in Sena

issues such as contamination from roadside reseeding efforts, and groundwater nitrate contamination from septic systems.

3 Strategies

Purchasing collective machinery, forming farming cooperatives, and identifying viable marketing approaches were three strategies to support local agriculture repeated throughout the interview process. Additional recommended strategies include the initiation of pilot programs for growing high-value crops year round, the promotion of small-scale agricultural industries, and the identification of funding assistance. Potential examples of small-scale agricultural industries include the following:

- Year-round crops
- Farming cooperatives
- Community kitchens
- Certified organic production
- Orchards for fruit and nuts
- Vineyards
- Cattle ranching

These small-scale industries will only be successful if funding is identified and secured to provide planning and operational costs to initiate these alternative options. There are several grants and federal programs that assist local, small-scale farmers with the integration of new technologies. For example, the federal Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service provides funding for innovation in farm research and education. Further assistance in identifying funding is available through the New Mexico State University (NMSU) agricultural Extension agents, NMSU agricultural centers such as the Alcalde Agricultural Center, and the New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission (NMOCC).

Strategies

- Farming collectives
- Collaborative marketing
- Growing high-value crops
- Processing produce for value-added-agriculture
- Lengthen growing season with certain crops and greenhouses
- Market to schools and restaurants

NMSU San Miguel County Extension Office

P.O. Box 2170 West Branch
20 Gallegos Road
Las Vegas, NM 87701
Email: Sanmiquel@nmsu.edu

Website:

<http://sanmiquelextensionnmsu.org>

New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission

4001 Indian School NE, Suite 310
Albuquerque, NM 87110
505-841-9067

Email: joan.quinn@state.nm.us

Website: <http://www.nmocc.state.nm.us>

The integration of agricultural education in the local school systems is another important strategy to garner support for agriculture. Santa Fe has several programs underway for agricultural education, primarily supported by the non-profit organization, Farm to Table. Las Vegas City Schools has an agricultural program at Memorial Middle School which is funded by NMSU Extension Services. There are also national case studies that are helpful in identifying how farmers can market produce to schools, how schools can support local agriculture, and how schools can promote agricultural curriculum.

In order for agriculture to be preserved in El Valle it will take a concerted effort on the part of the community to ensure that this traditional practice is not lost. Residents, in partnership with the County and other economic development and farming organizations need to work together to ensure that future development is compatible and supportive of agricultural practices. In addition, residents need to work to protect and preserve their water and land, which is essential for farming.

Agricultural strategies are listed under each of the policy topics outlined in the following chapters.

Exhibit 3-4
Agricultural Field



Agricultural field located in Sena

Chapter 4 Land Use: Existing and Desired

1 Introduction

El Valle residents highly value the rural character of the area, the working landscapes, and the natural environment. They would like to protect the land from unplanned and haphazard development. Many participants in El Valle planning process became involved so that they could better understand the land development process and methods for protecting the communities. The San Miguel County Comprehensive Plan identifies much of El Valle as “environmentally sensitive areas.” This designation includes rivers, floodplains, valleys, arroyo corridors, steep slopes, prominent ridges, rock outcroppings, natural landmarks, vistas, and forests. Associated with these environmental sensitive areas are other natural resources, such as plants, wildlife and birds, which will benefit from land use controls.

Exhibit 4-2 identifies the existing and desired land uses within El Valle as defined by area residents. The land ownership includes a mix of private, state, and federal property. According to residents, the mesas and upland areas are predominately used for cattle grazing. The farming lands are located along the Pecos River valley with development clustered in villages. The desired land use within El Valle is consistent with historic settlement patterns. Residents would like to see future development located within the built-up village areas along State Road 3, as well as within the I-25 corridor west of San Juan. The Ribera Housing Project has been identified as a preferred location for future growth such as affordable housing, commercial development, and community recreational facilities.

Exhibit 4-1
Residents Harvesting Produce at AAA Farm



Local residents picking produce at AAA Farms in Sena including cucumbers and chile.

2 Issues and Concerns

- There is a concern that land development is happening without ensuring an adequate water supply to support the type/volume of development.
- Community members fear the loss of farming, ranching and grazing land uses, and local economies. This is particularly of concern for existing irrigated areas and when land changes ownership. El Valle residents would like to restrict development within irrigated lands in order to preserve the land use, open space, and scenic views.
- Historic settlement in El Valle formed in response to the natural environment and climate. Community members would like to preserve the traditional community layout, and ensure that future development is compatible with existing settlement forms. They would also like to protect the surrounding natural landscape, especially the ridgelines, as undeveloped land.
- El Valle residents would like to protect historical buildings and archaeological sites within their communities.

3 El Valle Land Use, Development, and Community Character Policy

Goal One: Land use regulations in El Valle should continue to protect the area's rural character, natural and cultural resource, as well as agricultural and grazing lands.

- Policy One: The County will establish land use designations that will promote the preservation of the rural lifestyle, open scenic character, cultural and natural resources, and the protection of ridgelines and view sheds.¹
 - Strategy A - The County may develop criteria that addresses the following:
 - Natural vegetation and healthy landscape buffers
 - Limits to land disturbance and development on steep slopes.

Exhibit 4-3
El Valle Homes



Homes located on the upper lands of El Valle

¹This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Land Use, Development and Community Character Policy 1

4-4 Land Use: Existing and Desired

- Signage restrictions according to the county and state sign ordinance.
 - Screens that hide service areas and dumpsters
 - Development that is complementary to the scale and architectural character of surroundings.
 - Appropriate zoning standards for renewable energy generation infrastructure.
- Strategy B – The County may work to develop specific policies and ordinances to protect agricultural and grazing lands, such as zoning code that restricts the extent of development in prime agricultural lands.
- Policy Two: The County will contact officially-designated representatives of land grants with notices of proposed development projects within or adjacent to land grant holdings.²
- Strategy A – The County may provide the San Miguel del Bado Land Grant with notices of proposed development according to the appropriate county ordinances regarding public notification.
- Policy Three: The County may prepare and adopt revised zoning regulations to protect existing neighborhoods from incompatible new development (or re-development) occurring adjacent to housing.³
- Policy Four: The County may adopt development ordinances that restrict development on agricultural and grazing lands.⁴
- Strategy A - The County may exercise its review and authority to protect agricultural and grazing land.⁵
- Strategy B – The County should consider developing subdivision regulations and an Agricultural Protection and Enhancement Ordinance.

²This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Land Use, Development and Community Character Policy 3

³This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Land Use, Development and Community Character Policy 4

⁴This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Land Use, Development and Community Character Policy 6

⁵This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Land Use, Development and Community Character Policy 5

- Strategy C – Residents along with the County should identify specific areas which should remain in permanent open space, including prime farm land and consider establishing conservation easements.

- Policy Five: The County may support and cooperate with nonprofits in the acquisition of conservation easements designed to protect agricultural and range lands, environmentally sensitive lands, and scenic and cultural resources, in an effort to provide visual separation and open space around traditional villages and to protect scenic corridors.⁶
 - Strategy A - The County may further coordinate with US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and New Mexico Land Conservancy organization to keep agricultural/ranch-land; create County farm and ranch land protection program. USDA NRCS Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) provides matching funds to state, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations with existing farm and ranch-land protection programs to purchase conservation easements
 - Strategy B – The County may partner with NMDOT to develop a Scenic Byway designation for State Road 3.

- Policy Six: The County may support the protection of traditional land use settlement patterns and historic structures and areas.
 - Strategy A - El Valle residents should work with local historians and preservationists to identify the unique characteristics of human settlement in the area in order to develop design guidelines for new development.
 - Strategy B - El Valle residents should work with the County to identify and map desirable locations for open space/agricultural land designations and conservation

⁶This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Land Use, Development and Community Character Policy 7

Exhibit 4-4
San Jose Historic Structure



Historic building in San Jose made of adobe and stone.

overlay zoning.

