

**LINCOLN COUNTY COMMISSION PROCLAMATION
RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE 150th BIRTH YEAR
OF LINCOLN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO**

WHEREAS, on January 16, 1869, "Lincoln County" was formally created in the Territory of New Mexico, which was given territorial status by the Compromise of 1850. When Spanish-speaking, native New Mexican settlers from the upper Rio Grande began arriving in the 1850s, they named their new home "Placita del Rio Bonito" (the place by the pretty river). Although settled in 1849, it was four years after the end of the Civil War, in 1869, that both the County and the town were renamed for the late President Abraham Lincoln; and the town of Lincoln being named the County seat. The new County of Lincoln was, at that time, the largest County in the United States; about one-quarter the size of New Mexico today; and

WHEREAS, unincorporated community of Lincoln largely owes its notoriety today to an infamous young man who became known as *Billy the Kid*, and his role in the Lincoln County War (1878), which was fought between rival merchants for economic domination. While it began with accusations of cattle rustling, it escalated to murder and a five-day gun battle at the courthouse. The teen-aged killer, *Billy the Kid*, (William Bonney) figured prominently in the carnage, killing Sheriff William J. Brady in 1878 and Deputies James Bell and Robert Olinger in April, 1881 during his escape the Lincoln County jail. In July, 1881 the Kid was hunted down and shot dead by Sheriff Pat Garrett in Fort Sumner, New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Lincoln County is the home of other historic sites, including Ft. Stanton, which was built in 1855, and served as a military fortification through 1896; and over its 160-year history, has also borne witness to westward expansion, including the Lincoln County War, the tuberculosis epidemic that peaked in the 1920s, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the World War II internment of German sailors; and

WHEREAS, the unique Ft. Stanton Cave and its Snowy River passage are a spectacular frontier of the underworld that beckon natives and visitors with its beauty and promise. Exploration of this geologic marvel continues to draw cavers, scientists and others to Lincoln County; and

WHEREAS, Capitan, founded in the 1890's and incorporated in 1941 is home to "Smokey Bear". In spring of 1950, a badly burned black bear cub was rescued from a large forest fire in the Capitan Mountains. First called "Hotfoot Teddy", he was later renamed "Smokey", and became the real-life version of the United States Forest Service mascot "Smokey Bear". Smokey died in 1976, and his remains were returned to Capitan for burial at the Smokey Bear Historical Park. Capitan also hosted its 64th Annual Smokey Bear Stampede, continuing to hold the nation's title of "largest open rodeo", during the 4th of July holiday, and

WHEREAS, Carrizozo, the County Seat, has a population of approximately 1,000. In 1899, it was identified as the site for a station on the El Paso & Northeastern Railway main line, which brought businesses, and increased importance to the town. A county referendum in 1909 moved the county seat from Lincoln to Carrizozo, which resulted in a four-year legal battle that was resolved in favor of Carrizozo by the United States Supreme Court. The result was a boom period where railroad access and political importance lead to significant population growth in Carrizozo, reaching around 2,000 by 1920. In the 1950s, the rise of the automobile reduced the importance of Carrizozo's close proximity to the railroad, and the last passenger train passed through in 1968; decreasing both economic opportunity and population; and

WHEREAS, Corona, established in 1903 as a railroad town, is the smallest incorporated village in Lincoln County, with a population of approximately 175. It is the closest habitation to a purported UFO crash in 1947 about 30 miles to the southeast (Roswell UFO Incident). Corona's economic reliance has traditionally been tied to the ranching industry, but has recently been identified as having an abundance of wind, necessary for the operation of a wind farm. The Village of Corona is working with Pattern Energy on "The 2.2 Gigawatt Corona Wind Projects", purported to be the largest wind project in the Western Hemisphere; and

WHEREAS, situated in the beautiful mountains of Lincoln County is its largest municipality and financial and tourist hub, the Village of Ruidoso; initially named "Dolan's Mill" until 1885 when it was renamed for the noisy river that ran through the town. This mountain resort town, when combined with the suburbs of the City of Ruidoso Downs (home of the Ruidoso Downs Race Track & Casino, hosting the All American Futurity each Labor Day, which claims to be the richest race in Quarter Horse racing) and the unincorporated area of Alto, bring the Ruidoso Metropolitan Statistical Area's resident population to approximately 13,250, with that number tripling or quadrupling during summer months; and


WHEREAS, the Hondo Valley is home to several unincorporated communities, with the histories of Glencoe, San Patricio, and Hondo adding to the richness of the County. *Glencoe*, home to the Coe family, including George and Frank Coe, members of the Lincoln County Regulators, is also the site of the St. Anne's Chapel, which is on the State Register of Cultural Properties. *San Patricio's* economy throughout history has been based on farming and ranching. Water was the key factor to success, with one of the earliest acequias in the valley being established in San Patricio by 1867. Contributing to San Patricio's history is the Hurd-LaRinconada Gallery, with displays original works of famous artists Peter Hurd and Henriette Wyeth-Hurd. *Hondo*, originally known as La Junta, or the junction, referring to the confluence of the Rio Ruidoso and Bonito rivers, notably and uniquely offered schooling to its children in early years, with records listing 44 students in the Hondo School District in 1880, and 113 in 1920; and

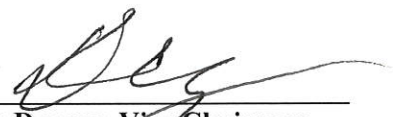
WHEREAS, Lincoln County continues to be led by a thoughtful and conservative Board of County Commissioners. The County Gross Receipts Tax Rate of 5.500% is tied with Lea County for the lowest rate in New Mexico. In 2016, the taxpayers of the County directed the Commission, by overwhelming margin, to purchase a \$25 million General Obligation Bond for the construction of a replacement hospital and EMS building in Ruidoso. The Board of County Commissioners negotiated the repayment of the General Obligation Bond in a manner that resulted in no tax increase to the citizens of Lincoln County. The County of Lincoln is also in negotiation with Pattern Energy, which has received regulatory and Commission approval to construct wind farms in the county that will generate substantial Payment in Lieu Of Taxes, enabling the County to add necessary infrastructure to its operations. Lincoln County ranks 8th of 33 in the State for land area, with 4,831 square miles; and 19th of 33 in the State for population with 19,162; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF LINCOLN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, THAT it recognizes and honors the 150th Birth Year of Lincoln County and its rich history that has made it the great County it is today;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that August 20, 2019 be set aside to celebrate "LINCOLN COUNTY'S 150TH BIRTH YEAR".

GIVEN UNDER OUR HAND, THIS 20th DAY OF AUGUST, 2019 AT THE LINCOLN COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN CARRIZOZO, NEW MEXICO.


Preston Stone, Chairman



Dallas Draper, Vice Chairman


Elaine Allen, Member


Thomas F. Stewart, Member


Dr. Lynn Willard, Member

ATTEST:


Whitney Whittaker, County Clerk

