

*New Mexico*

*Stronger Economics Together*

Strategies for Building New Economic Opportunities

**South Central Mountain Economic Development Association**



**Economic  
Development  
Plan**

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## Stronger Economies Together Initiative

Launched in 2009 by USDA Rural Development in collaboration with the nation's Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDC) and their land-grant university partners. The purpose of Stronger Economies Together (SET) is to strengthen the capacity of communities in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of their region. Important elements of the Stronger Economies Together program will build collaboration between communities in a region, provides economic analyses that is tailored to help capture the region's current or emerging clusters and comparative economic advantages and is supported by technical assistance provided by land-grant university extension systems to the regions over a period of several months including the SET training.

## Executive Summary

The SCMEDA Regional Economic Development Plan is the blueprint for early 21st century economic development in the southcentral mountain/high plains region of New Mexico. There is a growing awareness that the plan's underlying concepts of collaboration and cooperation, of emerging public/private partnerships, of economic transformation across this two county/mountain reservation region is the new, and perhaps, the only way in which increasingly daunting rural economic challenges can be addressed. Considerable momentum toward this has already taken place over the past couple of years in the region, between several entities and the Mescalero Apache Tribe and among Southeast NM Economic Development District [SENMCOG] members. Increased momentum in this direction is now expected as a result of the SET process.

The Southcentral Mountain Economic Development Association has submitted the SET V application on behalf of the Mescalero Apache Tribe, the rural communities of Ruidoso Downs and Ruidoso and Carrizozo Works Inc., a 501©(3) non-profit in Carrizozo, engaged in economic and community development. The Otero County communities of Cloudcroft and Alamogordo, as well as the Otero County Economic Development Council Inc., have also been steadily involved in the development of the SCMEDA SET plan. The final plan is a collaborative effort between the USDA Rural Development state and national offices, the New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service [NMSU CES] and the above named partners.

The SCMEDA SET V application is the result of nearly 300 business, civic and community leaders and other involved citizens meeting monthly between October 26, 2015 and October 24, 2016, primarily at the Mescalero Apache Tribe's Inn of the Mountain Gods, and less frequently at other smaller municipal meeting venues. Participants from across Otero County, the Mescalero Apache Nation and Lincoln County, many of whom had never met nor planned together before, developed new relationships, confronted common challenges and attempted to generate new economic approaches and solutions. Regional demographic and economic quantitative data, and additional narrative data was reviewed, as well as ideas from other existing plans and strategies from elsewhere in the Southwest and the Rocky Mountain region.

Through this process, four leading areas were identified with excellent potential for economic diversification and economic base job creation across the region. They include:

- **Tourism Recreation and Cultural Heritage**
- **Agriculture, Forest and Wood Products, Energy Production**
- **Light Industry, Small Corporation and Workforce Expansion**
- **Biomedical and Biotechnical [Wellness, Medical and Behavioral Health Services]**

A detailed description of the economic benefits anticipated from these industry clusters for the south-central mountain region is outlined in the regional economic goals section of this plan. A lengthy set of Implementation Strategy Objectives have been subsequently developed and are attached as Appendices for each regional goal, including each specific strategy, assigned responsibilities, estimated completion timetable and its current status. Additional Evidence Base for the Plan – an inventory and analysis of Regional Infrastructure, with numerous recommendations – is also attached as Appendix 7. This Appendix lists the current state of 11 major infrastructure categories [including Access to Capital], all of which are critical support structures for economic growth and economic base job creation in the region. Finally, six [6] Americorps Volunteers have been requested for 2017-2018 for assignment to each SCMEDA SET V partner. The volunteers will spend up to a year, focusing on economic development strategy implementation.

Several barriers/challenges were repeatedly pointed out during planning meetings. They include:

1. The lack of affordable, safe workforce single and multi-family housing
2. The lack of high speed broadband fiber optic infrastructure in portions of the southcentral mountain region, particularly in the communities of Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs
3. The need for a much larger, high quality workforce that exhibits social competence and traditional work habits
4. The concern about considerable amounts of underdeveloped and insufficiently maintained infrastructure including water supplies, and, the need for continued infrastructure investment by local, county, and Tribal governments, state and federal government and other quasi-governmental agencies
5. The lack of easier, more sufficient access to capital for business start-ups and expansion
6. The historic inability “to work together” across the region following decades of mistrust, such as Lincoln and Otero Counties with each other, municipalities working with each other or with counties. Of great concern has also been these entities all working cooperatively with the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

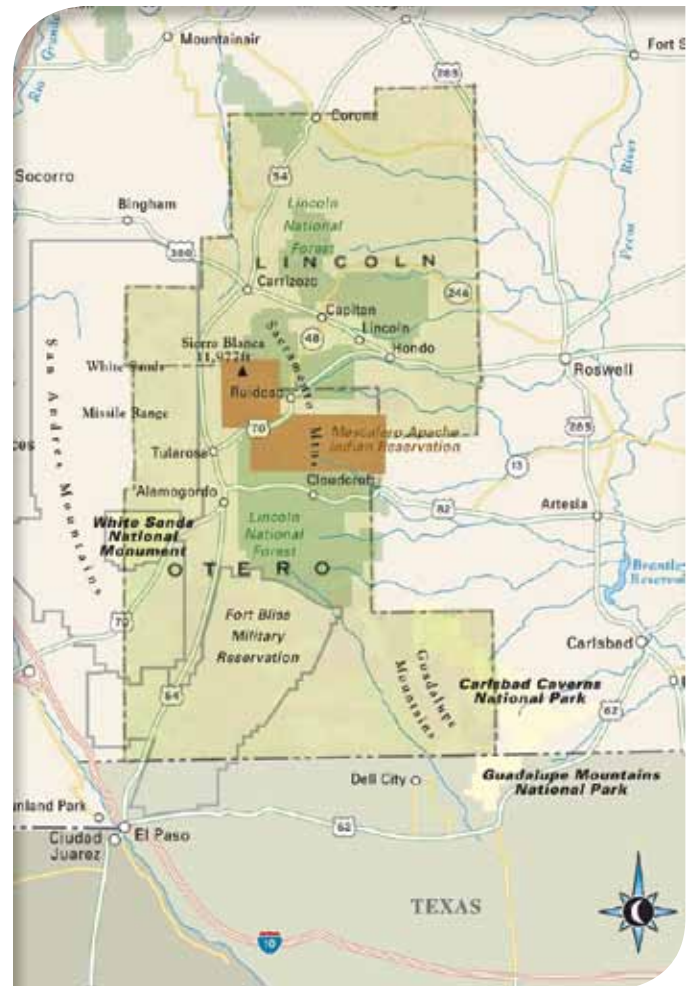
Despite these challenges, it is the belief of the participants and community leaders that ample assets and opportunities exist in the southcentral mountain region for economic revitalization and economic base job growth in the next 5-10 years.

## South Central Mountain Region Description

New Mexico's southcentral mountain region, comprised of Lincoln County, the Mescalero Apache Reservation and Otero County, have been an identifiable economic region since the close of World War II. By the early 1970s, the mission of the White Sands Missile Range changed to the point that little defense-related economic activity continued in Lincoln County focusing instead in Otero County and elsewhere in southern New Mexico. Natural resource industries such as logging and mining were also no longer in operation. Further, the rise of Ruidoso Downs Racetrack, the emergence of Ski Apache and the fabled Inn of the Mountain Gods, made the Mescalero/Ruidoso/Ruidoso Downs area a year-round tourism destination, and shifted the regional economy to a tourism base. Casino gaming was added later in the 1990s.

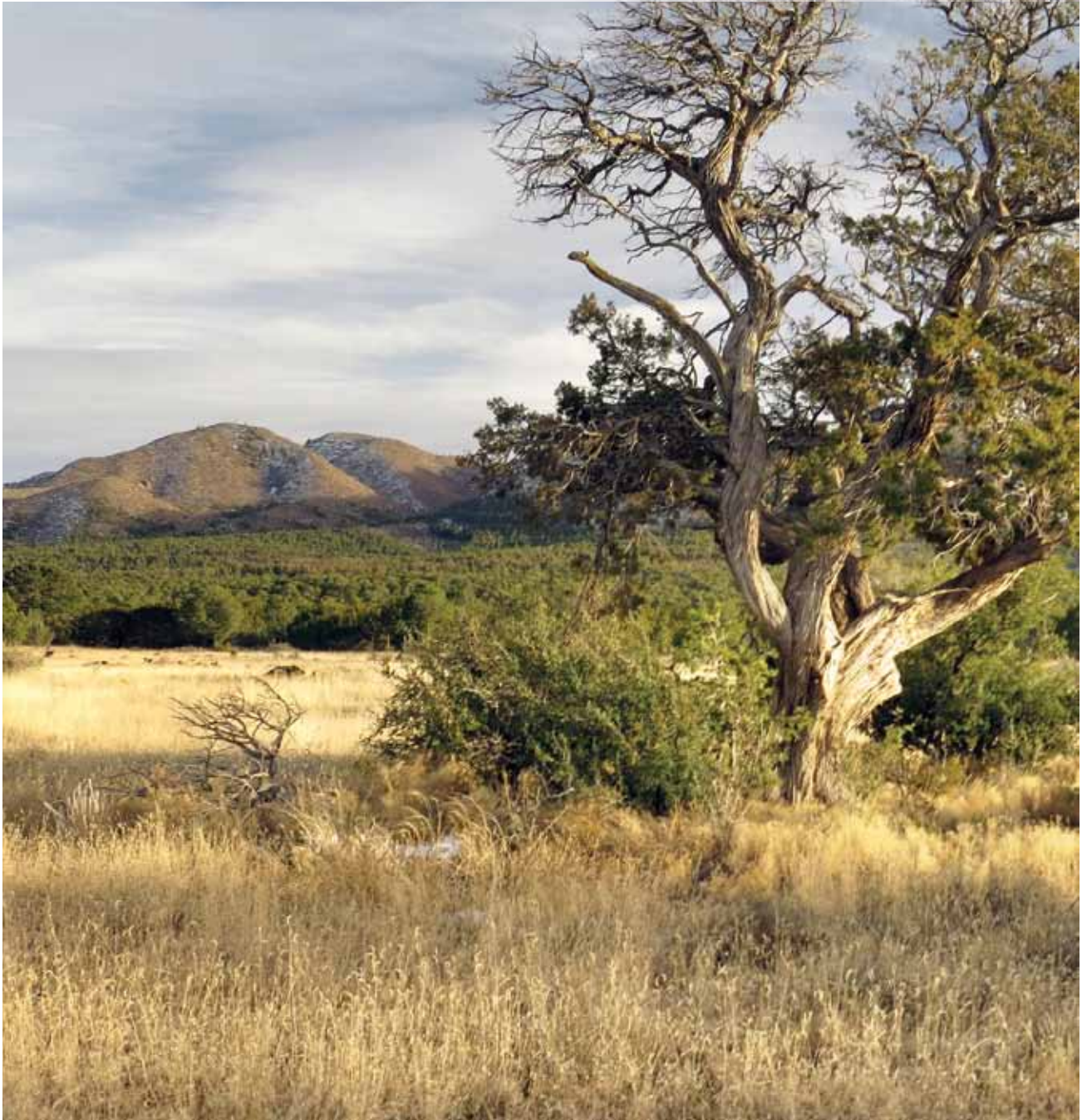
Accordingly, these small southcentral mountain rural communities needed a much larger workforce and as a result, much of the workforce has since traveled from outlying areas including Tularosa, Carrizozo, Capitan, Lincoln, Mescalero, the Hondo Valley into Ruidoso Downs, Ruidoso and Inn of the Mountain Gods/Ski Apache/Ruidoso Downs Racetrack. Many of the same residents comprising the workforce also remain in the area for shopping, entertainment, professional services, etc.

The more populated portion of the southcentral mountain region is bounded by US Highway 54/the Union Pacific railroad on the west, US Highways 380 and 82 on the north and south – all of which provide major goods and services transportation arteries and potential transit routes for new business/industry. The Pecos Valley and Chaves County eventually bounds the region to the east. Major regional communities [with 2015 populations] include Alamogordo [30,753]; Ruidoso [7,739], Tularosa [2,864], Ruidoso Downs [2,586], Mescalero [1,601], Carrizozo [941] and Cloudcroft [682].



South Central  
Mountains Regional **VISION STATEMENT**

*The southcentral mountain region of New Mexico will become New Mexico's top performing rural, small community economy, recognized as New Mexico's best place to live, learn, play, work and do business.*



## Introduction

### Acknowledgements

The Southcentral Mountain Economic Development Association would like to thank the staff from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Regional Rural Development Centers, and New Mexico State University County Extension Service for support throughout the course of this project. SCMEDA would also like to show our appreciation to the following individuals and organizations that took part in the training sessions and numerous meetings, for their invaluable insight and ideas that led to the creation of this plan:



- The Mescalero Apache Tribe, Danny Breuninger, President;
- The Inn of the Mountain Gods, Frizzell Frizzell Jr., Chief Operating Officer and the IMG staff;
- Carrizozo Works Inc., Ray Dean, President;
- Village of Ruidoso Mayor Tom Battin and Village Manager Debbie Lee;
- Village of Ruidoso Community Development Director Greg Cory; Planning and Zoning Director Bradford Dyjack;
- ENMU-Ruidoso Contract Training Director, Coda Omness; Departmental Business Manager, Sheralyn Ross; Information Specialist, RaLynne Stanbrough;
- ENMU-Ruidoso Coordinator of Publications, Kathy Kiefer



### Regional Collaboration

The plan has buy-in from numerous key decision makers in the region including:

Yvonne Lucero, *Mayor, Town of Carrizozo*

Ray Dean, *President, Carrizozo Works Inc.*

Tom Battin, *Mayor, Village of Ruidoso*

Debbie Lee, *Manager, Village of Ruidoso*

Dave Veneable, *Mayor, Village of Cloudcroft*

Gary Williams, *Mayor, City of Ruidoso Downs*

Carol Virden, *City Clerk/Treasurer, City of Ruidoso Downs*

Clayton Alred, *President, Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso*

John Hemphill, *Director, New Mexico Workforce Connection Eastern Area, Ruidoso, New Mexico*

Irma Devine, *Chairperson, Board of Directors, Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce*

Becky Brooks, *Executive Director, Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce*

Additionally, public input and support was garnered through a series of public meetings held between October 26, 2015 and October 24, 2016 primarily at the Inn of the Mountain Gods Convention Center. Meetings were also held at the Council Chambers of the Village of Ruidoso and at Town Hall in Carrizozo. An estimated 300 citizens from across Lincoln County, the Mescalero Apache Nation and Otero County participated in one or more meetings, and via different types of social media.

