

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE STATE PARKS DIVISION OF THE ENERGY, MINERALS
3 AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY
4 STUDY OF THE BLACKWATER DRAW ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE.

5
6 WHEREAS, the Blackwater Draw site near Portales in
7 Roosevelt county is internationally renowned and is one of
8 the most well-known and significant sites in North American
9 archaeology; and

10 WHEREAS, the Blackwater Draw site's importance was first
11 recognized in 1929 by Ridgely Whiteman of Clovis, New Mexico;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, early investigations at the Blackwater Draw
14 site recovered some of the first evidence of a human
15 occupation in association with late pleistocene fauna,
16 including the Columbian mammoth, the camel, the horse, the
17 bison, the saber-toothed cat and the dire wolf; and

18 WHEREAS, since its discovery, the Blackwater Draw site
19 has been a focal point for scientific investigations by
20 academic institutions and organizations from across the
21 nation. The Carnegie institute, Smithsonian institution,
22 academy of natural sciences, national science foundation,
23 United States national museum, national geographic society
24 and more than a dozen major universities either have funded
25 or participated in research at the Blackwater Draw site; and

1 WHEREAS, the Blackwater Draw site was designated a
2 national historic landmark by the United States department of
3 the interior in 1961; and

4 WHEREAS, the Blackwater Draw site was proposed as a New
5 Mexico state park in the 1950s, but a state park was not
6 established due to opposition from the gravel mining industry
7 that controlled the site at that time; and

8 WHEREAS, the Blackwater Draw site is owned and managed
9 by eastern New Mexico university; and

10 WHEREAS, the Blackwater Draw site is located just one
11 mile from Oasis state park; and

12 WHEREAS, in 2005, the legislature of the state of New
13 Mexico authorized the expenditure of funds by the state parks
14 division of the energy, minerals and natural resources
15 department for a project to improve facilities and the
16 educational program at the Blackwater Draw site in
17 conjunction with eastern New Mexico university; and

18 WHEREAS, in 2007, the state parks division completed a
19 very successful project in conjunction with eastern New
20 Mexico university; and

21 WHEREAS, further improvement of visitor facilities and
22 programs at the Blackwater Draw site would increase its value
23 as a tourism destination and educational location and would
24 create benefits for the region and New Mexico generally; and

25 WHEREAS, there are significant opportunities to expand

1 the collaboration and partnership between eastern New Mexico
2 university and the state parks division at the Blackwater
3 Draw site, and eastern New Mexico university desires to
4 pursue such an expanded and long-term partnership; and

5 WHEREAS, collaboration between eastern New Mexico
6 university and the state parks division at the Blackwater
7 Draw site may offer opportunities to utilize state resources
8 more efficiently while improving the management of the site;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
10 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state parks division of the
11 energy, minerals and natural resources department be
12 requested to study the feasibility of a long-term partnership
13 with eastern New Mexico university at the Blackwater Draw
14 site, and that the study also analyze the designation of the
15 site as a state park as an alternative to a long-term
16 partnership; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state parks division
18 report its findings to the appropriate interim committee of
19 the legislature by December 1, 2008; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
21 transmitted to the secretary of energy, minerals and natural
22 resources and to the director of the state parks division of
23 the energy, minerals and natural resources department. _____