



State of New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands

Executive Order No. 2025-001 Moratorium on Mineral Leasing in the Upper Pecos River Watershed

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Public Lands (Commissioner) has broad constitutional authority and statutory jurisdiction over the direction, control, care and disposition of state trust lands, in accordance with the acts of Congress relating thereto and such regulations as may be provided by law (see NM Const., art. XIII, Sec. 2 and NMSA 1978, § 19-1-1);

WHEREAS, the Commissioner is authorized to withhold state trust lands from leasing when she determines that it is in the best interest of the state land trust to do so (see NMSA 1978 §§19-8-33 and 19-10-19; 19.2.100.31 NMAC);

WHEREAS, the Commissioner and the New Mexico State Land Office have a duty to administer state trust lands in a manner that keeps them healthy and productive for existing and future generations;

WHEREAS, the Upper Pecos Watershed is a critical resource for surrounding communities, which rely on clean water for municipal and domestic water supplies, agriculturally and culturally significant acequia systems, and economies dependent on recreational activities, such as fishing, camping, swimming and hiking;

WHEREAS, the Tóqok'ô P'áæwâamu (Greater Pecos Valley region) is the ancestral home of P'æ kilâ (Pueblo of Pecos) and holds deep cultural significance to Indigenous peoples, including the Pueblo of Jemez and the Pueblo of Tesuque, as well as Hispanic communities and Land Grants/Mercedes;

WHEREAS, the Pecos River originates in the Santa Fe National Forest's Pecos Wilderness within the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and flows for over 926 miles before becoming part of the Rio Grande in Texas;

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission designated streams and wetlands within the Upper Pecos Watershed as Outstanding National Resource Waters, the highest level of protection against degradation that can be afforded for a waterbody under the State of New Mexico's Water Quality Standards;

WHEREAS, the Pecos Valley is still recovering from the disastrous effects of previous mining activities at the Tererro and El Molino mine and mill sites, which resulted in toxic runoff in the Pecos River in 1991 that killed more than 90,000 fish, polluted wildlife and community

drinking supplies, and has cost tens of millions of dollars to clean up and has still not been fully remediated;

WHEREAS, the Upper Pecos Watershed remains threatened by potential new mining activities, such as the 2019 acquisition of 20 mining claims and the staking of new mining claims covering 4,300 acres in the Jones Hill area near Tererro by Comexico LLC, a subsidiary of Australian mining company New World Resources Ltd;

WHEREAS, the protection of the Upper Pecos Watershed has received broad community support, including from the Village of Pecos (Resolution No. 2023-006), San Miguel County (Resolution No. 05-09-23), Santa Fe County (Resolution No. 2023-055), the New Mexico Acequia Commission, as wells as many non-governmental organizations and local residents;

WHEREAS, the New Mexico congressional delegation introduced the Pecos Watershed Protection Act in 2023 to permanently protect portions of the Upper Pecos Watershed, which has also received the support of the Governor;

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2024, the U.S. Department of Interior initiated a process to propose the withdrawal of approximately 165,000 acres of U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands from new mining claims and mining leases for a period of 20 years;

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2025, the President issued Executive Order 14154 to advance mineral development on federal lands and consider reversing proposed and existing mineral withdrawals;

WHEREAS, mineral development is inconsistent with the sensitive nature of the Upper Pecos Watershed and the withdrawal of state trust lands from mineral development would help safeguard the water and lands that sustain agriculture, outdoor recreational activities, clean drinking water and fish and wildlife, while also providing the federal government time to consider appropriate administrative and legislative designations to protect the broader landscape;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Stephanie Garcia Richard, Commissioner of Public Lands, do hereby order and direct that the state trust lands described in Appendixes A and B shall be withheld from mineral leasing until December 31, 2045, unless the Commissioner determines that the withdrawal shall be extended;

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the withdrawal from leasing ordered herein shall be recorded in the State Land Office tract books by means of a land use restriction; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that nothing shall restrict the State Land Office from reissuing leases or rights of way already in effect as of this date, or from issuing new permits, rights of way or leases for purposes other than mineral development.

