

1: BLUE LAKE | Taos Pueblo

BLUE LAKE. The Return of Blue Lake. On December 15, , former President Richard M. Nixon signed into affect Public Law , approved in a bipartisan manner by the United States Congress.

The people are descendants from the great Ancestral Puebloans Indian culture. Prior to the European settlement in the area, the Taos Pueblo occupied , acres of land, at the center of which was Blue Lake, their most sacred shrine. The lake is a stunning cobalt blue and is tucked away at 11, feet in a glacial cirque of the Sangre de Cristo Range. The lake importance extends beyond its practical use as a source of water and nourishment. It is central to religious beliefs and practices of the Taos Pueblo people. It is regarded as the source of all life. One creation myth claims that they were created out of the waters of the Blue Lake Dzelzitis. A former tribal leader, Quirino Romero comments on its importance. Blue Lake is where the spirit of Indian God is still living today. We go over there to pray, and we go over there to worship. To these people, religion is central to their very existence. For the Pueblo, religion and daily practice are synonymous. Furthermore, religious beliefs and practices act to solidify the group. The connection to Blue Lake works to tie the people to their cultural tradition and their identity as a congregation. Without the unifying power of the lake, these people could not exist as a specific group. It is for this reason that the seizure and manipulation of this land was life-threatening to the Taos Pueblo people. The conflict began with the first occupation of the land by the Spanish and Mexicans in the 16th Century. The Taos Pueblo were granted land rights to the area and had the freedom to use it any way they desired. Government took over the land in the Pueblo were granted the same access and rights to the land as before. This promise was included in the treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo. Due to the growing number of white settlers in the area, however, the land was exploited for its various resources. In the government disregarded the treaty and gave the land to the National Forest Service. Blue Lake and the surrounding area became Carson National Forest. The land around the sacred lake became popular camping sites for recreational users and all privacy of the Taos Pueblo people was lost Dzelzitis. This problem was detrimental to the entire way of life of the Pueblo. They could no longer perform their rituals for they believe that the presence of outsiders destroys the power of all ceremonial acts. John Bodine, an anthropology student of Pueblo culture, talks about the struggle this created for the people. Their very presence, even if they observe nothing is contaminating. Taos elder Juan de Jesus Romero put this problem into blunt terms. Our people will scatter as the people of other nations have scattered. The Taos Pueblo people, therefore, could not let this transgression stand. The people were engaged in a constant struggle with the American government until their land was eventually returned. In the government passed they Pueblo Lands Act which offered monetary compensation for the stolen land but did not return the title to the land. The Pueblo were not satisfied with this offer and continued to protest. Over the next fifty years there was much debate in the government surrounding the issue. In the Senate Indian Affairs Committee recommended the land title be restored to the Pueblo, but instead the Department of Agriculture issued a permit only for native use rights of the land. In the Indian Claims Commission made a public statement affirming that the land was taken unjustly by the U. Government, but the commission could only offer monetary compensation for the injustice Dzelzitis. The issue of Blue Lake received media attention and intrigued the nation. Newspapers across the country covered the issue. A quote from Ben C. Lujan, the Governor of Pueblo, was included. Another editorial article was posted in the Washington Post in providing further support to the Pueblo. An old injustice inflicted on the Taos Indians of New Mexico should be set right before Congress adjournsâ€. But a Senate Subcommittee continues to ignore the bill, allegedly at the behest of Sen. If the Senator has any legitimate objection to righting a wrong done more than 60 years ago, he ought to lay his cards on the table. It seems inexcusable to suppress a bill of this kind, involving the national integrity, in the face of the action by the Claims Commission and the House Gordon-McCutchan. A series of emotionally gripping television documentaries aired around the same time. The NCC based its protest on the First Amendment, claiming that the Pueblo people were prevented from practice their religion freely. The NCC acknowledged the importance of the matter and publicly testified that the whole watershed was a sanctuary to the Pueblo. All of these efforts

THE TAOS PUEBLO AND ITS SACRED BLUE LAKE pdf

greatly assisted the Taos Pueblo and eventually led to the return of their land. In a series of dramatic trials transpired. Eventually in President Richard Nixon endorsed a bill signing the land back over to the Taos Pueblo. The people were granted exclusive use of 1, acres surrounding the lake. Fortunately for the American Indian community, Nixon had made helping the Indians a priority based on his admiration for a American Indian football coach he once had Gordon-McCutchan. Due to the persistence of the Pueblo and all who assisted in their campaign, the native people are now able to enjoy their sanctuary in privacy. The area is currently accessible only to the Taos Pueblo and outsiders are not allowed entrance. This secrecy and stick ban of any non-Pueblo members is certainly a reaction to the abusive treatment the Pueblo have received. The significance of the victory of Blue Lake extends beyond the Taos Pueblo. The bill set a precedent that eventually helped other tribes such as the Yakima and the Zuni to reclaim their sacred sites. The century long perseverance of the Taos Pueblo is a model that can inspire indigenous traditions and oppressed groups across the world. As many groups continue to struggle in their attempt to regain their own sacred sites, hopefully the reacquisition of Blue Lake can be a source of inspiration and encouragement. Earth Island Institute, 29 Sept. Clear Light Publishers, Special to The New York Times. Leave a Reply Your email address will not be published.