## Regional Economic Goals

Based on this input from the region coupled with the resources explored throughout the Stronger Economies Together process, the Southcentral Mountain Economic Development Association recommends the following goals for the Southcentral Mountain Region:

GOAL  
1

Increase the breadth and depth of regional tourism, recreation and cultural heritage.

GOAL  
2

Transform the regional natural resource economic base in the two-county region

GOAL  
3

Expand or recruit 20 new non-tourism corporations or light industries to the region

GOAL  
4

Improve the wellness of the regional community through innovative approaches and new collaborations for wellness, medical and behavioral health services





# Regional Economic Development Plan

## Strategic Goal Area 1: Tourism, Recreation, Cultural Heritage

Increase the breadth and diversity of regional tourism, recreation and cultural heritage activities and attractions in order to develop a new regional brand and attract new tourism audiences

### Regional Economic Benefits

Increased tourism, expanded recreational opportunities and focus on cultural heritage will contribute to economic development in the region through the growth of hospitality enterprise activity, jobs and incomes, and increases in total Lodgers Tax and Gross Receipt Tax dollars.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Status</i>
1.1 Develop a new regional advertising brand and tourist passport program for the southcentral mountain region in collaboration with the <i>New Mexico True</i> program, the Billy the Kid Scenic Byway program, and other tourism-related programs/organizations	Regional Tourism Council	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.2 Develop a broad range of new festival events recreational activities, entertainment/art/historic venues and supporting infrastructure in order to attract a younger tourist/tourist family audience	Regional Tourism Council	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.3 Expand the breadth and depth of outdoor recreation opportunities, facilities and competitive/training events	Regional Tourism Council Mescalero Apache Tribe Municipalities	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.4 Identify and recruit new convention audiences to hold expanded corporate, non-profit, retreats, conferences, workshops institutes at convention venues in the southcentral mountain region	Regional Tourism Council	Spring 2017	Proposed



Target Outcomes:

**Short Term (1 Year)**

- Development and roll out of a new regional brand and tourist passport in Lincoln County, Mescalero and Otero County by newly formed Regional Tourism Council
- Increase regional tourism revenues [including Gross Receipts Tax, Lodger's Tax, and Tribal Resort Tax] by 10% by December 2017 in the southcentral mountain region.
- Monthly customer/business owner service training underway
- Regional convention venues see a 15% increase in booked conventions



**Intermediate (Year 2-3)**

- Continued growth in regional tourism revenues Capital Outlay projects including new hiking/biking trail construction, recreation courts and playing fields open and available for regional event use completed and in use
- New festival events up and running
- Carrizozo tourism structures completed and in use
- Bonito Lake open with Camp Ground operation transferred to Village of Ruidoso Parks and Recreation Department

**Long Term (year 4 and beyond)**

- Capital outlay projects completion including new rodeo arena(s)



## Strategic Goal Area 2: Agriculture, Forest and Wood Products and Energy Production

Transform the natural resource economic base in the two-county region by

- Diversification of the historic livestock agricultural industry of the region by creation of four new value-added agricultural products
- Creation of a new NMSU Viticulture Research Extension Center in the Hondo Valley
- Creation of four (4) new sustainable ranching patents through the NMSU Corona Ranch and Livestock Research Center and the NMSU Arrowhead Center, and spin off to regional agricultural entrepreneurs by 2019
- Creation and implementation of up to 5 wood industry cluster sites of 4-5 sustainable wood businesses employing 3-5 employees in Lincoln County, Mescalero and Otero County by 2019.
- Creation of six [6] supporting small logistics chain support businesses and jobs for pending wind energy center and solar facility projects in Lincoln County by 2019. Opportunity can be extended into Mescalero and Otero County upon request
- Creation of up to six [6] new distributed energy production and export sites using wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass energy sources.

### Regional Economic Benefits

- Expansion of the regional agricultural base beyond the historic ranching industry will enable local producers merchants to develop and sell locally produced, value-added products, put more brackish water to use
- Increasing support for the NMSU Corona Range and Livestock Research Center/Southwest Center for Rangeland Sustainability will expand the research center support staff, primary and collaborating scientific and engineering staff, attract scientists and agri-businesses from across the Western US, and add to the small but growing number of patentable ideas arising from rangeland research
- Development of five wood industry business cluster "parks" will contribute to the sustainable resource-based



economic development in the southcentral mountain region through (1) broadening the economic base beyond tourism; and, (2) increasing the export industrial base in the region. The wood industry expansion will also increase wildfire protection and forest health, and improve critical watersheds. Increased production of value-added forest products will help restore a historic industry in the region, and greatly expand the product export business to buyers outside of the region, including northern Mexico.

- The ramp-up of wind and solar energy small support businesses and jobs corresponds with the expected construction of the Western Spirit Clean Line and SunZia Transmission Projects [2018], wind energy centers [2019] in northern Lincoln County, and several planned large solar projects in the Carrizozo area. The creation of new small businesses will strengthen RV parks, small retail stores, as well as to establish Lincoln County as a support location for future similar projects across southern and eastern New Mexico.
- The creation of new energy production sites for energy export outside the region to eastern New Mexico, Texas, Arizona and California will increase the number of economically sustainable energy industry jobs and assist in leveling out the cyclical nature of New Mexico oil and gas industry.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Status</i>
2.1 Create four new value-added agricultural products and four (4) new sustainable ranching patent through NMSU County Extension, a new NMSU Viticulture Research Extension Center and expanded and NMSU Corona Ranch Livestock Research Center	SCMEDA Group NMSU County Extension NM Wine and Grape Assn. NMSU Corona Range	Fall 2019	Underway Proposed
2.2 Create and adopt ten year, SCMRC & D staff, 1 million acre forest restoration plans for northern and southern LNF Districts with non-profit, State Forestry, Tribal, County, industry, and local government BLM and State Forestry partners	LBFRS SCMRCD SCMEDA Group Otero County WUI Greater Ruidoso WUI Mescalero Forestry USFS	By Aug 2017	Underway
2.3 Organize and conduct all forest industry development under Southcentral Mountain RC & D; coordinate with Mescalero Apache Tribal Forestry	SCM RC&D Council Mescalero Apache Tribe	By Mar 2017	Underway
2.4 Work with industry, government and workforce training programs to construct and support 2000 MW of installed wind power and/solar power capacity primarily on agricultural and Tribal lands	SCMEDA Group Central NM Electric Co-op Corona Landowners Assoc. Otero Co. Electric Co-op NMRETA	By 2018	Underway

## Target Outcomes:

### Short Term (1 Year)

- Completion and adoption of Southern and Northern Sacramento Mountain Forest and Watershed Landscape Restoration plans
- Oversight and coordination of forest products industry development by SCM RC & D Council completed
- State and Federal transmission project permitting completed.
- Landowner and State Land Office transmission land lease contracts completed
- Initial two agricultural patents issued and placed on market
- Three wood yard sites identified and opened for business
- Legal and institutional framework completed for new NMSU Viticulture Extension Center

### Intermediate (Year 2-3)

- Initial USFS funding acquired for Phase I Landscape Restoration Plan implementation
- Two vineyards completed in eastern Lincoln County
- Federal funding secured for Viticulture Extension Center; Center opened in 2019
- Additional agricultural patents issued by NMSU Corona Ranch
- Two additional wood yard sites identified and opened for business
- Three new crops grown in Lincoln County



### Long Term (year 4 and beyond)

- Phases II and III Landscape Restoration Plans implemented
- Wind Energy Center and Transmission projects completed.
- Solar energy center projects completed.



## Strategic Goal Area 3:

### Light Industry, Small Corporation and Workforce Expansion

Increase economic base job opportunities throughout the region by creating, expanding or recruiting 36 new light industry and small corporation businesses, with an expanded, highly trained workforce by 2020.



#### Regional Economic Benefits

Expansion and diversification of regional economic base beyond its historic tourism focus by the addition of light industry base will reduce the dependence of the regional economy on declining tourist-related industries such as golf, gaming and horse racing. Well-placed geographically with a pleasant climate, beautiful location and proximity to the U.S.- Mexico border. Emphasizing development of light industry, private investment and small corporate relocation. Contribute to economic development of the region and reduce the employment variations due to fluctuations in the state and national economy.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Status</i>
3.1 Identify and create business incentives and regulatory reductions to attract new 'rec tech' businesses, micro-breweries, 'gig economy,' youth development and high altitude training centers in the region	SCMEDA Group	Dec 2017	Proposed
3.2 Create a Mescalero Development Corporation for Tribal Business Development including agricultural and energy production/export	Tribal Council	Dec 2017	Proposed
3.3 Identify, design, fund and initiate new construction projects such as RV parks, Commerce Centers, housing areas to stimulate regional construction industry	Municipalities	Dec 2020	Proposed
3.4 Identify and pursue professional service providers, "solo work" business owners, and other small Texas and West Coast/ California entrepreneurs and corporations to relocate and work in/ out of the southcentral mountain region	SCMEDA Group	Jan 2020	Proposed

## Target Outcomes:

### Short Term (1 Year)

- LEDA and other economic incentives, regulatory reductions in place across region
- Town of Carrizozo RV park established and open for business
- “solo work” sales and marketing team in place and operational
- Texas and West Coast/California relocation opportunities identified and being pursued
- Business relationships established with NMSU Arrowhead Center
- Recruiting team developed and trained for West Coast and trade show trips
- ‘gig economy’ research and training

### Intermediate (Year 2-3)

- Mescalero Development Corporation established and in operation
- New construction projects underway [affordable housing, tap rooms and microbreweries, training centers

### Long Term (year 4 and beyond)

- Ten or more targeted light industries or small corporations created, expanded and/or attracted to the region by 2020



## Strategic Goal Area 4: Biomedical and Biotechnical [Wellness, Medical and Behavioral Health Services]

Improve the wellness of the regional community through innovative approaches and new collaborations to wellness, medical and behavioral health services through

- Improved access to healthcare.
- Expand knowledge and availability of nutrition, fitness, stress management and alternative healthcare.
- Address regional healthcare issues:
  - ▶ Hypertension
  - ▶ Teen pregnancy
  - ▶ Substance abuse
  - ▶ Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
  - ▶ Heart disease
  - ▶ Physical fitness
  - ▶ Access to food and adequate nutrition
  - ▶ Eldercare

### Regional Economic Benefits

The regional economy depends on a healthy workforce and a support system that addresses the unique needs of its citizens.

New Mexico ranks 49th in the nation for child well-being. New Mexico is ranked 37th in the nation for overall health. In Lincoln County 61.27% of children under the age of 18 are at or below the Federal Poverty Level; 73% of students are eligible for subsidized meals. While availability to fast food restaurants is above the national average, 42% of Lincoln County residents have limited access to food. Lifestyle

habits need to change. 22% of County residents drink excessively; 24% smoke cigarettes; 29% have hypertension; and teen birth rates are almost twice the national average. Otero County residents exceed benchmarks on heart disease, strokes, lung disease, diabetes and hypertension. Regional citizens are sedentary, approximately 25% of the population is physically inactive.

Responsible lifestyle behavior, augmented by accessible healthcare services, will also result in a more vibrant, reliable workforce. Employment opportunities,





further, can be created through addressing regional healthcare needs.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Status</i>
6.1 Establish a new task force to assess and engage on medical/behavioral healthcare and wellness issues on an ongoing basis.	Regional Task Force	Spring 2017	Proposed
6.2 Improve access to healthcare	Regional Task Force	2020	Proposed
6.3 Improve healthcare/wellness educational opportunities	Regional Task Force ENMU-Ruidoso NMSU-Alamogordo	2018	Proposed
6.4 Address lifestyle issues.	Regional Task Force	2018	Proposed

### Target Outcomes:

#### Short Term (1 Year)

- Commitment to building a new hospital in Ruidoso, which shall serve primarily the needs of Lincoln County and Mescalero.
- Encourage collaborations between existing healthcare providers.
- Establish and maintain alternative therapies, with a focus on wellness and nutrition.
- Prioritize needed services and specialties from regional hospitals.
- Obtain County support for expanded health clinics.

#### Intermediate (Year 2-3)

- Realize progress in curbing the use of tobacco, drugs and alcohol.
- Complete construction of new hospital in Ruidoso.
- Expanded healthcare and wellness worker training in both counties
- Expanded availability of food [including locally grown food] within rural areas of Lincoln County.
- Secure at least one additional medical clinic location in Lincoln County.
- Expand specialty services within region.

#### Long Term (Year 4 and beyond)

- Realize documented improvement in rates of hypertension, teen pregnancy, COPD and heart disease.
- Secure sufficient number of medical clinics within rural areas in Lincoln County.
- Realize documented improvement in physical fitness, drug/alcohol abuse and nutrition.
- Secure assisted living and long-term care facilities in Lincoln County.

# Evidence Basis for Plan

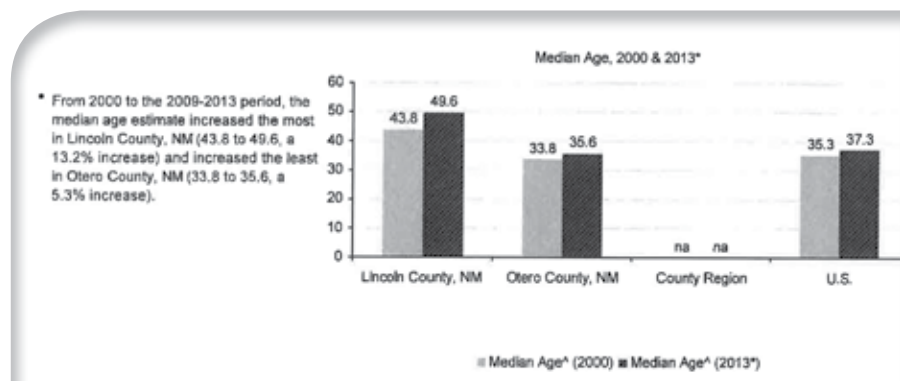
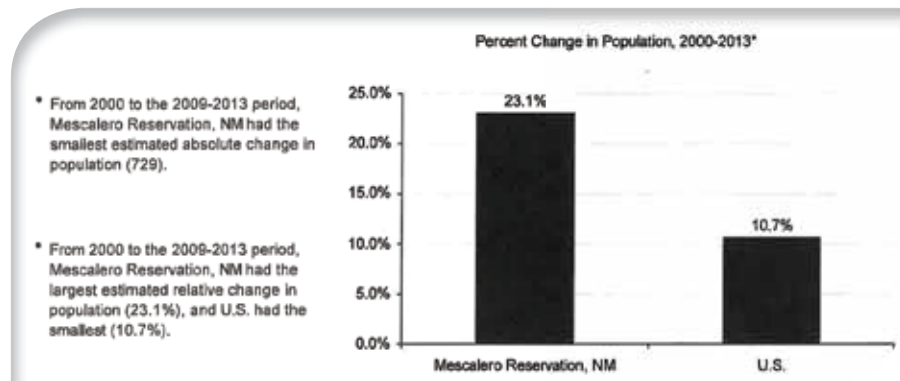
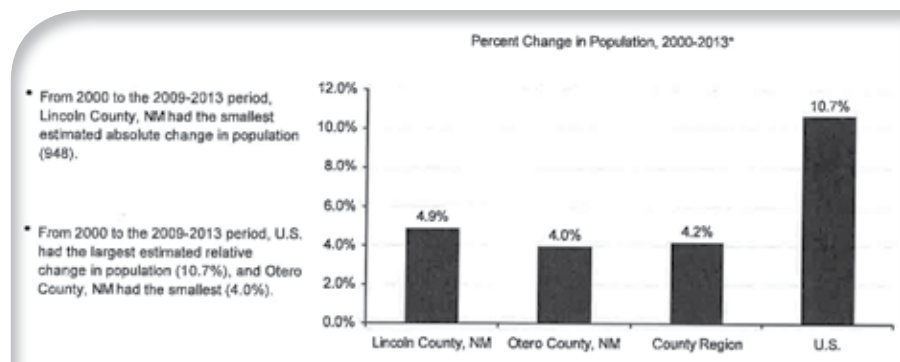
## Regional Demographic Data

### Population

Population, its growth and composition relative to economic development, frequently differs in the southcentral mountains, as in other New Mexico regions, from overall State trends. Within the region, Lincoln County trends and composition does not resemble Otero County, nor does Mescalero resemble either county. Although Mescalero Apache Nation trends and composition are significantly different than the adjoining counties, the trends slowly over time are changing as 1) more Tribal members return to the reservation following postsecondary education or off-reservation employment; 2) more Tribal members live close but not on the reservation in nearby communities, particularly Tularosa, Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs.