SIGNED THIS 12 DAY OF March 2025.

STEPHANIE GARCIA RICHARD
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

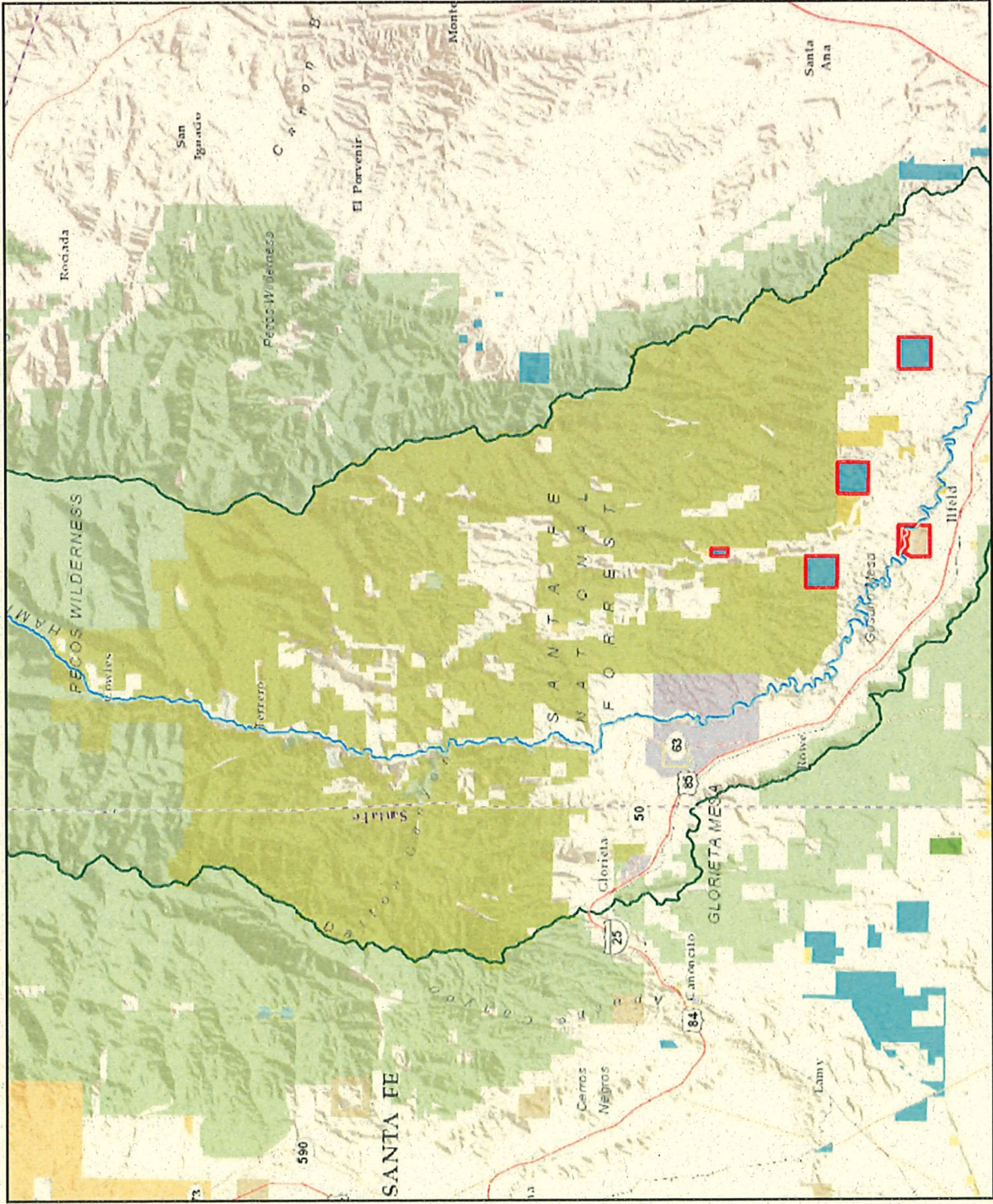
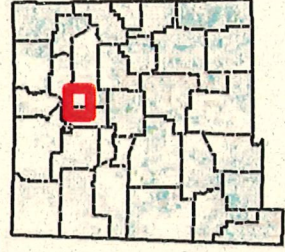