- Strategy C - El Valle residents should partner with local nonprofits to acquire conservation easements and development rights to protect agricultural and range lands.
- Strategy D – El Valle residents and the county should consider imposing deed restrictions on properties in restrict the subdividing of agricultural lands.
- Strategy E – El Valle residents should consider placing properties into family “trusts” which can stipulate the acceptable uses of agricultural lands.

Chapter 5 Economic Development / Sustainable Growth

1 Introduction

In order to provide diverse economic development opportunities to El Valle, education and infrastructure will be vital in building the foundation for such development and growth. El Valle communities would like to see economic development in the areas of agricultural industries, tourism focused on the local ecology and traditional arts, and other complementary industries. Providing educational opportunities for local residents is one way of developing local capacity in these industries. Expansion of a local branch of the Luna Community College and New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas could provide vocational training for El Valle residents. Vocational classes should include entrepreneurial skills, business administration and marketing, computer skills, and agricultural technologies. These skills will help to build local businesses including the agricultural industry in El Valle.

In addition, the implementation of a regionalized agricultural curriculum within the local primary school system would excite young people about agricultural occupations and technologies. Other sustainable development and growth opportunities include opening a library in Ribera, building commercial kitchens for value-added agricultural products, and tapping into the renewable energy industry to benefit the local economy.

Exhibit 5-1
La Risa Café



La Risa Café located on SR 3 in Ribera.

Businesses located in El Valle are generally locally owned and cater to area residents as well as focusing on tourism associated with outdoor recreation, farming and cultural arts. In addition there is a strong presence of economic development initiatives associated with utilizing the natural products found in the area such as sandstone. In fact, El Valle is known for their beautiful masonry work as seen in rock walls, buildings, benches, and sculptures.

The Las Vegas / San Miguel Economic Development Corporation created a Strategic Economic Development plan in conjunction with the City of Las Vegas and San Miguel County. They focused on a three-pronged approach which includes:

- Nurture and expand “existing” businesses
- Encourage new “home-grown” businesses
- Attract new “targeted” businesses

The County is currently working on redeveloping the old Ribera Housing site which has been vacant for many years. Through a series of public meetings, residents have identified desired uses of the site including affordable housing, farmers/artist market, recreational facilities, community kitchen, meeting rooms, as well as studio and office space for local businesses and artists. This project will further support local economic development especially those based in agriculture and traditional arts and trades.

2 Issues and Concerns

- The residents of El Valle would like to see more economic development in the area and favor local, small-scale businesses.
- El Valle residents would like to focus on preserving the agricultural industry and land use, but are open to

El Valle Businesses

- Sunshine Gas Station and Convenience Store
 - La Risa Café
 - Madison Winery
 - Villanueva Convenience Store
 - Tommy's Automotive
 - Jerry's Automotive and Body Shop
 - El Pueblo Bar
 - Pecos River Campground and Convenience Store
-

Exhibit 5-2
Masonry Wall



Masonry wall displaying some of the area's natural resources and artistic talent.

developing other compatible businesses. Building an agricultural industry will complement the area’s vision for the desired land use, resource conservation, and economic development.

- There is a concern that new development will increase taxes for current residents which can lead to gentrification of the area. El Valle residents want to learn from other communities, such as Santa Fe, that have experienced similar trends in order to be proactive and minimize this threat.
- El Valle communities desire to develop local capacity and businesses instead of focusing on attracting outside investors.
- Residents want to develop more job opportunities for youth in order to retain them in the community.

3 El Valle Economic Development and Sustainable Growth Policy

Goal One: El Valle residents want sustainable development and growth that is compatible with existing land uses and that supports the traditional lifestyle and arts of El Valle communities. New businesses and growth should support the local economy and utilize the existing local industries.

- Policy One: Economic development may be approached as a partnership effort with all stakeholders to facilitate opportunities that are consistent with the community’s values and way of life and that offer opportunities for reinvestment in the community.⁷
 - Strategy A – The County and the Las Vegas-San Miguel County Economic Development Corporation have contracted with the University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) to evaluate the County’s strengths and weaknesses related to economic development. As a next step, the County

Exhibit 5-3
Madison Winery



Madison Winery located in Barranco is a successful business that sells wine on-site, to local stores and on the internet.

⁷This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Jobs, Housing and Economic Development Policy 1

will look into having BBER create an Economic Development Plan. A section of the plan should reflect El Valle’s interests as they relate to future economic development strategies and pursuits with residents of El Valle on an advisory group.

- Strategy B – The County may seek out small-scale and appropriate development that provides high-paying jobs, new business opportunities, green space, facilities for special events, and affordable housing for El Valle residents.

- Policy Two: Economic development initiatives that preserve natural and cultural resources, and green space will be prioritized.⁸

- Policy Three: The community may encourage economic development that supports tourism and that is recreational, cultural, historical and/or agricultural in its focus including:⁹
 - Eco-tourism / Agro-tourism
 - Traditional arts
 - Agriculture
 - Businesses that support the tourism industry including RV parks, restaurants, grocery and convenience stores
- Strategy A – The County may consider designating El Valle as an Arts and Culture District in order to protect the historic and cultural integrity as well as access available funding for Arts and Culture planning and marketing efforts.
- Strategy B – Areas such as the Ribera Housing Project will be considered for redevelopment to include farmers markets and community kitchens in an effort to support agricultural based economic development efforts.
- Strategy C - Locally initiated “Farm to Table” and

⁸This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Jobs, Housing and Economic Development Policy 2

⁹This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Jobs, Housing and Economic Development Policy 4

Exhibit 5-4
Villanueva State Park



Villanueva State Park camp grounds along the Pecos River.

“Slow Food” movements can serve to raise awareness about local food production through educational campaigns, festival events, one-on-one outreach and training, and statewide policy-making.

- Policy Four: The County may encourage economic development that utilizes local resources and builds the capacity of El Valle residents while serving the needs of local residents. The County will support local businesses and grass-roots economic initiatives.¹⁰

¹⁰This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Jobs, Housing and Economic Development Policy 3 & 6

- Strategy A – Preferred economic development initiatives are those that utilize locally available resources, are small-scale, have few environmental impacts, and incorporate traditional skills and cultural values. These opportunities should be identified through BBER’s economic analysis.
- Strategy B – The County may investigate renewable energy initiatives, such as solar, geothermal, algae production, and biofuels, as an appropriate economic development strategy as well as promoting a sustainable community infrastructure.

- Policy Five: Agriculture may be sustained as an integral part of El Valle’s place-based economy.

- Strategy A – The local farm economy should be supported by encouraging agriculturally-oriented businesses such as farmers markets and farm tours during growing and harvest seasons.
- Strategy B – Partnerships with New Mexico State University (NMSU) Extension agents, NMSU agriculture centers, and New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission (NMOCC) to build organic high value agricultural niche markets, year round farming, installation of new farming technologies, and affordable green housing should be pursued.
- Strategy C – Grant funding should be pursued in order to

**Exhibit 5-5
AAA Farms in Sena**



AAA Farms harvest ripe produce weekly to sell to El Valle residents that visit the farm and at the farmers market in Las Vegas.

support the integration of agricultural technologies and for the purchase of farming equipment. Example: USDA Sustainable Research and Education (SARE) grant program that provides funding to small-scale farmers for implementing new technologies and agricultural education projects.

