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Comments: The beauty of the Taos Mountains has captured hearts for centuries. These mountains have embraced the surrounding communities, generously providing its mountain water for the Rio Hondo and the acequias that have helped sustain the communities through the years. In Valdez, before the wells, we were sent to the river with two buckets to bring water for house use. (Two we were told provided balance, making it lighter to carry). We went to the Acequia to bring home the pure drinking water.

Long before there was a ski area, we played in the Taos Canyon, always taking a bucket to gather the wild strawberries that grew along the road all the way up to the mine. All kinds of medicinal herbs could be found in the canyon and the land bordering the acequias. Flowers everywhere.

Change in life is a given and change has certainly provided positive improvement in many areas. When change creates a serious issue to the community and to the Mountain's infinite beauty, what is taking place cannot go UNCHECKED. Voices must be raised against the Taos Ski Valley Gondola and other projects being considered. With environmental deterioration taking place all around us, "economic growth," more development, more buildings in the TSV, there MUST be concern as to how this will affect/effect the surrounding communities whose lives depend upon the mountain water resource. Our beautiful Taos Mountain is not an object to be used but is sending an urgent call for good stewardship, that its pure air and the life the mountain gives will be enjoyed by generations to come.

I am a parciante with my home in Valdez with nine acres that are irrigated. It is crucial that the 5 million gallon water tank not be considered by the Forest Service and object to the Taos Ski Valley Gondola and other improvements being considered. No added commercial growth will substitute for the irreplaceable and irretrievable beauty of the Taos Mountain. We must be grateful for those drawing attention to the seriousness of this issue.