Tribal population growth increased by 23.1% between 2000 and 2013, higher than the adjoining areas. The Mescalero population continues to be significantly younger than the Lincoln county population [median age of 23.6, with 82.4% below the age of 44 compared to Lincoln County's median age of 49.6, in 2013] less pronounced in Otero County [median age of 35.6] in the same time period.

In general, the net population in the region grew until the Great Recession of 2008 and then, began to slowly decline with the exception of the City of Alamogordo. The median age of Lincoln County residents is 49.6 years [2013],



Data Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, 2014. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office, Washington, D.C.; U.S. Department of Commerce, 2000. Census Bureau, Systems Support Division, Washington, D.C.

while a younger population resides in Otero County [2013 median age 35.6]. The larger, younger population cohort is also present on the Mescalero Apache Reservation.

Native Americans accounted for 5.9% of the regional population in 2013, varying between 2.2% in Lincoln County to 7.1% in Otero County [where the majority of the Mescalero Apache Nation is located].

The UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research suggests that population

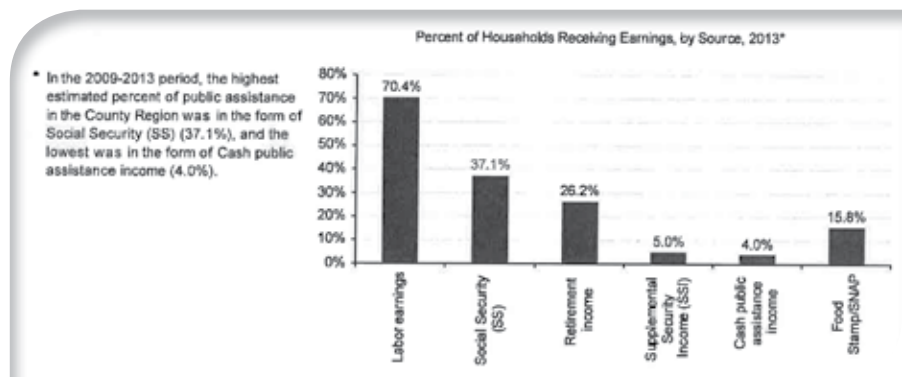
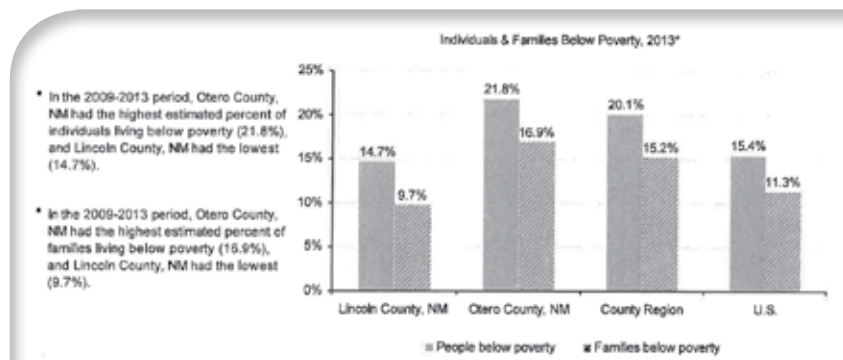
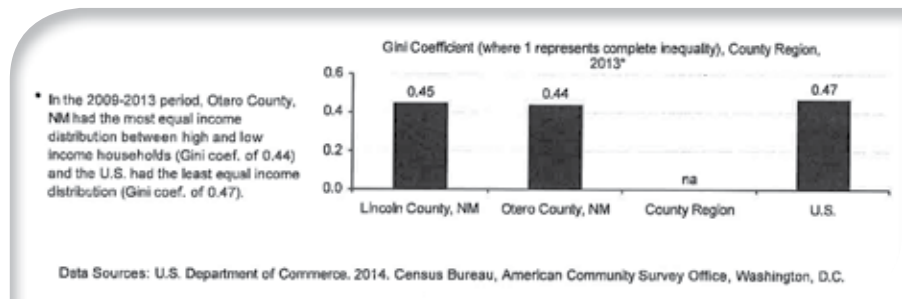
County	2010	2015	2020	2025	% Increase	State
Lincoln	20,503	19,420	21,577	21,959	.27%	1.12%
Otero	64,340	64,362	66,367	67,064	.71%	1.12%

### Income/Poverty

78.6% of households in the southcentral mountain region made \$75,000 per year or less according to the Census Bureau in 2014. Income inequality, a measure between high and low incomes [1.0 is complete inequality] was similar to the national average [.47] with Lincoln County at .45 and Otero County at .44.

Poverty in the region varies between 14.7% [Lincoln County] to 21.8% [Otero County], well above the national rate [15.4%] in 2013 and just below the overall New Mexico rate of 21.9% also in 2013. Poverty rates are noticeably higher among certain groups such as families with children [25.4% across the region] and older teenagers [30.9% across the region].

A large number of regional residents are on fixed incomes [social security and retirement income payments of various types]. Mean household earnings across the region was \$50,224 [2014].



## Employment

2015 US Department of Commerce data suggests between 2001 and 2014, overall employment in the southcentral mountain region declined slightly, by 1.5% in Lincoln County and 3.2% in Otero County. However, a significant number of arts, entertainment and recreation jobs were omitted from the data set representing the two largest Lincoln County employer, Ruidoso Downs Race Track with 1,000 employees and nearby Inn of the Mountain Gods [Otero County] with 1300 employees. That said, retail trade, healthcare and social assistance, arts, entertainment and recreation, and accommodation & food services and defense contracting [Otero County] remained the primary employers. Health care and social assistance saw a dramatic increase adding 1,060 jobs and is expected to continue steady growth. Retail trade had a slight net loss over the 13 year time period, down from 2005 – 2010. Adding in the Ruidoso Downs Racetrack and Inn of the Mountain Gods employment figures to the arts, entertainment and recreation, and accommodation & food services, there should be a modest net gain in employment since 2001.

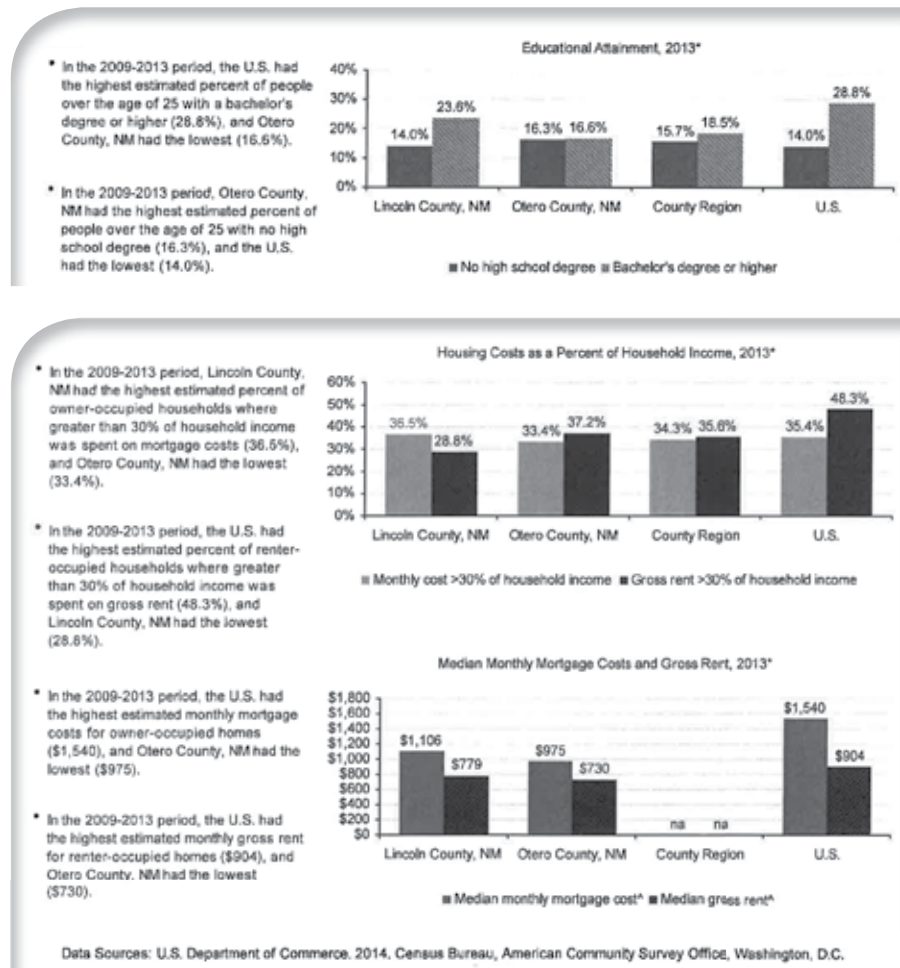
Unemployment in the region is generally at or below the monthly New Mexico unemployment rate but fluctuates considerably during the year and is dependent on the travel and tourism, arts entertainment and recreation economy. As such it is increasingly part-time and low wage [non-salaried, minimum wage or above]. The lack of sufficient, reliable workers has provided upward pressure on wages certainly in the Lincoln County tourism industry.

## Educational Attainment

In the regional population above the age of 25 [56,802], 84.3% had a high school diploma or high school equivalency, 15.7% had no diploma or equivalency. In Lincoln County, 54.7% had earned an Associate's degree up to graduate/professional degrees. In Otero County, 42.4% had earned similar degrees. School enrollment figures are not reported here; however, since 2013, the trend across New Mexico and in the southcentral mountain region has been gradually downward.

## Housing

As noted earlier, the availability of affordable, safe housing continues to be a significant challenge. 2013 Census data reports that the median year



of construction for single family occupancy housing in both Lincoln and Otero Counties is 1981, more than 30 years old. Large percentages were built in 1959 or earlier [18.2% in Lincoln and 17.2% in Otero]. Lincoln County shows a high seasonal, recreational, occasional use as a resort region. Housing has a reputation for being expensive in Ruidoso for example and forms in the region a higher than state average as percentage of household income.

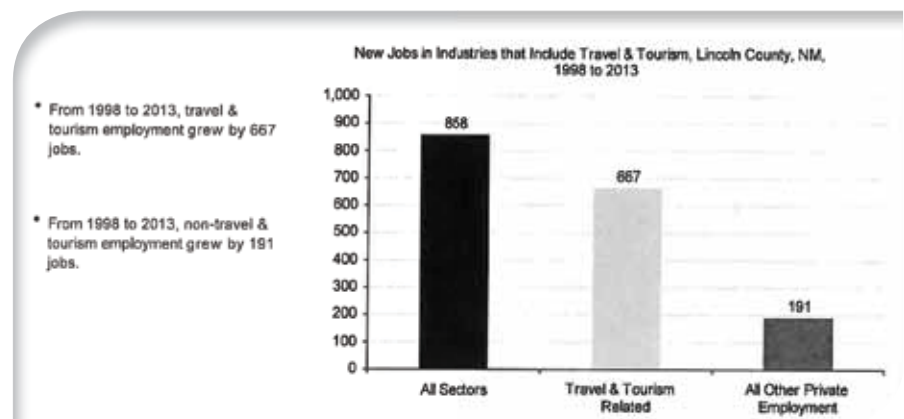
## Regional Economic Data

The southcentral mountain region economy declined during the Great Recession of 2008 and has not completely recovered. The recovery has also been highlighted by an apparent exodus of families and individuals to urban areas for improved employment opportunities, as evidenced by the slow and steady decline of public school and two year college enrollment in the region.

Several other trends are offered as evidence of the need for the SET plan. They include declining attendance at horse racing venues and race track closures elsewhere. The Ruidoso Downs Racetrack lease will soon be up and renewal appears to be in question. The Track employs up to 1,000 workers during the six month racing season. Two, the popularity of golf – a traditional reason to visit the southcentral mountain region – peaked in 2005, declined particularly among millennials and finally seems to be making some recovery although not to 2005 levels. Three, the growth of the millennial population, the aging of the traditional casino population has caused the flattening of gaming revenues and the saturation of the gaming markets. Finally the uncertainty of winter sports in the past decade has caused a slowdown in regional tourist attractions such as Ski Apache, the major ski destination in the southern United States complicated by a continuing 25-year drought



## Occupations



Lincoln County is more heavily weighted in the over 47 age cohort, while Otero County [including the Mescalero Apache Nation] is more heavily weighted in the 20-49 age cohort.

More recent data is more optimistic. The New Mexico Tourism Department reported in October 2016 [for the calendar year 2015] that Lincoln County experienced a 2.9% growth in tourism and Otero County a 1.7% increase, both somewhat below the State average of 3.6% for 2015. The Village of Ruidoso has also reported steady increases in both Gross Receipts and Lodgers' taxes over the past two fiscal years.