- Strategy D – The community should consider forming an agricultural cooperative that would provide local farmers the opportunity to share farm equipment and other farm resources. The cooperative can market their produce and value added products to farmers markets within Las Vegas and Santa Fe, the La Montanita Co-op, West Las Vegas Public Schools, and local/regional restaurants.
 - Example: The La Montanita Co-op Trade Initiative provides pick-up of produce throughout the state, supply and storage services for producers, and distribution of regional products to four NM stores and other retail outlets and co-ops. The Santa Fe Alliance also has a Farm to Restaurant project that brings together member restaurants and regional farmers.

- Policy Six: Develop organized marketing strategies for El Valle area focusing on agriculture and local products.

- Strategy A – The County along with the Las Vegas-San Miguel County Economic Development Corporation can aid the community in establishing a comprehensive marketing campaign that supports agriculture and traditional arts in El Valle.

- Policy Seven: Partnerships with Luna Community College and New Mexico Highlands University as well as with primary and secondary schools should be pursued in order to develop educational programs in the following areas: ¹¹

- Entrepreneurial skills
- Businesses administration and marketing

Agriculture Terms

Value Added Agriculture is the processing of raw materials into a finished product. Adding value to raw agricultural products can be accomplished in a variety of ways including: cleaning and cooling, packaging, processing, distributing, cooking, combining, churning, culturing, grinding, caning, handcrafting, labeling, etc.

High Value Crops are certified organic products including salad greens, mesclun salad greens, arugula, asian greens like mizuna, bok choy, and tat soi, fruit and berries, lavender and other culinary herbs, varieties of tomatoes, goat cheese and milk

¹¹This policy supports SMC 2004 Comprehensive Plan Jobs, Housing and Economic Development Policy 5

- Career-enhancing computer skills
 - Agricultural technologies and niche crops
 - Organic farming
-
- Policy Eight: Higher education opportunities and local jobs within El Valle should be sought in order to retain children in the community
 - Strategy A The community should work with the Las Vegas School Systems to ensure that local schools are well funded and supported.

Chapter 6 Natural and Cultural Resources

1 Introduction

Natural Resources

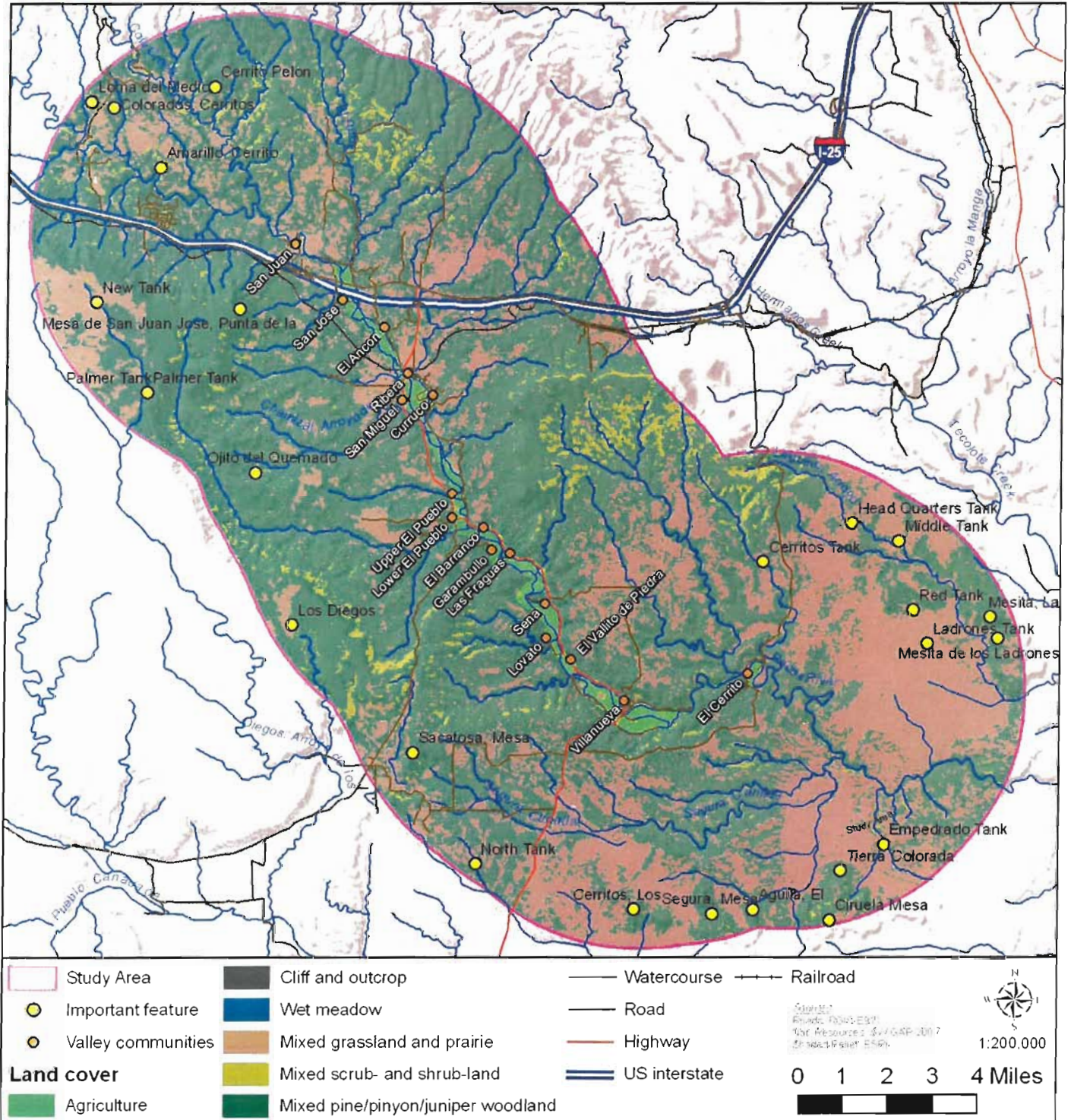
The study area is located in the southwestern portion of San Miguel County approximately 20 miles southwest of Las Vegas. The general area is at the interface between the southern margin of the southern Rocky Mountain physiographic province, the northern extent of the Sacramento Section of the Basin and Range physiographic province, and the southwestern boundary of the Raton Section of the Great Plains physiographic province. High mountain ranges separated by deep structural basins typify the Southern Rocky Mountain physiographic province, whereas the Sacramento Section is characterized by high tablelands with broad, rolling summit plains and widely separated structural basins. The Raton Section contains high piedmont plains, the remains of extensive basalt flows, and deep canyons of the Canadian and Cimarron river systems (Hawley 1986). The typical landcover types that occur in the general area include the Southern Rocky Mountain Piñon-Juniper Woodland, the Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Woodland, and the North American Warm Desert Lower Montane Riparian Woodland and Shrubland (Prior-Magee et al. 2007). The southern Rocky Mountain Piñon-Juniper ecological system occurs on dry mountains and foothills in southern Colorado and in mountains and plateaus of north-central New Mexico. The Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Woodland occurs in the mountains, plateaus, and foothills in the southern Rocky Mountains. These shrublands are most commonly found along

Exhibit 6-1

View of Las Questa de Villanueva y El Cerrito



Exhibit 6-2
Natural Resources in El Valle



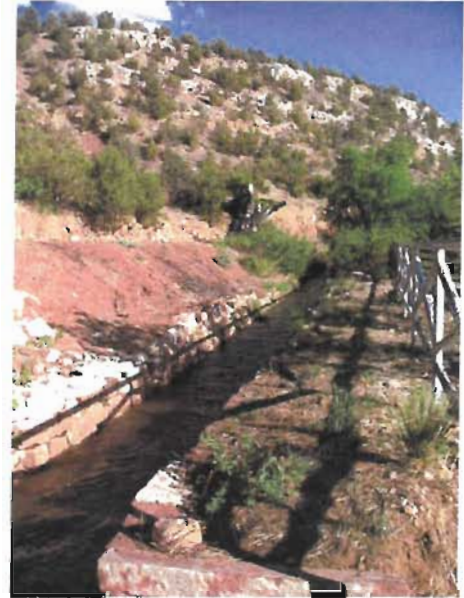
dry foothills, lower mountain slopes, and are often situated above Piñon-Juniper woodlands. The North American Warm Desert Lower Montane Riparian Woodland and Shrubland occurs in mountain canyons and valleys of southern Arizona, New Mexico, and adjacent Mexico and consists of mid- to low-elevation riparian corridors along perennial and seasonally intermittent streams. The vegetation is a mix of riparian woodlands and shrublands. El Valle communities lie within the rich farmlands of the Pecos River watershed and are within 100-year floodplain of the Pecos River. Agriculture, grazing, and the use of irrigated fields for pasturing animals is the dominant land use in the vicinity. The area's setting is generally rural with development clustered within the villages. Areas surrounding the villages are low-density open landscapes.