Appendix A: State Trust Land Within Pecos Watershed Mineral Withdrawal



Stephanie Garcia Richard
Commissioner of Public Lands
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- Pecos River Subwatershed Boundary
- Proposed Federal Withdrawal Area
- State Trust Lands Withdrawn from Mineral Leasing**
 - Mineral Estate
 - Surface Estate
 - Both
- Other Surface
- Bureau of Land
- Department of
- USDA Forest
- Tribal
- National Park
- State Department of Game and Fish
- State



0 1.75 3.5 7 Miles

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Appendix B: State Trust Land Within Pecos Watershed Mineral Withdrawal

Township Range Section Aliquot						Parcel Acreage
Mineral Estate						
		14N	13E	16	NESE	40
		14N	13E	16	NESW	40
		14N	13E	16	NWSE	40
		14N	13E	16	NWSW	40
		14N	13E	16	SESE	40
		14N	13E	16	SESW	40
		14N	13E	16	SWSE	40
		14N	13E	16	SWSW	40
		14N	13E	16	1	37.92
		14N	13E	16	2	28.88
		14N	13E	16	3	26.29
		14N	13E	16	4	40.06
		14N	13E	16	5	35.79
		14N	13E	16	6	34.61
		14N	13E	16	7	37.21
					Total Acres:	560.76
Both Estates						
		14N	13E	2	NE4SE4	40
		14N	13E	2	NE4SW4	40
		14N	13E	2	NW4SE4	40
		14N	13E	2	NW4SW4	40
		14N	13E	2	SE4NE4	40
		14N	13E	2	SE4NW4	40
		14N	13E	2	SE4SE4	40
		14N	13E	2	SE4SW4	40
		14N	13E	2	SW4NE4	40
		14N	13E	2	SW4NW4	40
		14N	13E	2	SW4SE4	40
		14N	13E	2	SW4SW4	40
		14N	13E	2	1	38.19
		14N	13E	2	2	38.05
		14N	13E	2	3	37.91
		14N	13E	2	4	37.77
		14N	14E	16	NE4NE4	40
		14N	14E	16	NE4NW4	40
		14N	14E	16	NE4SE4	40
		14N	14E	16	NE4SW4	40
		14N	14E	16	NW4NE4	40
		14N	14E	16	NW4NW4	40
		14N	14E	16	NW4SE4	40
		14N	14E	16	NW4SW4	40
		14N	14E	16	SE4NE4	40
		14N	14E	16	SE4NW4	40
		14N	14E	16	SE4SE4	40
		14N	14E	16	SE4SW4	40
		14N	14E	16	SW4NE4	40
		14N	14E	16	SW4NW4	40
		14N	14E	16	SW4SE4	40

		14N	14E	16	SW4SW4	40
		15N	13E	16	NW4NW4	40
		15N	13E	16	SW4NW4	40
		15N	13E	32	NE4NE4	40
		15N	13E	32	NE4NW4	40
		15N	13E	32	NE4SE4	40
		15N	13E	32	NE4SW4	40
		15N	13E	32	NW4NE4	40
		15N	13E	32	NW4NW4	40
		15N	13E	32	NW4SE4	40
		15N	13E	32	NW4SW4	40
		15N	13E	32	SE4NE4	40
		15N	13E	32	SE4NW4	40
		15N	13E	32	SE4SE4	40
		15N	13E	32	SE4SW4	40
		15N	13E	32	SW4NE4	40
		15N	13E	32	SW4NW4	40
		15N	13E	32	SW4SE4	40
		15N	13E	32	SW4SW4	40
					Total Acres:	1,991.92