## Regional Assets

*[see Appendix 5 for an additional listing of the region's assets]*

Participants in the year-long regional conversation on the future of southcentral mountain economic development were in agreement about the assets of the region: they like the southcentral mountains/high plains region for numerous reasons and think others should too! Among the top rated regional assets were 1) the vast natural resources of the area; 2) the countless outdoor recreation opportunities; 3) the region's established reputation as a state and national tourism end-destination; 4) the preponderance of the arts, culture and rich, diverse sense of history and its peoples, i.e. hundreds of years of fascinating Apache and Hispanic cultures, and more recently, "Billy the Kid," "Smokey Bear" and the Trinity Site – the 1945 birthplace of the Atomic Age; 5) the diversity of government organizations and operations; and 6) the temperate year-round climate.

### A Commitment to Revitalizing the Downtowns

The Town of Carrizozo and the Village of Ruidoso have made significant, long-term commitments to downtown revitalization. The Village of Ruidoso for example was named a New Mexico Main Street Accelerator Community on October 19, 2016 after several years of pursuing its third Main Street designation. The Town of Carrizozo has completed and has begun implementation of a Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan with thirteen [13] major community development and improvement strategies. Project steering committees are in-place and working on both projects. Modest grant funding has already to initiate early project activities.



## The Social Architecture of the Region

The social architecture of the southcentral mountain region is noticeably changing. A new entrepreneurial spirit appears to be emerging in the Town of Carrizozo, the Ruidoso Business community and in the Mescalero Apache Nation. A large number of new residents who have moved to Carrizozo from other parts of the State and country are bringing new ideas and new energy to community development. In the Ruidoso business community a number of Ruidoso High School graduates from the 1980s and 1990s have returned home, with training, resources and ideas for new businesses. The trend toward ‘eco-tourism’ [i.e. mountain biking, hiking etc.] has already started to make a marked impression in the complexion of tourists and resulting business outcomes. On the Mescalero Apache Nation, again a number of regional high school Mescalero Apache graduates who graduated in the 1980s and 1990s have returned home to take up Tribal governance and management positions. Most noteworthy is at the Inn of the Mountain Gods [IMG]. IMG has been introducing new tourism attractions and concepts for some time such as the Ski Apache Windrider – high adventure Zip-line, new events such as three-on-three basketball tournament [first ever on a Native American reservation, drawing nearly 10,000 participants and spectators]. New younger leadership is also emerging in the region, complemented by regional leadership development programs, Leadership Otero and Leadership Lincoln, who train future leaders for regional enterprises.

Other significant elements of the region’s social architecture is the presence of the New Mexico Workforce Connection Regional One Stop Career Center responsible for management for all of SE NM’s 12 counties including Lincoln and Otero. Management is based in Ruidoso. Higher education credit and non-credit training opportunities exist with and through two branch colleges, Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso and New Mexico State University-Alamogordo.

## Significant Natural Resources

- Natural resources in the region include its location in the second best solar region in the United States [NREL, 2012]; its location in a significant portion of the US 80 meter wind resource [NREL, 2009], with significant biomass and geothermal resources [NREL, 2007 and 2009];
- A new rare earth element mine is in the development and permitting stage in Lincoln County’s Gallinas Mountains. Rare earth elements have also been found in the nearby Capitan Mountains.

## New Tourism Assets

Two new Zip-lines have been constructed and are in operation by the Mescalero Apache Tribe. The larger of the two the WindRider Zip-Line is North America’s highest, beginning above 11,000 feet. The Ruidoso Parks and Recreation department has recently opened several lakes for fishing for the first time, several miles of hiking and mountain biking trails and the major second section of the Ruidoso River Walk trail system.



## Potential Barriers and Related Strategies

*[see Appendix 6 for an additional listing of the region's barriers and challenges]*

### Housing

Near the top of everyone's list, and amid many side conversations, was the overwhelming lack of affordable housing for the regional workforce, which creates and sustains a 'drive-in' workforce from outside the southcentral mountain larger communities and their major employers. In the Ruidoso area and immediately north of Ruidoso – traditional visitor second home areas – the price of housing is driven up beyond the means of the workforce – common to resort communities throughout the Rocky Mountains. Moreover, the public housing projects built and operated in the area a decade or more ago – including those on the Mescalero Reservation – have waiting lists and are rundown, insufficiently maintained, occasionally run-down. Where to affordably and safely live is a barrier to the region's essential workforce including teachers, police, firefighters, healthcare workers, retail mid-managers, state and federal government employees and others. Finally, much of the housing in the mountain region that would be available on the rental market to the college-age workforce, the young family workforce and the growing senior workforce is increasingly unavailable due to the explosion of the overnight rental, AirBnB-type usage. Second home owners can make much higher income from short-term tourist rentals [a week or less] rather than year-long or longer rental commitments.

*Strategy: Work with municipalities, state and federal agencies to adopt housing ordinances, enroll in state and federal housing construction/maintenance/weatherization programs through a coordinated regional office [Mescalero, Ruidoso/Ruidoso Downs and Alamogordo]. Engage in public/private partnerships to address housing issue.*

### Water Supply Infrastructure

Compounding the lack of affordable single and multi-family housing is private and public underinvestment in basic infrastructure such as water, roads, wastewater treatment and broadband technology [See Appendix 7 for a recent inventory of eleven (11) critical infrastructure areas]. Many participants felt that the decreasing supply of potable water in the region during the 2000 - 2025 drought headed the critical infrastructure list.

*Strategy: Constant public investment in water distribution and management systems. Adoption of regional planning including aggressive conservation, graywater usage and new technology utilization; Consideration of desalination as a partial future water source alternative.*

### Lack of High Speed Broadband

The SET discussions and a parallel series of business community conversations cohosted by the Village of Ruidoso Community Development Department and the Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce suggested grave speed and reliability concerns driven to meet the needs of the business, institutional and governmental community for better, faster, and unencumbered broadband data access. Current telecommunications providers have been repeatedly challenged to provide high speed broadband access for the business and residential community to meet continually growing demand but are having dif-



faculty doing so. Two regional providers have expressed an interest in entering the fragmented market [Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs and very rural Otero County are the chronically underserved areas] but lack the capital to deliver fiber optic-based, high speed service to the business or residential communities. Workforce training is needed for existing provider employees, electrical contractors seeking to enlarge their business and young adults seeking a new hands-on technology-oriented career.

*Strategy: Create and implement two-part broadband infrastructure and delivery service plan for southern Lincoln County and rural Otero County by January 2017; Seek private/public investment funds for built-out of upgrade Alto/Ruidoso/Ruidoso Downs system and rural Otero County.*

### Intergovernmental Communication

Improvement in intergovernmental communication and cooperation was noted by many SET meeting participants across the region. One is occasionally reminded that the fabled “Lincoln County War” of the 1870s is still not over! The historic inability “to work together” across the region following decades of mistrust, such as Lincoln and Otero Counties with each other, between municipalities working with each other or municipalities with counties. Of great concern has also been these entities all working cooperatively with the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

*Strategy: Seek consensus on a set of regional issues, shared by most or all entities; establish and conduct a series of short, productive meetings with everyone at the table. Everyone.*



## Evaluation Plan

### Key Measures and Strategies to Track Progress:

#### Progress Indicators:

##### Strategic Goal Area 1:

##### Tourism, Recreation Cultural Heritage

- New regional tourism council membership roster, meeting agendas
- Number of new tourism events in the region
- Number of new conferences, institutes, workshops, organizational and corporate retreats
- Establishment of artisan business development center
- Number of customer service training events and number of participants attending training sessions
- New regional brand and logo with hard copy passport and smart phone app
- Opening of new recreation venues such as ball parks, fields, rodeo arena, Wingfield Park pavilion, etc.
- Completion of new infrastructure projects in the immediate vicinity of or directly support tourism recreation and cultural heritage venues
- Number of college teams selecting region for annual high altitude training
- Number of new tourism businesses focused on a younger clientele, families from Northern Mexico, Mescalero Apache art

##### Strategic Goal Area 2:

##### Agriculture Forest and Wood Products and Energy Production

- Review of Southcentral Mountain Resource Conservation District meeting agenda and minutes
- Review of completed, approved and signed southern Sacramento Ranger District and Smokey Bear Ranger District forest landscape plans
- Identification and GPS location of five new wood products collection and sales yards
- Reduced timetables for NEPA environmental review on multiple forest and water restoration projects
- Number of new agricultural patents issued in Lincoln County
- Authorization and opening of new Viticulture Extension Center
- Number of new agricultural products grown in region
- Transmission line completion; wind energy farm tower completion and operation
- Number of wind and/or solar energy center regional support businesses with project contracts

### Strategic Goal Area 3:

#### Light Industry, Small Corporation and Workforce Expansion

- High speed fiber optic broadband network to participating businesses, organizations and institutions completed
- Study completed to identify opportunities for Texas and California businesses seeking to relocate to region
- Number industry/educational institutions workforce training programs collaboration undertaken
- Number of new ‘solo work’ business licenses issued in region
- Number of businesses in the region providing/selling finished products, materials, supplies and services to defense contractors in southern New Mexico and to Border Complex businesses
- Number of economic base jobs associated with new or relocated businesses and light industry

### Strategic Goal Area 4:

#### Biomedical and Biotechnical [Wellness, Medical and Behavioral Health Services]

- Review of new regional taskforce meeting agenda, membership roll and minutes
- Approval of new hospital bond issue; completion of new hospital
- Completion of new service contract between LCMC and Presbyterian Medical Services
- Completion of new services contract between LCMC and Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center
- Repeated meetings with holistic and alternative medical providers
- Completion of new service agreement between Mescalero Apache Tribe and LCMC for dialysis and other services completion and opening of new elder care facilities
- Completion and usage of new technologies through high speed broadband to deliver rural medical services
- Development and enrollment of adult and college students in nutrition, holistic medicine, and fitness classes
- Certificate of Completion offered for New Mexico State Health Innovation Plan occupations
- Reduced numbers of high risk behaviors such as prescribed drug reliance, teen pregnancy and hypertension
- Expanded dual credit curriculum in new certification health careers

# Appendices

## Appendix G1

Strategic Goal Area: Tourism, Recreation, Cultural Heritage

## Appendix G2

Strategic Goal Area: Agriculture, Forest/Wood Products and Energy Production

## Appendix G3

Strategic Goal Area: Light Industry, Small Corporation and Workforce Expansion

## Appendix G4

Strategic Goal Area: Biomedical and Biotechnical [Wellness, Medical and Behavioral Health Services]

## Appendix 5

Regional Assets

## Appendix 6

Potential Barriers and Challenges

## Appendix 7

Evidence Base for the Plan

## Appendix 8

SET Planning Group Membership and Affiliations

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## Appendix G1 Plan of Action

### Strategic Goal Area G1: Tourism, Recreation, Cultural Heritage

Increase the breadth and diversity of regional tourism, recreation and cultural heritage activities and attractions in order to develop a new regional brand and attract new tourism audiences

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Goal Date	Status
1.1 Develop technical and content coordination for Chambers of Commerce, municipal and other tourism-oriented websites	Regional Tourism Council	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.2 Conduct monthly customer service training workshops through ENMU for new business and organizational employees	Chambers of Commerce NMSU-A SBDC	Fall 2016	Pending
1.3 Develop and share a regional calendar of events and a directory of artisans across Lincoln County, Mescalero and Otero County	Chambers of Commerce	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.4 Create/operate a Mainstreet- Ruidoso project with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand shopping hours</li> <li>• Four new bar/brewpubs</li> <li>• Free Public Wifi</li> <li>• New sidewalks, lighting and transportation shelter up to Wingfield Park</li> </ul>	VOR Mainstreet Committee	By 2017	Designated 10/19/16
1.5 Create a Lincoln County Arts and Cultural District	SCMEDA Group Chambers of Commerce	By 2018	Proposed
1.6 Establish an artisan business development center at Horton Complex to improve sales and profitability through arts management training, market development and buying/selling activities	SCMEDA Group	By 2018	Proposed

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Timeline	Status
1.7 Design and build a new arena in Capitan; upgrade Mescalero arena; aggressively promote Capitan/Mescalero as a rodeo/roping event coordinated end-destinations	Lincoln County Commission LC Fair Board Mescalero Apache Tribe	By 2018	Proposed
1.8 Develop and advertise region as a 'solo work' destination	SCMEDA Group Regional Tourism Council	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.9 Add more live music and outdoor dining to restaurant venues	Regional Tourism Council	Spring 2017	Underway
1.10 Recruit 4-8 college teams [cross country, soccer, softball, baseball, golf]	Regional Tourism Council	Winter 2017	Proposed
1.11 Recruit the UNM Ski team to train at Ski Apache	IMG/Ski Apache	Spring 2017	Proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop new festival events:</li> <li>• Red Hot Poker Festival,</li> <li>• The Electric Car Ride,</li> <li>• High Mountain Wine and Craft Beer Festival</li> <li>• Horseshoe Tournaments</li> <li>• Geocaching Festival</li> <li>• Harvest Festival</li> <li>• Pet Shows</li> <li>• Mountain Film Festival</li> <li>• Mountain Music Festival</li> <li>• Lumberjack Festival – North</li> <li>• Regional and State Marksmanship events</li> </ul>	VOR Tourism VOR Parks Commission	By 2019	Proposed



[black powder, cowboy action shooting, small bore, air gun, trap/skeet]

- Gus Macher Tournament – IMG
- “Bark in the Park” Event
- “K9s in the Vines” Event

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Timeline	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wine and Wage Happy Hours</li> <li>• Dog Fest</li> <li>• Paws on Parade</li> </ul>			
1.12 Develop six [6] new Eco Tour events and businesses	Regional Tourism Council SCMEDA Group	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.13 Add four [4] new road/mountain biking events	Regional Tourism Council	December 2017	Proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and complete a bike plans for Carrizozo, Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs and IMG</li> <li>• Implement bike share transit program in Ruidoso</li> </ul>			
1.14 Increase number of conventions at VOR Convention Center and IMG by 20%, such as	IMG and VOR Center Staffs	Fall 2017	Proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Mexico Wine and Grape Association</li> <li>• Local civic club regional conventions</li> <li>• Texas professional associations</li> <li>• NMAA</li> <li>• Corporate retreats</li> <li>• NMPED</li> <li>• US Border Patrol</li> <li>• NM “Solo Work” Conference</li> <li>• New Mexico Brewers Guild</li> </ul>			
1.15 Add Archery at IMG	IMG Staff	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.16 Design and construct three new 4 field softball parks [VOR, Mescalero and CORD]	Mescalero Tribe City of Ruidoso Downs	Spring 2018	Proposed
1.17 Expand hiking and running/walking trails by 10 additional trails	Village of Ruidoso P & R City of Ruidoso Downs	Spring 2018	Underway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USFS fitness trail in Ruidoso Downs</li> <li>• Walkabout trail system within Carrizozo Town of Carrizozo</li> </ul>	USFS Smokey Bear Ranger Dist.		