Soils

The average elevation of the study area is 6,000 feet (ft) to 6,100 ft above mean sea level. Average maximum and minimum temperatures range from a high of 93.4 degrees Fahrenheit (F) to a low of 10.3 degrees F. Mean annual air temperature is 52 degrees F and the frost-free period is 120 to 150 days (Bennett 1986).

A variety of soil types are located within the study limits. Manzano loam, alluvium derived from eroded sandstones and shales, occurs in the floodplain of the Pecos River and is the primary soil type used for agriculture. Soil types situated in undulating terrain on the margins of the Pecos River include those of the Tuloso, Sombordoro, Vibo, and Ribera series. The Tuloso series are shallow, well drained, and moderately permeable soils that formed in alluvium and colluviums derived from sedimentary rocks. These soils are found on hills, benches, and ridges with slopes ranging from 1 to 35 percent. Sombordoro soils are shallow and well drained. They form in material weathered from sandstone and are found on uplands with slopes of 0 to 4 percent. Soils of the Vibo series are deep, well drained, and form in material derived from old mixed alluvium. They are found on alluvial terraces with slopes of 5

Exhibit 6-3
Piñon-Juniper woodland adjacent to farming land



to 15 percent. The Ribera series consist of moderately deep and well drained soils that formed in mixed material deposited by wind and water on upland fans and the side slopes of valleys (USDA 2007).

Water Resources

The Pecos River arises in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of Mora County, New Mexico and then flows south through San Miguel, Guadalupe, De Baca, Chaves, and Eddy Counties before entering Texas. The Pecos Watershed encompasses 1.6 million acres in the State of New Mexico and includes key habitats including large reservoirs, perennial springs and streams (US Bureau of Reclamation 2002). Land use consists of rangeland, irrigated cropland, and pastureland. Soils are moderately deep with moderate to heavy texture.

All of the communities within El Valle are located within the Pecos River watershed and are situated within 0.5 mile to 1 mile from the Pecos River. The tributaries to the Pecos River within the study area include the following: El Rito Creek, Cow Creek, Arroyo Chamizal, Arroyo del Pueblo, Arroyo Begoso, Gonzales Arroyo, Cañon de la Presa, and Cañon de Peña.

Average annual precipitation within the study limits is 17 inches, mostly occurring during summer rains in July and August, and often creating brief and heavy showers. Due to these precipitation patterns, climate, and landscape, the water availability and storage are limited.

The environmentally sensitive areas as identified by the community include:

- Pecos River, tributaries, floodplains and arroyos
- Acequias and ojitos
- Natural landmarks such as the Villanueva State Park
- Open range land
- Prominent mesas, ridges, and vistas

Exhibit 6-4

Arroyo crossing in El Curruco



Exhibit 6-5

Pecos River in Sena



Cultural Resources

El Valle is made up of traditional communities that retain their historic land use pattern. Most families have lived in the area for many generations, which has created deep-rooted familial ties to the area as well as a strong sense of place for residents. Many of the traditional families are represented in the place-names of villages such as Sena, Gonzales Ranch, and Villanueva. The settlement patterns of the villages are similar as they are each oriented with an iglesia (church) or capilla (chapel) at the center. Those villages that contain churches also have campo santos (cemeteries). The Valle also contains the San Miguel del Bado Land Grant, of which many of the families located in El Valle are heirs.

The San Miguel del Vado Grant was established sometime in 1794 when Lorenzo Marquez, on behalf of himself and 51 other heads of households, petitioned Governor Fernando Chacón for a tract of "vacant and unsettled" land along the Rio Pecos "commonly called El Vado (A river crossing in Spanish and sometimes spelled El Bado. The appellation was made because the initial community was built where the old trail to the plains on the east crossed the Pecos River)." Claiming that they had large families and that there was insufficient land and water in Santa Fe to sustain the growing population, they requested the tract "not only for us, . . . but also for everyone in the province not supplied." The boundaries requested were: "on the north, the Rio de la Vaca, from the point called the Rancheria to the Agua Caliente; on the south, the Cañon Blanco; on the east, the Cuesta [questa], with the little hills of Bernal; and on the west, the place commonly called the Guzano.

The Historic Santa Fe Trail crosses the study area following closely along I-25. This feature also plays an important role in the history of the area, as the primary commercial highway between Missouri and Santa Fe between 1821 and 1880.

