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Sedillo Ridge Open Space Forest Thinning

\$700,000 is requested to develop a forest health restoration plan, survey and delineate property boundaries, and conduct forest thinning operations at the 494-acre Sedillo Ridge Open Space (“Sedillo Ridge”) in the East Mountain area of Bernalillo County. Sedillo Ridge is predominately covered by very dense piñon-juniper woodlands and oak stands with few open meadows. The underlying rugged topography is defined by rocky slopes with little level ground.

Sedillo Ridge was acquired by Bernalillo County in two phases in 2000 (484 acres) and 2008 (10 acres) with Open Space mill levy funds. In 2005, the Bernalillo County Commission adopted the *Sedillo Ridge Resource Management Plan* that supports forest thinning operations. Among other benefits, forest thinning will help reduce the risk of catastrophic fire to the property and adjoining residences to the south and east, remove diseased and/or infested trees, and encourage the re-establishment of understory grasses and shrubs that support a more diverse wildlife habitat. Upon completion of forest thinning operations, Bernalillo County will initiate trailhead and trail construction efforts for non-motorized users (i.e. hikers, equestrians and bicyclists).

Bernalillo County is prepared to match the \$700,000 request with approximately \$100,000 of Open Space mill levy funds in order to complete forest thinning operations. Bernalillo County has also completed natural and cultural resource surveys that identify resources to be avoided and/or protected during future forest thinning and trail construction efforts.



Fifty First Legislature, First Session, 2013