1.18	Create six new walking/running events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scenic 5k, 10k, half marathon in Ruidoso Downs</li> </ul>	Regional Tourism Council VOR P & Rec	Fall 2017	Proposed
1.19	Establish US Border Patrol training and recreation relationship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>retreats</li> </ul>	VOR Community Development IMG Staff	Fall 2017	Proposed
	<b>Steps to Accomplish</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Status</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high altitude training</li> <li>off-duty recreation</li> <li>language/culture training</li> </ul>			
1.20	Target Arizona as a new geographic market	Regional Tourism Council	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.21	Develop tour bus landings in region	IMG and VOR	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.22	Develop Mescalero arts and crafts gallery location in Mid-town Ruidoso and Carrizozo	SCMEDA Group	Spring 2017	Underway
1.23	Develop Gold Star Family regional promotion	Regional Tourism Council	Fall 2017	Proposed
1.24	Transfer management of City of Alamogordo camp grounds at Bonito Lake to Village of Ruidoso	Cities of Alamo / Ruidoso	Spring 2018	Proposed
1.26	Design and build two new splash parks in SET areas using recycled water	Carrizozo, IMG	Fall 2017	Proposed
1.27	Redesign Chamber of Commerce awards to recognize entrepreneurs, new business/industry start-ups, outstanding non-profits	Ruidoso Chamber Carrizozo Works Cloudcroft Chamber	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.28	Nominate local individuals and businesses for state-wide awards to increase regional exposure	All Partners	Spring 2017	Proposed
1.29	Expand September Motorcycle Rally events outside of Ruidoso and Mescalero	Cloudcroft, Carrizozo	August 2017	Proposed





1.30 Secure Alamogordo/Ruidoso/  
Ruidoso Downs ride share services  
from Uber or Lyft                      Regional Tourism Council      Winter 2017 Proposed

1.31 Create and implement new I-25, US 70/54, Carrizozo Works-led Group Fall 2017      Proposed  
US 380 'way finding' signage for Town of  
Carrizozo, Mescalero, Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs

1.32 Create new outdoor performance space      Town of Carrizozo      Spring 2018 Proposed  
in Carrizozo

1.33 Add free public WiFi for Carrizozo      Carrizozo Works      Winter 2017 Proposed

**Steps to Accomplish                      Responsibility                      Timeline                      Status**

1.34 Add new pickle ball courts to Carrizozo Town of Carrizozo                      Summer 2018 Proposed

1.36 Create/ operate a Lincoln County Museum Owner                      Fall 2017 Proposed  
Museum in Ruidoso at the Old Mill      Lincoln County Historical Society

1.37 Develop 'grandchild oriented' Summer programs USFS Smokey Bear District Spring 2017  
• Ranger Rick program at USFS District HQs                      Proposed



## Appendix G2 Plan of Action

### Strategic Goal Area: Agriculture, Forest/Wood Products, and Energy Production

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Goal Date	Status
2.1 Increase the number and speed of NEPA decisions in order to increase USFS Lincoln National Forest wood supply availability		Fall 2017	Proposed
2.2 Identify up to five geographic locations Lincoln and Otero Counties for wood cluster “parks” guided by the <b>NM Wood Supply Analysis</b> , for public, Tribal, private or public/private operation.	<i>SCMRCD Staff</i>	Spring 2017	Underway
2.3 Identify probable small diameter wood products	<i>SCMRCD Staff</i> NM Forest Industries Assn.	April 2017	Underway
2.4 Identify and cost out sort yard biomass energy generator	County Forester <i>GSWA</i>	August 2017	Underway
2.5 Design sort yard prototype with 1) portable sawmill; 2) siding processing; 3) firewood processing; 4) fence post/vigas processing; 5) flooring/siding; 6) pressure treatment; 7) biomass for electricity generation; 8) plywood fabrication	<i>SCMRCD Staff</i>	Fall 2016	Planned
2.6 Develop a capital investment strategy and solicit private investors	<i>SCMRCD Staff</i> VOR Community Development	Fall 2016	Planned
2.7 Create up to five (5) escrow fund reforestation projects in region	<i>SCMRCD</i> the Nature Conservancy	By 2018	In discussion
2.8 Identify and publish monthly restoration project list in Lincoln/Mescalero /Otero Counties; distribute list	<i>SCMRCD</i> BLM, State Forestry LNF; Soil Conservation Districts	Fall 2016	Underway

**Key: *SCMRCD* – Southcentral Mountain Resource Conservation District.  
*SCMEDA Group* – Southcentral Mountain Economic Development Association**

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Goal Date	Status
2.9 Create marketing strategy covering <i>SCMRCD Staff</i> the Southwest, Northern Mexico, <i>NMSU-A SBDC Staff</i> the Borderplex with a .50 FTE marketing <i>SCMRCD</i> staff member or by private contract. Target affordable housing, “tiny” housing, firewood, building/property support, biomass industry sectors		By June 2017	Proposed
2.10 Connect Mescalero Sawmill to NM Tech technology assistance group	<i>VOR</i> Community Development	Fall 2016	Underway
2.11 Form official partnerships with organizations such as National Turkey Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and New Mexico Forest Products Industry to increase access to forest restoration jobs	<i>SCMRCD Staff</i>	Spring 2017	Planned
2.12 Enter into training agreement with ENMU-Ruidoso Contract Training/NM Workforce Connection to establish industry training schedule for topics such as wood inspection, certified logger training, etc.; continue annual Wood Summit	<i>SCMRCD</i>	Spring 2017	Underway
2.13 Develop value-added wood product logistics partnership with Borderplex near El Paso	<i>SCMEDA Group</i> Arrowhead Center	Spring 2017	Proposed
2.14 Identify, negotiate and secure at least eight [8] multi-year wood supply contracts, creating a sustainable wood supply chain, on behalf of wood cluster businesses	<i>SCMRCD Staff</i>	2018	Proposed
2.15 Develop two new vineyards near Lincoln and Hondo Valley	<i>SCMRCD</i> staff NMSU County Extension Service NM Wine and Grape Association	2018	In Discussion
2.16 Investigate creation of a new NMSU Viticulture Research Extension Center in the Hondo Valley	Jasper Riddle	Summer 2017	Underway



2.17 Identify opportunities and market patents to *NMSU Corona Ranch* Spring 2017 Proposed  
 agricultural entrepreneurs and Ag corporations *NMSU Arrowhead Center*

**Key:** *SCMRCD – Southcentral Mountain Resource Conservation District.*  
*SCMEDA Group – Southcentral Mountain Economic Development Association*

<b>Steps to Accomplish</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Goal Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
2.18 Develop annual farmer’s markets in Carrizozo Works Carrizozo, Capitan, Tularosa.	SCMEDA Group	Summer 2017	<i>Proposed</i>
2.19 Market NMDA-certified compost to orchards and vineyards in Otero County, southeast and southwest NM	SCMRCD Staff	Spring 2017	Proposed
2.20 Identify locations in the Carrizozo area for olive grove creation, shiitaki and portabella mushroom production; engage potential growers	NMSU County Extension Service	Spring 2017	Proposed
2.21 Introduce use of drones and sensor technology & smart phones in wood products, livestock, crop agriculture and energy production industries in southcentral mountain region	NMSU Corona Ranch Bayer Crop Science/Monsanto	Spring 2017	Proposed
2.22 Provide drone use training in agriculture	NMSU Corona Ranch Bayer Crop Science/Monsanto	Spring 2017	Proposed
2.23 Improve NMSU Arrowhead Center working relationship with NMSU Corona Ranch	NMSU Corona Ranch Advisory Board NMSU Deans	2017	Underway
2.25 Create NMSU-A SBDC and NMSU – Corona Ranch working relationship	James Miller/Trish Livingston	Spring 2017	Planned
2.26 Conduct housing, RV park, contractor/subcontractor office space inventory in Corona, Carrizozo, Capitan	Corona Landowners Assn. Carrizozo Works Inc. Carrizozo Chamber	Spring 2017	Planned
2.27 Develop local transportation, construction materials, professional services [surveying, title work, etc.], commercial solid waste removal list for national transmission and wind energy center construction companies	SCMEDA Group Mescalero Apache Tribe Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce		Underway



- 2.28 Coordinate training agreement with NM Workforce Connection, NMSU-A and ENMU-Ruidoso Contract Training to refer regional residents to other institutions [wind energy] or to establish local [PV solar] technician training [Replicate as needed in Mescalero and Otero County] SCMEDA Group 2018 Planned

**Key:** *SCMRCD – Southcentral Mountain Resource Conservation District.*  
*SCMEDA Group – Southcentral Mountain Economic Development Association*

<b>Steps to Accomplish</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Goal Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
2.29 Establish and implement small business development service schedule in Carrizozo Corona for new support businesses	<i>SCMEDA Group</i> <i>NMSU-A SBDC</i> <i>James Miller</i>	Spring 2017	Planned
2.30 Establish incentives to promote apprenticeships in renewable energy industries	ENMU-Ruidoso and NMSU-A	Fall 2017	Proposed
2.31 Identify up to six [6] new distributed energy production and export sites using wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass energy sources	SCMEDA Group	Spring 2016	Underway
2.32 Create small logistics chain support businesses and jobs for pending wind energy center, transmission and solar energy facility projects in Lincoln County by 2019. [Opportunity can be extended into Mescalero and Otero County upon request]	Corona Landowners Assn. Carrizozo Works Ruidoso Chamber	Fall 2017	Proposed



## Appendix G3 Plan of Action

### Strategic Goal Area: Light Industry, Small Corporation and Workforce Expansion

Increase economically sustainable job opportunities throughout the region by creating, expanding or recruiting 20 new non-tourism corporations or light industries with 40 new full-time jobs by 2019.

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Goal Date	Status
3.1 Develop Ruidoso as a Southwestern SCMEDA Group wildfire consulting headquarters		Spring 2018	Proposed
3.2 Develop Ruidoso business accelerator, studio arts incubator and entrepreneurship center at the Horton Complex	Village of Ruidoso	Fall 2017	Proposed
3.3 Adopt a Mescalero Energy Development Plan for wind, solar, biomass energy project development at Mescalero	Mescalero Apache Tribe	2017	Proposed
3.4 Attract and develop six new, private/public senior living housing projects	SCMEDA Group CCA Group	Spring 2018	Proposed
3.5 Increase the number of family entertainment venues	SCMEDA Group	By 2020	Proposed
3.6 Attract, construct and operate a high altitude training center for college and professional athletes and adult recreation participants	SCMEDA Group	By 2018	Proposed
3.7 Create incentives to attract 4-5 microbreweries to Cloudcroft, VOR and Carrizozo	SCMEDA Group Chambers of Commerce	By 2018	Proposed
3.8 Connect NMSU Arrowhead Center with new entrepreneurial enterprises	SCMEDA Group NMSU-A SBDC	Spring 2017	Proposed



<b>Steps to Accomplish</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Goal Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
3.9 Develop Americorps/VISTA grant application for economic development VISTA volunteers assigned to Carrizozo, Ruidoso, Mescalero and Ruidoso Downs	Regional Americorps	Fall 2016	Underway
3.10 Establish new, scalable RV park in former Carrizozo Industrial Park	Carrizozo Town Council	Spring 2017	Proposed
3.11 Designate new 250 acre Valle del Sol area as new Carrizozo business/industrial park	Carrizozo Town Council Carrizozo Works Carrizozo Chamber of Commerce	2017	Proposed
3.12 Complete Town of Carrizozo Community Center remodel	Carrizozo Town Council	June 2017	On-hold
3.13 Create a 6 unit Commerce Center in Ruidoso Downs	SCMED Group	January 2018	Proposed
3.14 Create truck stops in Ruidoso Downs and Carrizozo with EV fast charge and CNG fast-fuel fueling	SCMED Group	By 2018	Underway
3.15 Attract another major film production in Lincoln County w/post-filming attraction plan	Lincoln County Film office	December 2017	Proposed
3.16 Lease Camp Sierra Blanca from State of NM to create youth/ENMU training center	Ted Allen Group ENMU	By 2018	Proposed
3.17 Reopen or attract new businesses in Carrizozo			
• Re-open Roy's Ice Cream Parlour	Carrizozo Works	2017	Underway
• Attract a new hardware store	Carrizozo Works	2018	Proposed
• Open new resale/thrift shop	Carrizozo Works	2017	Proposed
• Create four bed and breakfasts	Carrizozo Works	2018	Proposed



Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Goal Date	Status
3.18 Develop New Construction projects [via public/private partnerships] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two new single unit or multifamily housing developments in Ruidoso</li> <li>• A Veteran' Village in Ruidoso</li> <li>• Three additional housing projects in Ruidoso Downs : multifamily; a second single unit Section 8 HUD project; a third Veterans 'small house' [400 to &lt;1,000 square feet] project.</li> <li>• Three additional housing projects in Carrizozo: one modeled after Casa Manana; a second Section 8 HUD project; a third Veterans 'small house' [&lt;1,000 square feet] project.</li> <li>• Single housing units Section 8 or USDA funded along US Highway 70 for Mescalero families</li> <li>• 48 new Mescalero housing units</li> </ul>	SCMEDA Group	2020	Proposed
3.19 Create incentives and pursue three [3] 'rec tech' industries to relocate to southcentral mountain region; outdoor products testing area	SCMEDA Group	by 2018	Proposed
3.20 Reduce unnecessary or VOR Community Development out-of-date VOR regulations by 20%		by 2018	Proposed
3.21 Develop short-term incentives for and create a US Highway 70 Ruidoso Downs enterprise zone	City of Ruidoso Downs	2017	Proposed
3.22 Develop and implement a 'solo work' attraction strategy for the region; Implement strategy	SCMEDA Group	Fall 2017	Proposed





<b>Steps to Accomplish</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Goal Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
3.23 Lease new offices at OCEC HQ in Cloudcroft to professional service businesses	OCEC General Manager	Fall 2016	Underway
3.24 Design and implement K-12 Teacher training program for Mescalero Tribal members	ENMU System Mescalero Apache Tribe	Fall 2016	Underway
3.25 Create specific pathways for regional veterans to transition from military service to economically sustainable civilian jobs	ENMU-Ruidoso NMSU-A	2017	Proposed
3.26 Continue aggressive anti-drug enforcement activities in Mescalero, Lincoln and Otero Counties	County Sheriff Departments Municipal Police Depts. NM State Police/DEA	Ongoing	Underway
3.27 Establish incubators at the higher education institutions in the region and partner with SBDCs to provide business development training and services	NMSU-Alamogordo ENMU-Ruidoso NM Workforce Connection		
3.28 Target specific occupations For training to support regional Economic development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-K to 12 teachers</li> <li>• Renewable Energy workers</li> <li>• Wildland fire fighters</li> <li>• Law Enforcement</li> <li>• Certified Healthcare providers</li> </ul>	ENMU-Ruidoso NMSU-Alamogordo	Fall 2017	Proposed
3.29 Identity and establish additional, annual non-credit training opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NMED water system operator training /recertification</li> </ul>	ENMU-Ruidoso NMSU-Alamogordo	2017	Proposed