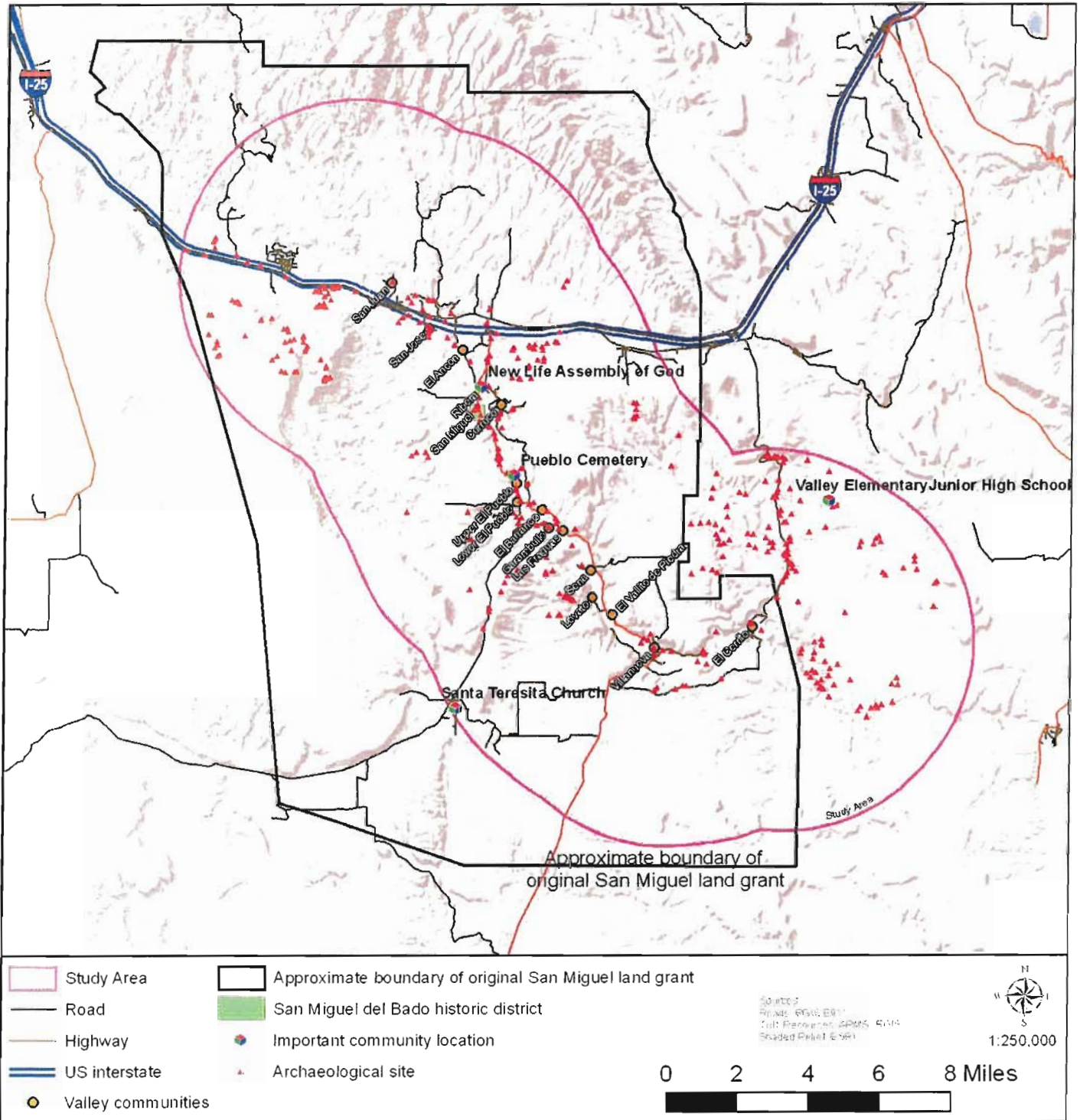
Exhibit 6-6
Capilla located in Sena



Exhibit 6-7
San Miguel del Vado Church



Exhibit 6-8
Cultural Resources in El Valle



Stemming out from the Pecos River includes an intricate network of *acequias* (irrigation ditches) which have been in existence for over 100 years. Acequias are common to New Mexico and the rest of the Southwest, and are part of an important cultural tradition and land-use strategy that extends over two centuries. Today, almost every village contains its own organized acequia district. The acequias are managed by the community under the leadership of a *mayordomo* (ditch boss) with help from the *parcientes* (farmers), all of which maintain and operate the acequia systems. Acequias are considered cultural resources by the state of New Mexico. Many of the acequias in New Mexico are unlined earthen features, which creates a continuity of form and materials from historic times to the present day. As a result, these kinds of cultural resources generally retain their historic integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, feeling, and association. As such, all of New Mexico's acequias are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because of their historical significance to, and continuity with, modern communities. Because of the strong connection to their place, many of the residents view the entire area as having cultural significance

The culturally sensitive areas as identified by the community include:

- Churches: San Miguel del Bado Church and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church
- Capillas located in San Juan, San Jose, Sena, El Pueblo, and El Cerrito
- Historic structures such as the Ribera School House, bridges, and rock walls
- Acequias
- Native American ruins can be found throughout El Valle especially along the mesas
- Moradas

El Valle Acequia Districts

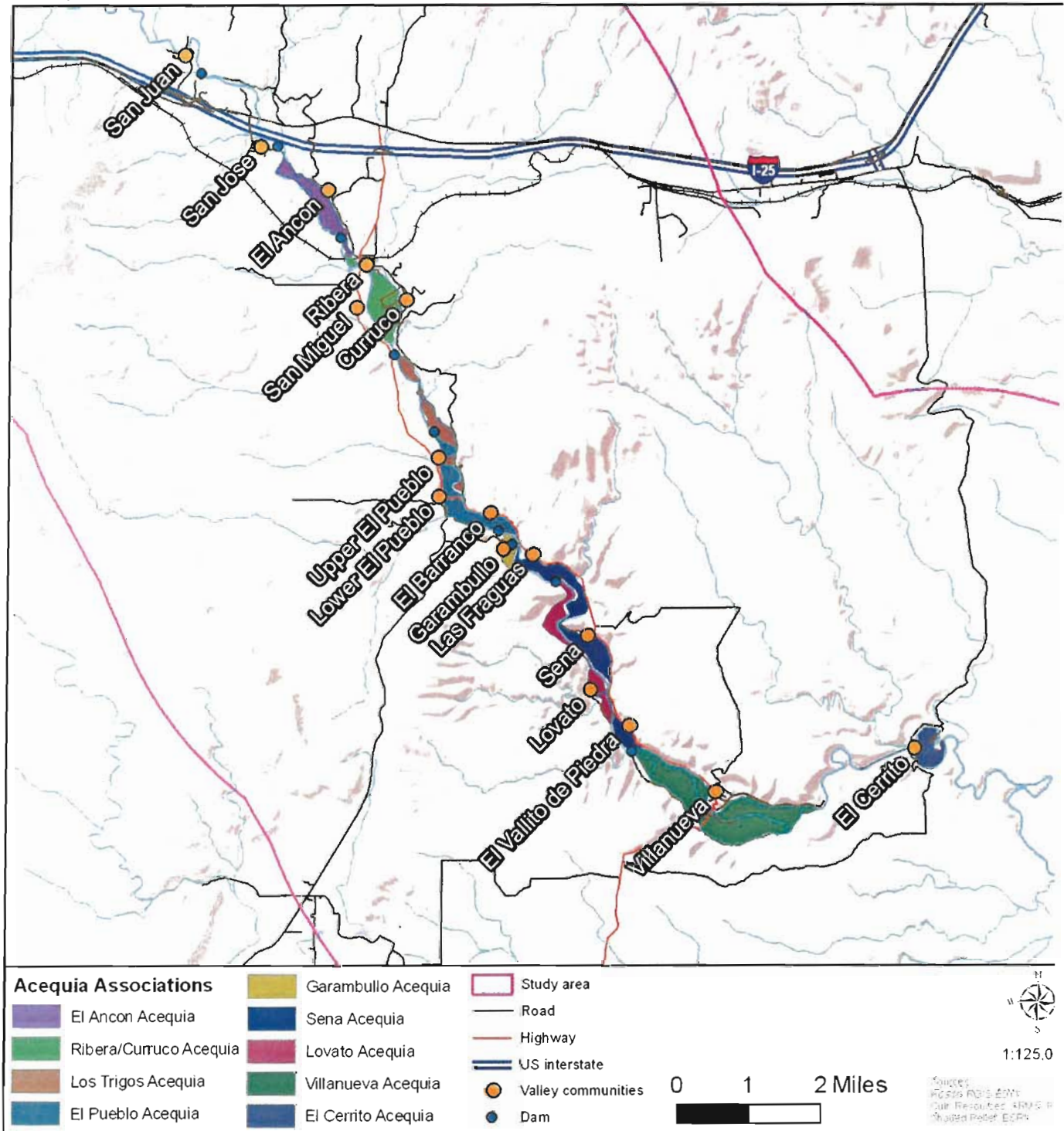
- El Ancon
 - Ribera/Curruco
 - Los Trigas
 - El Pueblo
 - Garambullo
 - Sena
 - Lovato
 - Villanueva
 - El Cerrito
-

Exhibit 6-9

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Juan



Exhibit 6-10
Acequia Associations in El Valle



2 Issues and Concerns

- The major natural resource issues that El Valle communities face are encroachment of development on agricultural, grazing, and pasture lands by developers.
- The community considers water to be one of their most precious resources. The community is concerned about the threat of declining water quality due to faulty septic systems and other potential contaminate sources. Water quantity is also a major concern, as the southwest experiences extended periods of drought.
- Residents value their cultural, natural and scenic resources and seek to protect these resources. The communities want to maintain their rural character while promoting development and land uses that will preserve and conserve their important resources.

3 El Valle Environmental and Natural Resources Policy

Goal One: Water resources within El Valle should be protected and preserved for senior water uses particularly for the preservation of agricultural uses.

- Policy One: Agriculture should be sustained as an integral part of El Valle’s rural lifestyle, traditional and cultural practice, and local economy.
 - Strategy A - The County will support development and economic activities that allow agricultural water rights and uses to remain in-place.
 - Strategy B - The County will help protect existing and senior agricultural water rights from being transferred to new development.
 - Strategy C – The County should educate residents and encourage them to take advantage of preferential tax policies for productive agricultural land in New Mexico State Law (Sec. 7-36-20 NMSA 1978 which

Exhibit 6-11

Old adobe structures in El Cerrito



Exhibit 6-12

Owners of the AAA Farm in Sena



Brothers, Arturo "Tudy" Gallegos and Gabriel "Chillo" Gallegos.

allows for property tax assessments for land in agricultural use to be based on the land's capacity to produce agricultural products NM 6.5.27.1.1).

- Strategy D – The County should work with residents to establish conservation easements on agricultural and grazing lands.
 - Strategy E – The Acequia Associations should partner with the State Engineer's Office to protect senior water rights, spring flows, and in-stream flows.
-
- **Policy Two:** The County will support Acequia Districts in their efforts to maintain acequia systems and to retain water rights for agricultural purposes.
 - Strategy A – The County may assist Acequia Districts in seeking state funding assistance for the maintenance of the acequia system.
 - Strategy B – Acequia districts along with partners, such as the County, will facilitate community educational efforts which bring together technical experts in the area of water rights and water technologies in order to ensure residents are aware of state laws relating to the forfeiture of water rights, water banking, right of first refusal, etc.
 - Strategy C – The County, when possible, will support agriculturally-based economic development activities to ensure that water rights are not forfeited due to a lack of use.

 - **Policy Three:** The County will take an active role in water planning and when possible, will discourage new high water uses.
 - Strategy A – A hydrologic study may be conducted in order to identify water resources so that the County can make better decisions about new development and the availability of water.

Exhibit 6-13

Acequia bordered by riparian vegetation



Willows and Russian Olive trees

Exhibit 6-14

Pecos River in Sena



- Strategy B – The County will continue to work with the City of Las Vegas and the Water Alliance on water planning efforts.
- Strategy C – The County should continue to integrate water and land use policy in order to ensure that decisions consider the impacts on water resources..

Goal Two: The environment and natural resources should be preserved and protected.

- Policy One: Development should not deplete natural resources or degrade the environment.

4 El Valle Cultural Resources Policy

Goal One: The historic and cultural resources of the area should be protected.

- Policy One: The County will work with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to protect the traditional land use settlement patterns (such as the layout of each individual community) and will protect historic structures.
 - Strategy A - The County will work in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the SHPO to continue to identify, preserve, and encourage local residents to re-use historic buildings.

- Policy Two: When possible, the County will monitor new development adjacent to traditional historic villages to ensure it is compatible.
 - Strategy A – The County should establish objective criteria to evaluate the cultural impacts of new development.

Exhibit 6-15

Torreon located in El Ancon



A Torreon is a defensible look-out tower

- Policy Three: The County will encourage new development that provides landscaped or transitional uses that are appropriate when located next to historic moradas, shrines and churches.
 - Strategy A – The County should establish objective criteria and design aesthetics for new development so that it fits with the character of the community.

5 El Valle Scenic Resources Policy

Goal One: The vistas, open landscapes and scenic byways are viewed by the community as treasured resources. To the greatest extent possible, the community wishes to protect these areas from negative impacts or incompatible land uses or development.

- Policy One: The County will seek Scenic Byway designation and state and federal funding assistance for protecting land resources and vistas within the I-25/Railroad Scenic Transportation Corridor and the Pecos River Valley Recreation Area.
 - Strategy A – The County should coordinate with the Northeast Regional Planning Organization (NERPO) and the State Scenic Byway Program in order to apply for national designations of byways.
 - Strategy B – The County should apply for Scenic Byway funding through NERPO in order to make improvements, provide educational signage, and to highlight El Valle as a tourist designation.

Exhibit 6-16

Campo santo in El Pueblo



Rock structures as seen in picture are customary of El Valle architecture.

Exhibit 6-17

View of a county road and open vista in El Valle



- Policy Two: Cell phone towers and wind turbines proposed within any identified scenic corridor, and/or is visible from a scenic river, byway, or district will be restricted in height, color, and location to the extent possible.
 - Strategy A – The County will develop ordinances that protect scenic corridors from impacts to the viewshed and that will encourage placement of these facilities away from populated areas.
 - Strategy B – The County should develop compatibility assessments, such as a viewshed analysis, for evaluating proposed facilities as well as have a system in place for informing the public and receiving input.

Exhibit 6-18
El Cerrito area



View of the Pecos River

- Policy Three: The County should develop and adopt a Night Sky Ordinance, to limit light pollution and protect its ecological tourism potential and the quality of life for local residents.
 - Strategy A – The County should utilize the NM House Bill 362, Night Protection Act as the basis for developing County specific guidelines for the protection of the Night Sky. The County will determine if NM House Bill 362’s exceptions to the Night Sky Ordinance are appropriate for the Valley area. The exceptions including the following:
 - Outdoor lighting fixtures on advertisement signs on interstates and federal primary highways;
 - Outdoor lighting fixtures existing and legally installed prior to effective date of Act;
 - Navigational lighting systems at airports;
 - Outdoor lighting fixtures that are necessary for worker safety at farms, ranches, dairies, feedlots, or industrial, mining, or oil and gas facilities

New Mexico Night Protection Act

The purpose of the Night Sky Protection Act [74-12-1 to 74-12-10 NMSA 1978] is to regulate outdoor night lighting fixtures to preserve and enhance the state's dark sky while promoting safety, conserving energy and preserving the environment for astronomy.

- Policy Four: San Miguel County should adopt land use policy and zoning regulations to strongly protect the scenic corridor while encouraging economic development that supports heritage tourism, agri-tourism and ecological tourism.

Chapter 7 Housing, Infrastructure, and Community Services

1 Introduction

El Valle is made up of a series of unincorporated villages located along the Pecos River. The County, with help from local residents and organizations, provides capital and administrative oversight over much of the community infrastructure including county roads and solid waste, as well as funds capital improvements for area volunteer fire departments. In addition, the County oversees the Section 8 Housing program; however there are no County managed affordable housing projects within El Valle currently. The County has worked with area residents recently to develop conceptual plans for the redevelopment of the Ribera Public Housing site. Preliminary plans include affordable housing, buildings for commercial use, farmers market, community garden and open space.

Area residents maintain and operate the community centers located in San Juan, San Jose, El Pueblo and Villanueva. The facilities are used for community meetings and private gatherings. Utilities, as well as other maintenance and operating costs, are paid by facility user fees. The San Miguel del Vado Senior Center is open during week days and offers meals to seniors and also serves as a gathering place for community meetings. Area churches, chapels, and cemeteries are maintained primarily by the community.

Exhibit 7-1

San Miguel del Vado Senior Center



San Miguel del Vado Senior Center, location along State Road 3

Organizations such as the acequia districts and the Mutual Domestic Water Conservation Association (MDWCA) seek out funding for operations and capital improvements of their related infrastructure; however the County is primarily responsible for seeking out capital improvements for the area.

Residents have indicated that they would like to see community facilities improved and expanded in the area in order to improve overall quality of life as well as increase community pride and cohesion. Existing facilities are in need of repair and updating such as community centers and the senior center. In addition, residents would like to see new facilities such as libraries, parks, a recreation center and rodeo grounds within the area. Residents emphasized that there is a lack of public places for families as well as youth to gather.