- NMED wastewater system operator training /recertification
- Volunteer fire fighter training
- First responders
- 

<b>Steps to Accomplish</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Goal Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
3.30 Obtain ARRP Age-Certified Community Status for County and Interested Municipalities Establish 50+ Employment Program	CAAC	2017	Underway
3.31 Develop and staff Aging Well Resource Center			
3.32 Improve community transportation programs through additional public/private investment or inter-county partnerships	Municipalities Lincoln County Z-Tran; Shuttle Ruidoso LLC		
3.33 Expand Lincoln County Transit system to Capitan, Carrizozo and Glencoe to help transport necessary workforce ds	Municipalities Lincoln County	2017	Proposed
3.34 Consolidate all workforce activity into one easily accessible, identifiable central location in Lincoln and in Otero Counties	NM Workforce Connection ENMU-Ruidoso NM State Agencies	2017	Proposed
3.35 Create a regional career/technical high school in Lincoln County for six leading technical occupations of the future	Region IX REC ENMU-Ruidoso	2019	Proposed
3.36 Provide technical assistance to Lincoln County business owners and contractors who wish to become defense contractors at WSMR			

## Appendix G4 Plan of Action

### Strategic Goal Area:

### Biomedical and Biotechnical [Wellness, Medical and Behavioral Health Services]

Improve the wellness of the regional community through innovative approaches and new collaborations to wellness, medical and behavioral health services through

- Improved access to healthcare.
- Expand knowledge and availability of nutrition, fitness, stress management and alternative healthcare.
- Address regional healthcare issues:
  - Hypertension
  - Teen pregnancy
  - Substance abuse
  - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
  - Heart disease
  - Physical fitness
  - Access to food and adequate nutrition
  - Eldercare

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Goal Date	Status
6.1 Establish a new task force to assess and engage on healthcare and wellness issues on an ongoing basis.	SCMEDA Group	Feb 2017	Proposed
6.2 Improve access to healthcare. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure new hospital building in Ruidoso</li> <li>• Expand health clinic network in Lincoln County</li> <li>• Implement health clinic in Ruidoso Downs</li> <li>• Encourage collaborations: Mescalero/ Lincoln County Medical; Gerald Champion/ Lincoln County Medical; Lincoln County Medical/PMS/PMG</li> <li>• Expand access to holistic medicine</li> <li>• Create a new primary care clinic in Ruidoso Downs</li> <li>• Secure local oncology services in Lincoln County</li> </ul>	Regional Task Force	2020	Proposed

- Secure dialysis services in Ruidoso/Mescalero
- Secure elderly care services (assisted living

Steps to Accomplish	Responsibility	Goal Date	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long-term facilities) in Lincoln County</li> <li>• Increase specialty services within region</li> <li>• Effectively communicate available wellness and medical services within region</li> <li>• Exploit technology to address healthcare Services</li> <li>• Address transportation needs in Lincoln County</li> </ul>			
<p>6.3 Improve healthcare/wellness educational opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand ENMU-R curriculum to include courses in nutrition, holistic medicine and physical fitness (wellness vocations)</li> <li>• Expand dual-credit curriculum to include nursing, nutrition and physical fitness</li> <li>• Use the National Health Service Corps training model to increase the number of providers</li> <li>• Offer workshops on holistic medicine, nutrition and physical fitness</li> <li>• Select four occupations from 2016 New Mexico State Health Innovation Plan and implement certification programs</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Task Force ENMU-Ruidoso LCMC / PMS NMSU-A</p>	<p>Spring 2018</p>	<p>Proposed</p>
<p>6.4 Address lifestyle issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase physical activity of citizens</li> <li>• Reduce reliance on prescribed drugs</li> <li>• Reduce teenage pregnancy</li> <li>• Reduce hypertension through diet</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Task Force</p>	<p>2018</p>	<p>Proposed</p>

## **Appendix 5 - Regional Assets**

### ***Top Ranked Strengths Rated by Participants***

1. Natural resources [59]
2. Outdoor Recreation [43]
3. Tourism / Regional Destination [65]
4. Arts / Culture / History [35]
5. Government Diversity [26]
6. Temperate Climate [24]

### ***Complete List of Rated Strengths [No Particular Order and Participant Ratings]***

1. ENMU – Ruidoso [14]
2. Arts/Culture/History [35]
3. Holloman AFB and returning retirees [8]
4. [Area] attracts a very diverse group of people; [it's] a safe area [18]
5. Biomass and forest restoration [14]
6. Lincoln County Medical Center [5]
7. Tourism / regional destination [65]
8. Sense of community / life style [9]
9. Physical place / culture connection [4]
10. Temperate climate [24]
11. Historical uniqueness [14]
12. Many long-standing small businesses [3]
  
13. Land use – playground of the Southwest [7]
14. Natural resources [59]
15. Low cost of living [6]
16. Infrastructure access to 3 air ports [4]
17. Government diversity (Tribal, county, municipal) – opportunity for economic development collaboration [26]
18. Ski resort [3]
19. Outdoor recreation [43]

Strong Chamber of Commerce [Ruidoso] [7]



## ***Appendix 6: Potential Barriers and Challenges***

### ***Top Ranked Challenges Rated by Participants***

1. Affordable Housing [48]
2. Underdeveloped Infrastructure and Water Supply [32]
3. Lack of High Speed Broadband and Intergovernmental Communication [27]

### ***Complete List of Rated Challenges [No Particular Order and Participant Ratings]***

1. Need for a Dialysis Center [3]
2. Underdeveloped Infrastructure [32]\*
3. Workforce that can pass a drug test [14]
4. Lack of public transportation including an airport [18]
5. Lack of Affordable Housing [48]\*
6. Property neglect/Blight [13]
7. Lack of high speed broadband structure [27]\*
8. Vulnerable youth/families/elderly [9]
9. Acceptance of Outsiders [0]
10. Customer service skills [11]
11. Lack of senior services, i.e. medical specialists [11]
12. Water supply [32]\*
13. Remoteness of region [10]
14. High cost of land development [7]
15. Lack of decent paying jobs /job opportunities [22]
16. Need for 'shoulder season' tourism expansion [3]
17. Lack of four year university [1]
18. High sales tax [3]
19. Missed communication opportunities between communities [11]
20. Adequate facilities for drug treatment, abuse and mental health [3]
21. Lack of communication between government entities [27]\*
22. Lack of healthcare [3]
23. Cohesive focus and community engagement [7]
24. Relatively high energy and transportation-to-market costs [1]
25. General funding and budgetary governmental constraints [1]
26. Voter apathy [7]
27. Lack of activities for young people [14]
28. Forest health [14]

***Total Group Lists [all suggestions each group]***

1. Workforce and positive incentives
2. Affordable housing
3. Location
4. Health care/ Energy
5. Lack of public transportation
6. Public infrastructure – housing and water
7. Broadband and internet
8. Health care
9. Transportation to and from airport
10. Communication/internet dead spots, hi-speed internet
11. Lack of reliable workforce & skillsets
12. Lack of senior citizen services
13. Water
14. Apathy – citizen & work ethic
15. Lack of large employers
16. Cost of living
17. Blight and property neglect
18. Non-governmental collaboration disconnect. Apathy.
19. Infrastructure
20. Broadband – fiber optic limitations [jobs]
21. Senior services – services lack. Including medical services.
22. Water
23. Workforce [lack]
24. Limited industry
25. Jobs
26. Infrastructure
27. Resources
28. Governmental coordination
29. Lack of industry
30. Manufacturing
31. Funding
32. Affordable Housing
33. Jobs – diversity and skilled workforce
34. Geography – remoteness and cost of development
35. Funding constraints
36. Lack of transportation – a commercial airport
37. Lack of a four year university
38. Lack of healthcare specialists
39. Lack of career choices
40. Drugs / alcohol / poverty

41. Quality of workforce
42. Aging infrastructure
43. Lack of high paying, decent jobs
44. Acceptance of outsiders
45. Lack of interpersonal skills
46. Lack of cooperation among communities
47. Water/Forest health
48. Lack of infrastructure – roads, [hi-speed] broadband; sidewalks, transportation
49. Workforce and social capital. Fractured community, lack of communication, sharing information. Need to set common goals.
50. Vulnerable youth families, elderly, disabled populations
51. Workforce
52. Water to support growth
53. Affordable housing
54. Expand tourism in shoulder season

xxxxx





## **Evidence Base for the Plan**

### **Regional Infrastructure Status**

#### **1. Housing**

The lack of affordable, safe, energy efficient workforce housing has been identified as the single highest infrastructure priority in every discussion group on every discussion occasion in the past year across the two county region.

##### **Ruidoso**

The Village of Ruidoso commissioned an Affordable Housing Plan in 2015. Housing needs are most acute for affordable rental units, of which 230 units are now needed. Households earning between 60% and 120% of the Area Median Income are in need of 180 affordable housing units for purchase. At least 30 units are needed for senior housing. Another 25 units are needed for transitional housing. Finally, it is estimated that 370 existing units, within the Village of Ruidoso, are in need of housing rehabilitation.

The Village has enacted an Affordable Housing Ordinance and an Affordable Housing Land Bank and Trust. Both will enable the Village to offer incentives to developers in order to facilitate the construction of affordable housing units for rent or sale. The Land Bank will allow the Village to sell or trade Village-owned properties for affordable housing development.

Additional housing projects exist in Carrizozo, Mescalero and Ruidoso Downs but are not included in the chart below. Many need rehabilitation and have long waiting lines for occupancy.

## Existing Affordable Housing Programs

### Subsidized Rental Housing

There are five affordable apartment complexes in Lincoln County. The complexes that are located in Ruidoso are La Tierra, which is set aside for older adults aged 55 and up and Camelot, which has one-, two- and three-bedroom units for individuals and families. All of the affordable housing projects in Lincoln County have waiting lists, and the few vacancies are short-term and the result of a mismatch between the households on the waiting list and the units available. A listing of projects is in Table 39.

**Table 39. Affordable Rental Housing Complexes in Ruidoso**

Complex Name	Subsidizing Organization	Total Units	Number on Waiting List	Eligibility	At Risk of No Longer Being Affordable?
<b>La Tierra</b>	LIHTC, accept Section 8 vouchers	60 1 and 2 bedroom	18	Age 55+	No
<b>Inspiration Heights (Ruidoso Downs)</b>	Section 515/ Rural Development Rental Assistance	48 assisted rental units with one, two and three bedrooms	--	--	--
<b>Ladera Apartment Homes (Ruidoso Downs)</b>	LIHTC, Section 8 vouchers	60 rental units with one, two and three bedrooms	10	18 +	No
<b>Camelot Place Apartments</b>	RD Section 515	71 rental units with one, two and three bedroom	20	Family	No
<b>Casa Manana (Carrizozo)</b>	RD Section 515	8 one bedroom units	4	62+ or disabled	No
<b>La Tierra</b>	RD Section 515	60 assisted rental units with one, two and three bedrooms	NA	18+	No
<b>Special Needs</b>					
<b>The Nest Shelter</b>	NA	28 beds	0	Domestic violence victims and their families	NA
<b>Transitional housing</b>					
<b>Woodland Ridge Condominiums</b>	Church Out of Church	12 Units/48 person maximum occupancy	4 units are being remodeled, do not maintain a waiting list	All	No
<b>Puerto Esperanza</b>	Angus Church of the Nazarene	Considering purchase and renovation of Nob Hill Lodge	Existing lodge has 16 rooms	Youth exiting foster care, other	Project is in planning phases

Sources: affordablehousingonline.com; project managers

There are also special needs housing across the region for the following:

- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Homelessness Prevention
- Elderly Housing
- Adults with Disabilities Housing
- Transitional Housing
- Veteran's Housing

#### **Recommendations [Village of Ruidoso]:**

- **Modifications to Existing Ordinances:** *Amend commercial zones to allow residential and mixed use development; reduce minimum lot sizes in residential zones; and allow accessory dwelling units as a conditional use in the R-1 zone.*
- **Code Enforcement:** *Develop a property maintenance code that enables the Village to ensure landlords maintain their properties.*
- **Streamline Processes:** *Expedite the development review process and allow the Planning & Zoning Department greater latitude in administrative approvals.*
- **Reduced Fees:** *Typical fees for a single family home total \$2,200. Fee waivers could be applied to households with incomes at 80% of the Area Median Income or below.*
- **Partnerships:** *The Village can work with other governmental entities (County, Ruidoso Municipal School District) or large employers (Lincoln County Medical Center, ENMU-R) to support and attract a qualified workforce through affordable housing.*
- **Alternative Acquisition of Lots:** *Acquire lots that are in foreclosure or are subject to property tax liens.*
- **Facilitate Education:** *Provide information to both landlords and the public on resources available to address housing needs.*
- **Rehabilitate Existing Structures:** *Support renovation through outreach and leveraging of various federal and state grant opportunities.*
- **Homebuyer Assistance:** *Partner with local mortgage lenders; work with regional non-profits; MFA, USDA on identifying programs that can assist homebuyers.*

#### **Additional Recommendations [all entities]**

**Recommendation:** *Creation of a SE NM Housing Authority office in Ruidoso or Ruidoso Downs. Each SET entity should immediately identify a staff member or capable volunteer who can devote substantial time to investigate expansion of housing, working USDA Rural Development sub-office in Roswell, the HUD Section 8 Housing Albuquerque Field office.*

**Recommendation:** *Creation of three additional housing projects in Carrizozo: one modeled after Casa Manana; a second Section 8 HUD project; a third Veterans 'small house' [<1,000 square feet] project.*

**Recommendation:** Request annually energy efficiency projects to existing public housing in the region from SE New Mexico Housing Authority

**Recommendation:** Create new investor/contractor incentives for housing developments in Ruidoso Downs, Carrizozo and Ruidoso

**Recommendation:** The Mescalero Tribe should identify a staff member to work with the USDA Rural Development sub-office in Roswell and the HUD Section 8 Housing Albuquerque Field office on expanding site-built housing on the reservation.

**Recommendation:** Develop up to 4 new housing developments of 'small houses' [<1,000 square feet] across region for first time, and senior housing buyers.

**Recommendation:** Require annual maintenance on existing public and Tribal housing facilities from owners/managers.

## 2. Roads

### a. Lincoln County State and Federal Highway Summary

Current road surface conditions in Lincoln County are good. US380 between Capitan and Hondo is the worse section in the area. That section has its issues with historic Lincoln and lack of funding. US 54 north to Corona is the last stretch to have that corridor finished and it is in the planning stages for construction in the next three or four years. A resurfacing project will happen in the next year or so on the worse portion of Highway 70 near Glencoe. NMDOT just finished rebuilding two curves on Ski Run Road for safety reasons. US 70 got two overlays last summer, one through Mescalero and one through Ruidoso Downs, and just completed a US 380 overlay from the malpais west of Carrizozo to the US 380/NM37 intersection east of Carrizozo. Additional mileage on US 380 at Indian Divide is being chip sealed [August 2016]. Further improvements to US 54 north of Ancho are underway. NM Highway 246 (behind the Capitan Mountains) is poor, but not well traveled and doesn't get much attention. But - US 70, 380 and 54 are the main trunk lines and are in pretty good shape. NMDOT knows those being the main routes for commerce, and they are kept up.

**Recommendation:** NMDOT, working with regional municipalities, Tribal Council and counties should continue working on at least one major state and federal highway projects each year in the two county/reservation region.

### Otero County State and Federal Highway Summary

Current conditions are relatively good. Some road projects of significance took place in the last few years, and some projects are in the works to upgrade the conditions of the roadway and to mitigate some runoff issues.

Past projects in the past year include: US 54 south of Alamogordo for 11 miles was re-paved and finished this spring. The corridor from El Paso to Alamogordo is in good condition. The Bridge over La Luz Channel was also just complete.

Alamogordo, White Sands Blvd had a micro-surfacing done last summer. US 82 East of Cloudcroft and NM 6563 to Sunspot were recently chip sealed. US 70 at Holloman has a drainage project bidding this fall. US 70 between Dona Ana County line and Alamogordo is in good condition. US 54/70 between Alamogordo and Tularosa is in fair to poor condition. The NMDOT has four projects scheduled for 2016, 2017 and 2018. The Alamogordo bypass has an overlay planned. The four lane between Alamogordo and Tularosa is scheduled for repaving and shoulder work for 2017. There is also a drainage project planned for La Luz creek at the new bridge. Lastly there is an ADA Sidewalk project planned in Tularosa. These projects should get the corridor from Alamogordo to Tularosa in better condition.

US 54 North of Tularosa is in good condition to the county line with a major project to widen, repave and build shoulders taken place about 3 years ago. US 82 from Cloudcroft east is in good condition. The section between Alamogordo and Cloudcroft is in fair conditions, and there are two projects in the plan for this section. The first is some rockfall mitigation work on the section between Alamogordo and the tunnel. This work should take place this fall. The tunnel at High Rolls also has some re-work planned for the winter through to the spring. The work on the tunnel will have some traffic issues, as there is no real alternative for detour or re-routing traffic. Night time work has been suggested on the tunnel.

***Recommendation:*** NMDOT, working with regional municipalities, Tribal Council and counties should continue working on at least one major state and federal highway projects each year in the two county/reservation region.

**b. Carrizozo, Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs, Mescalero Roads**

SCMEDA entities participate in NMDOT school bus route, arterial and municipal cost-share programs and conduct annual road repair [Ruidoso] in-house or by private contractor through local government grants and arterial matching programs. Much of the work at Mescalero has been construction money or contract maintenance funds to surface or repave with Tribal matching funds. The US 54 redesign and replacement within the Town of Carrizozo is expected in 2017-2018. Both will support future economic development in the Carrizozo area. Ruidoso maintains 180 paved lanes of roads and 30 miles of dirt or gravel roads. Recently completed projects include an overlay of White Mountain drive and a walking path, selected street including Sutton Drive, and a realignment of the Grindstone Canyon Road into the new mid-town municipal parking lot. Pending projects include chip and fog sealing within the Town & County, Cree Meadows and Camelot subdivisions. Ruidoso Downs is conducting annual street replacement as a part of water distribution line replacement.

***Recommendation:*** Annual application for NMDOT county or municipal cost share funds and prioritization of roads that serve or improve economic

*development should be a high priority for each municipality, driven by an annual list of five [5] highest priority road projects.*

***Recommendation:*** *Ruidoso needs to assign highest priority to the Grindstone Canyon Road, the Convention Center entrance road and El Paso Road [through LCMC] and other high economic impact streets in the Mid-town area for work similar to the recently completed Sutton Drive. Continue to do so annually with other high economic priority streets.*

***Recommendation:*** *Village of Ruidoso / Lincoln County should apply for Sudderth/Mechem to revert to VOR roads and NM Highway 48 from a County road to an NMDOT Road. Reroute Mid-town Sudderth traffic to Wingfield and Rio streets.*

***Recommendation:*** *The Town of Carrizozo needs a major street replacement project each year such as the streets on the west and south of the Carrizozo Schools, with economic development potential high priority streets at the head of the list.*

### **c. County Roads**

Lincoln County has completed or has under discussion two multi-agency road improvement agreements that have economic development implications: the Cora Dutton Road chip seal connecting Nogal Mesa and Capitan; and, the Bonito Lake road under discussion.

***Recommendation:*** *Both Lincoln and Otero Counties should routinely include economic development considerations in establishing road improvement priorities of all types.*

## **3. Water**

Water continues to be a primary issue for the southcentral mountain region. The region has eight (8) large municipal water systems [plus Holloman AFB], and 88 domestic water associations or water/sanitation districts with less than 3000 customers [Lincoln], 77 similar organizations in Otero County and the Mescalero Tribal Water System of 10 well locations. Non-revenue water loss in the distribution system continues to be a significant problem across the region, ranging from <10% in some smaller systems to as much as 70% in larger systems.

Ruidoso has completed a total replacement of water meters with new radio-read meters that should improve leak monitoring and reduction of non-revenue water. Ruidoso Downs has had similar ARM technology for nearly a decade; some smaller systems are also installing ARM technology.

***Recommendation:*** *Domestic water associations, water and sanitation districts and municipalities need to aggressively seek or develop new funding sources to continue replacement of old distribution lines, valves to reduce non-revenue water loss. Further, rates need to be adjusted where necessary to develop*

*infrastructure development revenue. Finally, incentives should be developed through rebates or rate structure adjustments to motivate residential and commercial customers to reduce unnecessary water waste. A significant number of water system operator job vacancies continue to exist across the region. A regional water plan is underway.*

**Ruidoso Downs.**

Ruidoso Downs receives most of its water from a 24/7 spring, with three supplemental wells used as-needed. The system has 2 million gallons of storage, with tanks varying in condition and age. A new OSE agreement will allow Ruidoso Downs to use wells if its spring were to diminish production. A \$1.6 million distribution line replacement project will start in the next month or so. The Downs aggressively seeks funding for annual system upgrades.

**Mescalero.** The Mescalero Tribe operates ten [10] well locations/water systems, operated by sophisticated SCADA system at its main wastewater treatment plant on Highway 70. The system is operated by a NM and Tribal Level 4 Certified operator. Additional water system operators are needed for the outlying well sites.

**Ruidoso.** The Village of Ruidoso operates a complex water system of underground wells, tank and reservoir storage across a challenging topography. VOR has hired a Water Rights Specialist to better manage water consumption and production, and the former OSE State Engineer as its water consultant. The Village is aggressively working on reducing significant non-revenue water loss and increasing its water resources for its vast water distribution system. VOR has recently completed addition of ARM meters and SCADA controls, plus a \$3.5 million liner restoration in its primary surface storage reservoir, Grindstone Lake. A new large meter project at VOR storage tanks is underway. Interconnection between the Village's two water treatment facilities has been completed, allowing a single plant to serve the needs of the entire Village in the event of problems at the remaining plant. A major Alto Reservoir improvement project will also start in the near future. A Water Conservation Plan has been adopted. Ruidoso voters, in 2014 and, again, in 2016, have approved two separate \$3 million general obligation bonds to support improvements in the water infrastructure.

The Village has commenced efforts to organize a regional collaboration for water.

The VOR system is currently operated by Level 4 Certified operators, but due to turnover, has a continual need for NMED certified system operators.

**Carrizozo.** The Town of Carrizozo primarily receives water from two wells east of Town and from Bonito Lake [pre-Little Bear Fire in 2012] and owns 834 acre feet of water rights. With storage capacity of 1,250,000 gallons, the system pumps

8.5 million gallons per month [July 2016], of which 65% is revenue water. The system has a current leak ratio of 19%. Level 3 Operator and in the black in May for the first time in years.

**Recommendation:** *The Town of Carrizozo should seek external funding to systematically replace distribution lines and to begin the transition from older mechanical water meters to ARM meters.*

### **Desalination.**

The southcentral mountain/high plains region continues to be challenged by limited potable ground water supplies. Conservation, gray water use and usage collected rainwater [as ranchers and miners did in the region more than 100 years ago] are now being employed on a limited extent in an attempt to enhance the limited ground water supplies. Significant amounts of brackish and saline groundwater exist in the Tularosa Basin adjoining both counties. The potential for in-land desalination, particularly for water with less than Total Dissolved Solids of 10,000 mg/L is under investigation primarily in Otero County. Brine and waste disposal, deep well depths and intensive/expensive energy use by current recovery technologies limit the potential to expand potable or limited agricultural usage in the foreseeable future in this region.

**Recommendation:** *Initiate a meeting and extended conversation with the nation of Israel on desalination and new agricultural uses of water.*

## **4. Wastewater**

**Carrizozo.** Built in 2004, the lagoon-type facility rated at 180,000+ gallons per day generally considered to be oversized for Town population. May 2016 usage was 36,000 gallons per day. The plant has had operational difficulties due to smaller than needed in-flows, but as sufficient capacity to handle economic development over the next decade. There were two small, solids settling ponds, which were being aerated. Solids are removed in the metal building at the site. There are five facilitative lagoons, which are arranged so that wastewater can gravity flow from one to a consecutive pond. Ponds 1 and 2 were green in color and musky smelling, indicating good treatment was occurring. Pond 3 was a milky, white in color; smelled foul, and was determined to be septic. Ponds 4 and 5 have been taken off-line due to liner problems. Wastewater was not being discharged at this time of year. Water evaporates fast enough to keep water levels static. Effluent is discharged to a nearby ranch and distributed through a sprinkler system. The plant is operated by a certified operator with NMED Wastewater Operator 3 certification through the New Mexico Operator Certification Program. The plant has capacity for a population of 20,000, more than enough capacity exists for economic expansion in the Carrizozo community.

**Recommendation:** *Immediate repair of Pond 4 and Pond 5 with Colonias funds.*



**Regional MBR Waste Water Treatment Facility** [Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs, Inn of the Mountain Gods, Mescalero Travel Center]. The current facility was built in 2011, under a Joint Powers Agreement between the Village of Ruidoso and the City of Ruidoso Downs originated in 1974. Operating expenses for the WWTP are split, 85% are covered by Ruidoso and the remaining 15% are covered by Ruidoso Downs. The plant treats approximately 584 million gallons of wastewater per year, utilizing MBR [membrane bioreactor technology] to achieve EPA discharge standards, with an average daily volume of 1.6 million gallons. The plant can currently process up to 2.7 million gallons per day (985 million gallons per year). The framework is in place to increase future production capacity to 3.6 million gallons per day and to accommodate the seasonality of the area population. Approximately 3,000 additional Ruidoso residences on septic systems will eventually be added to the WWTP plant. The plant is operated by certified operators with NMED Wastewater Operator 4 certification through the NM Operator Certification program. There is sufficient capacity beyond these additions to handle economic development over the next decade in Ruidoso Downs, Ruidoso, and at the Inn and Travel Center.

**Recommendation:** *Continued work with the NMED Energy Management and Conservation Department on energy efficiency improvements at the plant; and, consideration of a 2.0 MW, third party-funded and operated PV solar facility to provide lower cost electricity for plant operation.*

#### **Mescalero Wastewater Treatment Facilities [East]**

Mescalero Wastewater Treatment Plant [east side] adjacent to Mescalero Apache School and adjoining housing area. The facility was built in 2011, with two lagoons and no solids separation. Effluent flows directly into the lagoon. Only one lagoon is currently being used with good treatment occurring. A mechanical aerator was also in operation. A liner was not observed, but it may have been covered with soil to prevent degradation. There was a typical variety of aquatic vegetation on the pond edge, with several ducks swimming in the lagoons.

**Mescalero Main Wastewater Treatment Plant [West]** Built in 1999, the plant is an activated sludge plant with a well-aerated aeration basin with proper treatment occurring. The plant is rated at 250,000 GPD and is operating at 172,000 Gallons per day [July 2016]. The Tribe is in the process of connecting housing areas and individual tribal member houses along US 70 to the West side plant. The plant is actively managed by dual Certified NMED/Tribal Level 4 Operator with Wastewater 4 and Water 4 certification through the New Mexico Operator Certification Program. The plant has sufficient capacity for economic expansion on the west side of the Reservation. Source: Carl Stubbs, retired NMED.

**Recommendation:** *The Mescalero Tribe should work with the NM Workforce Center – Lincoln County and ENMU-Ruidoso Contract Training Director for obtaining Tribal member training for certified water system operators.*

## **5. Electrical Power and Natural Gas**

**Public Service Company of New Mexico [PNM]** purchased Texas-New Mexico Power Company which served the City of Ruidoso Downs, the Village of Ruidoso and Ski Apache in 2005. PNM also serves Alamogordo, La Luz, and Tularosa. Service includes two recently constructed 5 MW and 7 MW PV solar generation facilities near the Alamogordo/White Sands Regional Airport and near La Luz. In Lincoln County, distribution infrastructure is aging, probably from the 1960s and 1970s, including the Gavilan Substation. Potential addition of new aerial fiber optic broadband cables to PNM poles is another business opportunity as well as a challenge PNM in the Ruidoso/Ruidoso Downs service area and rural coops elsewhere in the southcentral mountain area.

PNM is experiencing a shift in its time-of-the-day, retail load profile. The shift is taking place due to the relatively new emphasis on air conditioning in early afternoon-to-late afternoon across the mountain region in both retrofit and new construction.

***Recommendation:*** *New, sustained PNM investment in upgrading infrastructure over the next 5-10 years, and resumption of aggressive tree thinning in utility right-of-ways in its Lincoln County service area.*

**Otero County Electric Inc. [OCEC]** serves the Mescalero Reservation, the Town of Carrizozo, eastern Ruidoso Downs and other outlying parts of Lincoln County. OCEC also serves the rural portions of Otero County. Service includes a 75 kWh PV solar facility near the Alamogordo US 54/70 by-pass. The OCEC distribution system is of varying ages, through acquisition from earlier small municipal utilities, railroad systems and its own earlier construction. The Reservation has two OCEC/TGST substations built in early 2000, the Blazer and the Carrizo Substations, which sit astride the TGST transmission line that serves both PNM and OCEC into Lincoln County. Construction north of the Alto area on the new Rainmaker Substation was completed last summer. The region is well suited for PV solar power generation, due to southern latitude and elevation. OCEC has several such projects under consideration near the Town of Carrizozo. OCEC made a commitment in May 2015 to rebuild the complete power infrastructure within the Town of Carrizozo, removing two older substations and consolidating one substation built by OCEC in 1995. Other future projects include replacement of the underground system in Rancho Ruidoso Valley Estates. Additional system upgrading is needed in the Alto area due to aging infrastructure, increased population, and continuing subdivision expansion since the early 1990s. The OCEC load profile has been flat for the past few years but has historically increased and shifted due to the increased use of air conditioning in both new and older homes and businesses. The OCEC system can currently handle future economic growth, but will need to continue to make system upgrades if growth accelerates.