**Exhibit 7-2
San Jose**



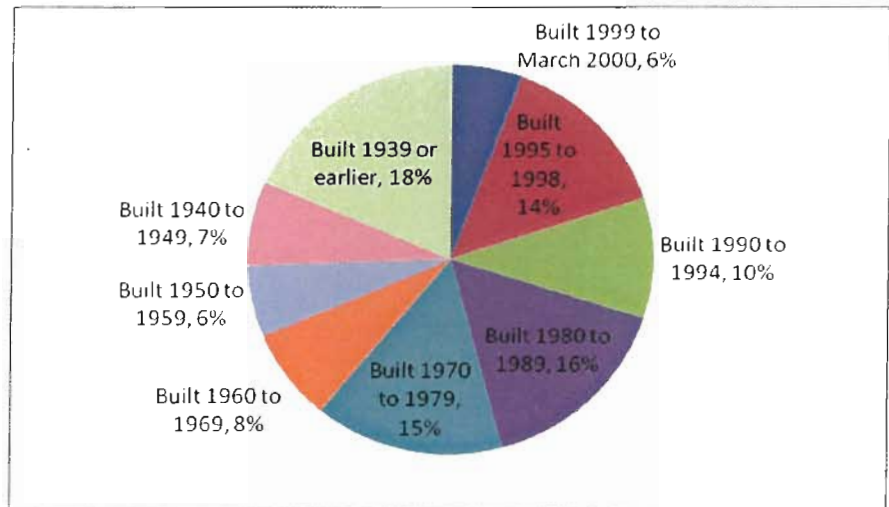
Homes located in San Jose

2 Housing

The housing in El Valle is largely composed of single-family dwellings. According to the US Census Bureau data, over ninety percent of residents in El Valle live in family households. The majority of these family households are two- and three-person households.

80 percent (1,995 of 2,479 housing units) of houses in El Valle are occupied, and of those, 87 percent are owner occupied. The percentage of mobile homes in the study area is 39 percent (976 of 2479 homes) above the county level at 30 percent. Homes in the area are typically older and have been passed down within families. 18 percent of homes were built earlier than 1939

and 21 percent were built between 1949 and 1969. These homes are considered historic by the SHPO. There was a steady



rate of new homes built in El Valle during the 1980's and 90's averaging 14%. In 1999 to 2000, the area saw a significant drop in home construction which was less than half of what was seen in previous decades.

Property values in the area are comparable to other areas in the region. However, there is the threat of increased speculation from outside buyers.

Housing Issues and Concerns

- Residents have indicated that they would like to see more affordable housing options in El Valle especially for younger families.
- Residents are concerned about the threat of new development driving up property values resulting in gentrification of the area.
- Residents are concerned that if new development is not compatible with the character of El Valle, that property values could be lowered.

3 Transportation

The primary mode of transportation in El Valle is vehicular travel. State Road 3 is the major collector for El Valle, connecting Interstates 25 and 40. In the El Valle area, I-25 is also designated as the Santa Fe Trail National Scenic Byway. There are no designated bicycles or pedestrian paths within El Valle. The New Mexico Department of Transportation has recently developed a Park and Ride stop in San Juan at the Pecos River Gas Station and Convenience Store, which serves commuters traveling to Santa Fe. The County maintains all local roads and utilizes a Road Maintenance Plan for identifying and prioritizing roads for improvements and maintenance. All county roads are currently dirt with some roads containing base course. County roads are not typically paved due to the high associated improvement costs.

In 2008, the County completed a Transit Feasibility Study in order to assess public transportation needs. Through the planning process, the County identified the need for public transportation options. This was especially true within rural areas-particularly for those

Gentrification denotes the socio-cultural changes in an area resulting from wealthier people buying housing property in a less prosperous community.^[1] Consequent to gentrification, the average income increases and average family size decreases in the community, which may result in the informal economic eviction of the lower-income residents, because of increased rents, house prices, and property taxes.

Source:
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gentrification>

Exhibit 7-3
El Ancon County Road



County road in El Ancon, view of travelers on horse and car.

commuting to work and school in Santa Fe and Las Vegas. The transit feasibility study helped provide justification for the newly installed NMDOT Park and Ride facilities in San Juan and Rowe areas. The County is interested in initiating public transportation services into El Valle including Park and Ride and Rail Runner.

Transportation Issues and Concerns

- Area youth interviewed indentified roads as the most important infrastructure issue and indicated that roads become impassable during times of inclement weather which makes vehicular travel impossible.
- Residents have indicated that they would like to see public transportation integrated into the area in the future and have identified the Ribera Housing redevelopment project as a potential location for a transit stop especially for commuters traveling into Las Vegas and Santa Fe.

4 Water and Wastewater

The El Valle Water Alliance is the area MDWCA and is the primary provider for drinking water. Areas not served by the MDWCA utilize private wells and water systems. Currently there are no wastewater services in the area, which requires each individual dwelling to contain their own septic system. Cesspools and outhouses are still allowable systems within the state and are being used within some areas of El Valle. Because of this, there is significant concern about water quality. Ed Gil de Rubio, the acting MDWCA administrator for the El Valle Water Alliance, shared his goals, strategies, and ideas as to the issues and challenges that face the MDWCA service areas within the Valle. The designated service areas within the study limits include:

- the North San Ysidro MDWCA
- South San Ysidro MDWCA
- Ilfeld MDWCA
- San Juan MDWCA

Exhibit 7-4

Villanueva Community Well



View of the Villanueva community well

- San Jose MDWCA
- El Ancon MDWCA
- El Corruco MDWCA
- San Miguel del Bado MDWCA
- Sacatosa MDWCA
- Gonzales Ranch MDWCA
- Villanueva MDWCA, and
- El Cerrito MDWCA.

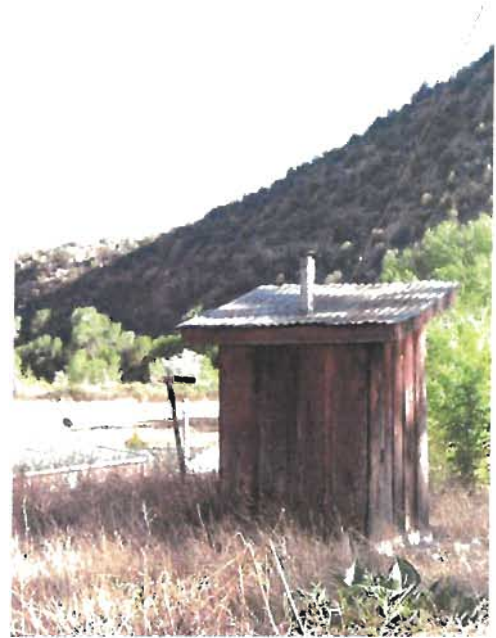
When the opportunity is right, the Water Alliance would like to expand into communities that seek their assistance. This expansion would initially be limited to neighboring areas. Regionalization of water and wastewater systems is a necessary step towards sustainability; however it will take time to make it happen. The Alliance's goal is to try and help each community strategize on an approach to improve their water system and then try to find money to maintain, install, and repair the systems.

The Water Alliance plans to move into addressing wastewater issues in the future. There is very little being done currently regarding wastewater in the area. The Water Alliance would like to approach wastewater on a regional level by establishing long-term solutions. Part of this process is establishing trust with the Valle communities. Testing is vital to understanding the water quality and wastewater issues within the region. The Water Alliance is currently looking to fill an operator position that would provide technical assistance in the field in water quality testing and will help with compliance issues. As well, the Water Alliance is looking to fill a bookkeeper position that can tackle the billing issues and assist with compiling water quality data. The Water Alliance has created 3 positions.

Water and Wastewater Issues and Concerns

- Major issues and concerns for the management of the Water Alliance in El Valle include the lack of capital, the federal pressure on the State of New Mexico to be in compliance, the need for new water board members, convincing communities to pay more money for their water system, water availability and storage, and wastewater.
- There is a lack of funding for maintenance, repair, and capital. There are new state emergency funds for local water systems that can be utilized; however capital monies are scarce given the current economic climate. The Water Alliance will need to look into low cost financing.
- Since the existing systems within El Valle are so old, they are in dire need of repair. There is an extreme need for updated infrastructure. New infrastructure has included the installation of water storage tanks. Future needs include the installation of new wells and pipelines, and repair and maintenance to the existing wells.
- There is federal pressure regarding water and wastewater compliance.
- Because communities have historically paid so little for their water, it is hard to convince them to pay the true market value of their water source.
- There is the need to engage younger generations within El Valle and to encourage participation in area water boards. The current members have served since the 1940's and there is a need for broadening the membership.
- There is very little being done currently regarding wastewater in the area. There is a need to provide wastewater services in order to ensure that ground and surface water is protected from septic contamination especially in areas where faulty septic tanks, cesspools and outhouses exist.

Exhibit 7-5
Outhouse



Outhouse located at a residence in Sena

Exhibit 7-6
Old Ribera School House



The Old Ribera School House is a proposed site for a community library and Luna Community College satellite office.

- Water quality testing needs to occur regularly in order to better monitor water quality.
- There is a need to approach wastewater on a regional level by establishing long term solutions.

5 Housing and Infrastructure Policy Modifications to the Comprehensive Plan

El Valle Housing, Public Facilities and Infrastructure Policy

Goal One: Community centers, libraries and parks should enhance the quality of life and facilitate community interactions and cohesion.

- Policy One: Essential services and infrastructure are desired within El Valle.
 - Strategy A – Methods for expanding affordable and reliable internet service within El Valle should be pursued. This can be done within individual residences but also provided at community centers and public libraries.
 - Strategy B – Opportunities for expanding cellular phone coverage within El Valle should be considered.

- Policy Two: The community supports the creation of public spaces within El Valle and has identified the following facilities as priorities:
 - public library
 - recreation center and swimming pool
 - rodeo grounds
 - parks
 - community kitchen
 - farmers’ market

**Exhibit 7-8
Baseball field**



View of a dirt baseball field located in Curruco

Goal Two: Housing in El Valle should be affordable and meet the needs of residents.

- Policy Three: The community encourages affordable housing initiatives within El Valle.
 - Strategy A – Areas such as the Ribera Housing Project will be considered for redevelopment in an effort to provide affordable housing options for residents.
- Policy Four: Density standards for housing will be considered to ensure new development is carried out in a manner that is in agreement with traditional patterns of centralized villages.

Goal Three: Transportation systems such as roads should be properly maintained and access to public transportation should be developed.

- Policy Five: Public transportation should be considered within El Valle.
 - Strategy A – Contact the NMDOT regarding the expansion of the Park-n-Ride program to include a stop within Ribera.
 - Strategy B – Pursue the expansion of the City of Las Vegas Meadow City Express services into El Valle.
- Policy Six: The County currently has a road maintenance plan which they will continue to utilize for identifying and prioritizing road projects.
 - Strategy A – The County should continue to work with NERPO, NMDOT, and the State Legislature to ensure funding for the maintenance of roads, bridges, and other infrastructure within the community.

Goal Four: Wastewater should be managed in a manner that protects water quality and public health and welfare.

- Policy One: The County will assist when possible the many Water and Sanitation Districts operating within its borders regarding detection and repair of leaks in storage and delivery systems.

Exhibit 7-9
Ribera Public Housing



Old Ribera Public Housing. Location of the proposed San Miguel County redevelopment project.

Exhibit 710
El Ancon



View of a typical county road.

- Strategy A – The County will work with El Valle Water Alliance in the management, maintenance and expansion of local rural water systems.

- Policy Two: The Water Alliance with assistance from the County should approach wastewater on a regional level by establishing long term solutions.

- Policy Three: The County will investigate funding assistance and tax incentives to encourage water conservation and the use of rainwater collection devices and drip irrigation.

- Policy Four: The community seeks to protect water quality and quantity within El Valle.
 - Strategy A – El Valle Water Alliance will seek technical assistance and/or funding from state and federal sources to monitor and reduce contamination from septic tanks in areas where water quality is deteriorating.

- Policy Four: The County encourages new development to acquire water rights and to limit individual domestic wells by providing community water systems.
 - Strategy A – The County will work with mutual domestics within El Valle area to identify funding for the expansion of water and wastewater systems.

Chapter 8 Implementation

Adopt the El Valle Sub-area Plan through resolution and ordinance.

- Continue to develop relationships with neighboring land owners including the National Forest, NM State Lands, Bureau of Land Management and the neighboring communities.
- Engage in regional planning efforts with San Miguel County and the Forest Service to ensure that the goals outlined in the El Valle Sub-area Plan are upheld.
- Select a “Plan Steward” who is responsible for coordinating the plan implementation.
- Develop a community based Working Group to prioritize the goals outlined within the El Valle Sub-area Plan in order to implement strategies.
- Develop and adopt localized zoning ordinances in accordance with the comprehensive plan goals and strategies.
- Consider issuance of bonds or special taxation districts to raise capital, or development impact fees to offset the cost of infrastructure.
- Participate in other ongoing planning efforts, such as the Water Alliance’s *40 Year Water Plan*, the *Las Vegas-San Miguel County Economic Development Study* and the *San Miguel County All Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

Congressman Ben R. Lujan
811 St. Michaels Dr. Suite 104
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
505-984-8950

Senator Jeff Bingaman
119 East Marcy Suite 101
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
505-988-6647

Senator Tom Udall
120 South Federal Place Suite 302
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
505-988-6511

San Miguel County Manager
505-425-9333

San Miguel County Public Works
505-425-3364

El Valle Water Alliance
505-473-9211

NM Acequia Commission
505-454-0735

USFS Santa Fe National Forest
505-438-7840

Villanueva State Park
575-421-2957

Chapter 9 References Cited

Baca, Elmo

1991 Pecos Valley Villages Stand Proud. *New Mexico Magazine* October: 87-98. Santa Fe.

Bennett, I. W.

1986 Climatic Information. In *New Mexico in Maps*, edited by Jerry L. Williams, pp. 32–54. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Forrest, Suzanne

1998 The Preservation of the Village: New Mexico's Hispanic and the New Deal. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Hall, G. Emlen

1991 San Miguel del Bado and the Loss of the Common Lands of New Mexico Community Land Grants. *New Mexico Historical Review* 66:4:413-432.

Hawley, J. W.

1986 Physiographic Provinces. In *New Mexico in Maps*, edited by J.L. Williams, p 26. 2nd edition. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

McClelland, L. J., T. Keller, G. P. Keller, and R. Melnick

1999 National Register Bulletin 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes. National Register Publications, Washington D.C.

Nostrand, Richard L.

2003 El Cerrito: Eight Generations in a Spanish Village. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma.

Prior-Magee, J.S., K.G. Boykin, D.F. Bradford, W.G. Kepner, J.H. Lowry, D.L. Schrupp, K.A. Thomas, and B.C. Thompson, Editors.

Southwest Regional Gap Analysis Project Final Report. U.S. Geological Survey, Gap Analysis Program, Moscow, ID.

US Bureau of Reclamation

2002 Biological assessment of proposed Pecos River 2002 irrigation season operations on the Pecos bluntnose shiner. US Bureau of Reclamation, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

United States Department of Agriculture

2007 Soil Survey of San Miguel County, New Mexico. A product of the National Cooperative Soil Survey, led by the Soil Conservation Service, in cooperation with the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, and the New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station.