**Recommendation:** Continued, annual investment in upgrading distribution systems in Carrizozo, Capitan and Alto to assist workforce housing growth, home-based/solo work business growth in Alto, and increased economic development across Lincoln County.

### **Natural Gas**

Natural gas as a domestic cooking and heating fuel is provided in the southcentral mountain region by Zia Natural Gas Company and New Mexico Gas Company. Propane and butane is used in the more rural areas. CNG has high potential for use a bus and large truck fuel source.

**Recommendation:** Add CNG and LNG fast-fuel stations in the two county area on US 54 and US 70 for potential economic development along federal highways. Add CNG and LNG slow –fuel stations for municipal and county truck fleets in the region.

## **6. Solid Waste Disposal**

Solid waste disposal, recycling and landfill services in the region are provided by the Greentree Solid Waste Authority [Carrizozo, Ruidoso Downs, Ruidoso (recycling only), and Mescalero (the Inn and Travel Center, plus other specialized services). The Village of Ruidoso provides its own solid waste disposal service. Mescalero conducts solid waste collection in-house with disposal at the Greentree Transfer Station in Ruidoso Downs. All solid waste is landfilled at the Otero-Greentree Landfill on US70 south of Alamogordo. The Otero-Greentree Landfill has ample capacity for several more decades. With proper asset management and capital funding, Greentree and VOR, Southwest Disposal, and the City of Tularosa have ample capacity to continue and expand solid waste collection and recycling services.

**Recommendation:** Continued investment in solid waste equipment identified in asset management plans. Creation of a upgraded solid waste system throughout the Mescalero Apache Reservation.

## **7. Aviation**

An important goal of general aviation in the southcentral mountain region is support of economic development [NMDOT 2016]. 120 jobs are currently dependent directly or indirectly on regional aviation. Toward that end, NMDOT has updated the NM Airport System Plan recently with the following analysis and forecast. This region is served by one Commercial Service Airport - the Alamogordo-White Sands Regional Airport, and two General Aviation airports - the Sierra Blanca Regional Airport and the Carrizozo Municipal Airport. Alamogordo-White Sands is of particular importance as the Alamogordo

Interagency Dispatch Center [ADC] and Air Tanker Base. The Sierra Blanca Airport also serves as an Air Tanker base on occasion. Sierra Blanca is also a participant in a regional group that is supporting air service through American Eagle into Roswell. This effort has resulted in a number of daily flights between Roswell and Dallas. A new route, between Roswell and Phoenix commenced daily operation in March. No increase in military aviation air traffic is expected through 2025.

The Aviation Operations regional forecast expects commercial air service to grow significantly at Alamogordo – White Sands through 2025. In summary, NMDOT believes that oil prices will increase at a rate of 2.5% per year through 2025, which will support growth in regional aviation.

**Recommendation:** *Municipalities, both Counties and the Tribe need to follow through on NMDOT-recommended infrastructure investment through New Mexico Airport System Plan or Capital Improvement Plan funding in the region's three airports: ALM, \$29,934,045; SRR, \$18,131,711 and Carrizozo, \$6,491,440.*

**Recommendation:** *Obtain 'jumper' air service to Sierra Blanca Regional Airport*

## **8. High Speed Broadband and 4G Cellular Service Broadband.**

As a most promising area for prospective business/industry development, the southcentral mountain region is driven to meet the needs of the business, institutional and governmental community for better, faster, and unencumbered broadband data access. Current telecommunications providers have been repeatedly challenged to provide high speed broadband access for the business and residential community to meet continually growing demand but are having difficulty doing so.

Availability of buried and aerial high speed broadband appears to be a key to growing the regional economy by supporting applications for public safety, education and training, business and telemedicine. However, the current lack of high speed broadband service, particularly upload speeds, continues to be a barrier to economic growth and an overall communications problem in southern Lincoln County [Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs] and eastern/southeastern Otero County [Mayhill, Weed, Sacramento, Pinon, Timberon].

According to the regional business community, significant discrepancies exist between "advertised versus actual" speeds. Part of the problem is acknowledged to be the 'last mile' backbone, the older copper-to-the-premises service. The incumbent providers appear to be reluctant to make large capital investments necessary for markets, for example, the size of Ruidoso/Ruidoso Downs. Replacement and build-out schedules when discussed are insufficient to support current service needs and anticipated economic growth.

The Village of Ruidoso has taken the leadership in capacity building through public conversations with national companies such as incumbent providers Windstream Communications, and TDS Telecom, and outlying regional companies such as Mescalero Apache Telecom Inc. [MATI] and Tularosa Communications Inc. [TCI].

Additional cell phone towers or 3G replacements continue in both counties. MATI has provided the leadership on the nearby Mescalero Reservation by obtaining USDA Rural Development funding to install fiber optics across the Reservation. Finally, two 1980s analog television sites have been recently updated with new towers and digital equipment for public and commercial television distribution at two Mescalero high mountain locations by KENW Television at ENMU in Portales, for the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

**Recommendation:** *Create and implement two-part Broadband/4G Cell service plan for southern Lincoln County and rural Otero County by January 2017*

**Recommendation:** Revise and adopt new broadband franchise agreements in Ruidoso Downs

**Recommendation:** Apply for US EPA 'Cool and Connected' for Mid-town Ruidoso, All-American Park Ruidoso Downs and 12<sup>th</sup> street Carrizozo.

**Recommendation:** Seek private/public investment funds for built-out of upgrade Alto/Ruidoso/Ruidoso Downs system and rural Otero County.

**Recommendation:** Through ENMU-Ruidoso, conduct BICSI training series for broadband providers including MATI and TCI [CAT 5-6, Fiber-Optics, Aerial Installation, Pole-Top Rescue]

### **Cell Service.**

Increased usage of cell service –based data plans in the Lincoln County, Mescalero and northern Otero County areas are causing cell companies to erect new towers and equipment that provide 4G cell service closer together and more closely along the major highways in the region. Lincoln County now has 41 cell tower sites which are 1) abandoned older 3G sites; 2) new 4G sites. Additional sites are being identified as data service demand by tourists and local residents continues to grow.

**Recommendation:** *Continued investment by cellular companies in additional 4 G sites throughout the southcentral mountain region.*

**Recommendation:** *Public, Tribal and private entities should investigate the suitability of their mountain sites for additional cellular tower, long term leases.*

## **9. Public Recreation Infrastructure**

A key component of the regional economy is tourism and recreation. As the number of visitors to the region continues to recently increase, the availability of park and recreational tourism venues becomes more important. Expansion of public recreation infrastructure is an important priority in the next 5-10 years.

**Ruidoso.** The Village's park system comprises eleven parks and open spaces that total over 700 acres of land. Parks, lakes and open space include over 26 miles of trails and pathways within the Village, eight pavilions and seven athletic fields for baseball, softball, soccer and football. A major children's playground "Kids Connection" was built just following 9/11 at the White Mountain Complex; several other children's playgrounds are available on school playgrounds and at Wingfield Park. The Grindstone Lake area, managed by the Village, has 18 miles of trails. The Links trail, located in the heart of the Village, is a three-mile paved path. Walking trails within the Village also include the River Trail, a major expansion phase of which is now underway.

Golfing opportunities abound throughout the region, although golfing has been struggling as a sport nationally. There are two eighteen-hole golf courses located within the Village: The Links, a municipal golf course, and Cree Meadows, a semi-private club. Five other golf courses are located within an eight-mile radius of the Village: Alto Lakes Golf and Country Club, the Outlaw, Kokopelli, Rainmaker's and the Inn of the Mountain Gods.

**Recommendation:** Completion and marketing of the River Trail system.

**Recommendation:** Construction of two additional four field softball complexes.

**Mescalero.** Mescalero recreational facilities are largely part of the Inn of the Mountain Gods and Ski Apache complexes.

**Recommendation:** Construction of two Tribal parks, westside and eastside of summit for Tribal members and their guests.

**Recommendation:** Replace all children's playground centers in Tribal housing areas, add a large children's playground near the Community Center Post office.

**Ruidoso Downs.** The city has three large parks with walking trails, a softball/baseball athletic field and public basketball court, skateboard and BMX field within the City.

**Recommendation:** Add a USFS walking/biking trail adjacent to the Downs.

**Recommendation:** Add four field softball complex.

**Carrizozo.** The town has two older parks with children's playground equipment and a former municipal golf course where a Little League field and a fishing lake are located.

**Recommendation:** Upgrade Fred Chavez Park playground equipment. Add a bike paths and a children's playground at Valle del Sol.

## 10. Wellness, Behavioral and Medical Facilities

### **Wellness.**

There are currently no public wellness facilities other than recreational [see Public Recreation section].

### **Behavioral**

There are no behavioral health inpatient or outpatient facilities in the region.

### ***Military and Indian Health Service Medical Facilities***

The Mescalero Service Unit of the Indian Health Service is located in Mescalero. The facility includes inpatient and outpatient medical and behavioral care. The 49<sup>th</sup> Medical group operates a day clinic on Holloman AFB for military personnel, dependents and veterans.

### ***General***

There are two regional medical centers in the southcentral mountain region: Gerald Champion Medical Center [Alamogordo, owned by Otero County Hospital Association] and Lincoln County Medical Center [Ruidoso, owned by Lincoln County and operated by the Presbyterian Hospital System], supported by primary care clinics in Cloudcroft [PMS], Tularosa [PMS], Hondo[CASA], Capitan PMG], Carrizozo [PMG] and Corona [PMG]. Founded in 1949, GCMRC is a 99 bed, unique shared military facility Level III trauma center. GCMRC was relocated into new facilities in 1996. LCMC was founded in 1953, and is a 25 bed critical access hospital. While there has been some additions to LCMC early in 2000, the main facility continues to be in its original building and site.

## **11. Access to Capital**

The rapidly changing world of money and the lack of substantial capital has depressed economic development in the southcentral mountain region. Local banks do lend but to "no risk" clients only i.e. good or excellent credit score, cash or collateral down and definitely a positive cash flow. Most businesses have one of those elements - such as a good credit score, but then no cash or collateral or bad cash flow. One bank in Alamogordo tries to lend (at the lower levels of staff) - it extends a hand to local businesses, but then the board usually stops it if cash flow looks weak-which is most of the time (Revenues minus expenses minus principal and interest on the loan with enough left over to live on.)

Another money issue is many businesses take cash and do not report it, and then when they go to sell the business, the purchaser is left looking at a negative cash flow because the tax records did not reflect reality. Bankers always use the tax records. The bankers will then not fund the project based solely on the tax records, even if the business is truly profitable if they had reported their cash.

The banks and the alternative lenders do not like startups. Perhaps if the banks had incentives to lend to startups it would help.

There is also a lack of the ability of obtain short term Line of Credits. There are business clients who could have used a temporary hand up and can't get it, and end up using more expensive financing options (The Merchant Banks etc.).

Another issue is when business go into debt their interest rates are higher which creates more debt and a never ending cycle they cannot get out of. If there were some type of debt consolidation loans (at reasonable or low interest rates) for businesses that hit hard times that would also be helpful.

Maybe a relaxation on the standards or auto deductions would help. The two small business groups that need the most help are businesses a couple of years old and startups that genuinely know what they are doing (not all startups) and just need that cash to get started.

Few local banks are substantially involved in commercial lending. Businesses talk about the need for a change in banking lending attitudes in the region. Financial incentives of various kinds are also now widely used across New Mexico and the U.S. to attract, and keep, new business and industry. The Southcentral Mountain Region has few incentives currently in place such as 1/8 percent local option earmarked gross receipt taxes.

***Recommendation:*** *Instruction needs to be provided for existing business owners, municipal, Tribal and County officials on new means of financing capital projects, business growth through organizations and programs such as:*

- *WESST*
- *Accion*
- *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation [DVR] clients with disabilities*
- *IDA Prosperity Works*
- *Energy Efficiency Incentives*
- *NM Tribal Infrastructure program*
- *US Department of Energy Office of Indian Energy*
- *Farm Services Agency [USDA]*
- *Business and Industry [USDA]*
- *Small Business Administration 7A Loan program*
- [www.GrowItNM.org](http://www.GrowItNM.org)
- *The Loan Fund*
- *Enchantment Land Certified Development Company– 504 loans*
- *USFS grants for Recreation projects*
- *NMDOT Cost Share/Coop Program*
- *NMED Infrastructure Funding Programs*
- 

***Recommendation:*** *Municipalities and Counties should make increased use of “build-to-suit, triple-net long-term lease deals for building construction and use.*

***Recommendation:*** *Start a regional micro-lending program to assist very small entrepreneur start-ups.*

***Recommendation:*** *The Mescalero Tribe should make annual application to the New Mexico Tribal Infrastructure Program, and to the NM Legislature ICIP program*

***Recommendation:*** *The Village of Ruidoso needs to quickly update/broaden its LEDA ordinance to make business start-up and relocation more attractive within Ruidoso. The City of Ruidoso Downs and the Town of Carrizozo need to review their existing LEDA ordinances to ensure economic incentives are in-place to attract new business and industry.*



**Recommendation:** Each SET entity should create an annual financial calendar with dates such as

- *ICIP Update Process*
- *Legislative appropriation. Legislature start and end.*
- *Colonias application [Ruidoso Downs and Carrizozo]*
- *NM Tribal Infrastructure Funding application [Mescalero]*
- *NMDOT Cost Share/Coop Program Application*
- *NMDOT TAP Grants [all Partners]*
- *Mainstreet/Frontier Community Application*
- *Utility Company Grant and Energy Rebate Applications*
- *NMED Water, Solid Waste, Wastewater, Energy applications*
- *CDBG Application Dates [Ruidoso Downs, Mescalero, Carrizozo]*
- *Local Elections [GO Bond Issue/Mill Levy renewal]*



### ***Appendix 8 SET Planning Group Membership and Affiliations***

Ray Dean, President, Carrizozo Works Inc. Carrizozo, New Mexico. *Committee Chairman*  
Frizzell Frizzell Jr., Chief Operating Officer, Inn of the Mountain Gods, Mescalero, New Mexico  
Greg Cory, Community Development Director, Village of Ruidoso. Ruidoso, New Mexico  
Bradford Dyjack, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Village of Ruidoso. Ruidoso, New Mexico  
Ricky Crow, Real Estate Developer, Ruidoso, New Mexico  
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