2: Taos Pueblo - New World Encyclopedia

In the mountains of northern New Mexico above Taos Pueblo lies a deep, turquoise lake which was taken away from the Taos Indians, for whom it is a sacred life source and the final resting place of their souls.

Here are answers to the most frequently asked questions about Taos Pueblo, our home. Please respect our rules and may your visit to Taos be a rewarding adventure. Taos PuebloOur people have a detailed oral history which is not divulged due to religious privacy. Archaeologists say that ancestors of the Taos Indians lived in this valley long before Columbus discovered America and hundreds of years before Europe emerged from the Dark Ages. Ancient ruins in the Taos Valley indicate our people lived here nearly years ago. The main part of the present buildings were most likely constructed between and A. The appeared much as they do today when the first Spanish explorers arrived in Northern New Mexico in and believed that the Pueblo was one of the fabled golden cities of Cibola. The two structures called Hlauuma north house and Hlaukwima south house are said to be of similar age. They are considered to be the oldest continuously inhabited communities in the USA. The Pueblo is made entirely of adobe " earth mixed with water and straw, then either poured into forms or made into sun-dried bricks. The walls are frequently several feet thick. The roofs of each of the five stories are supported by large timbers " vigas " hauled down from the mountain forests. Smaller pieces of wood " pine or aspen latillas " are placed side-by-side on top of the vigas; the whole roof is covered with packed dirt. The outside surfaces of the Pueblo are continuously maintained by replastering with thick layers of mud. Interior walls are carefully coated with thin washes of white earth to keep them clean and bright. The Pueblo is actually many individual homes, built side-by-side and in layers, with common walls but no connecting doorways. In earlier days there were no doors or windows and entry was gained only from the top. Approximately people live within the Pueblo full time. Other families owning homes in the North or South buildings live in summer homes near their fields, and in more modern homes outside the old walls but still within Pueblo land. There are over Taos Indians living on Taos Pueblo lands. The present San Geronimo, or St. Jerome, Chapel was completed in to replace the original church which was destroyed in the War with Mexico by the U. That church, the ruins still evident on the west side of the village, was first built in It was then destroyed in the Spanish Revolt of but soon rebuilt on the same site. Jerome is the patron saint of Taos Pueblo. Catholicism is practiced along with the ancient Indian religious rites which are an important part of Taos Pueblo life. The Pueblo religion is very complex; however, there is no conflict with the Catholic church, as evidenced by the prominent presence of both church and kiva in the village. A tribal governor and war chief, along with staffs for each, are appointed yearly by the Tribal Council, a group of some 50 male tribal elders. The tribal governor and his staff are concerned with civil and business issues within the village and relations with the non-Indian world. The war chief and staff deal with the protection of the mountains and Indian lands outside the Pueblo walls. The single most dramatic event in the recent history of Taos Pueblo land is the return of 48, acres of mountain land including the sacred Blue Lake. It was taken by the U. Government in to become part of the National Forest lands. Among the ritual sites where Taos people go for ceremonial reasons, Blue Lake is perhaps the most important. The return of this land capped a long history of struggle. Blue Lake and mountains are off-limits to all but members of our Pueblo. Tiwa is our native language. English and Spanish are also spoken. The land base is 99, acres with an elevation of 7, feet at the village. The tourist trade, arts, traditional crafts and food concessions are important employment sources at the Pueblo. Some tribal members are employed in the Town of Taos. The Pueblo has a centralized management system where tribal members are employed in a variety of occupations. The Bureau of Indian Affairs maintains an elementary school, located behind the south Pueblo in an area restricted to the public. The majority of teachers are Indian. There is also a preschool program for three and four-year-olds. An education committee comprised of Pueblo members oversees the education of students and monitors a scholarship program for students wishing higher education. Indian children also attend public schools in the Town of Taos. Mica-flecked pottery and silver jewelry are made by local artisans and sold at many of the individually owned curio shops within the Pueblo. The Taos Indians, being great hunters, are also famous for their work

with animal skins – moccasins, boots and drums. There are a growing number of contemporary Pueblo fine artists, combining Indian tradition with modern artistic expression. The outstanding Taos Pueblo trademark is the natural look, that is, the enhancement of natural material appearance without additional coloration. Our traditions dictate that no electricity or running water be allowed within the Pueblo walls. Most members live in conventional homes outside the village walls, but occupy their Pueblo houses for ceremonials. The Pueblo is generally open to visitors daily from 8 am to 4: Late winter to early Spring the Pueblo closes for about ten weeks. Taos is the northernmost of the nineteen New Mexico Pueblos. Our language is most closely related to that of Picuris, Isleta and Sandia Pueblos, but we are not related by blood.

3: Taos Pueblo San Geronimo Feast and the Lady of Peace | The Taos News

Prior to the European settlement in the area, the Taos Pueblo occupied , acres of land, at the center of which was Blue Lake, their most sacred shrine. The lake is a stunning cobalt blue and is tucked away at 11, feet in a glacial cirque of the Sangre de Cristo Range.

In addition to the obvious necessity the Pueblo community has for a consistent supply of water, Blue Lake has even more crucial religious significance to the group. The lake itself is located about twenty miles north of Taos Pueblo in northern New Mexico, and is the site of annual pilgrimage and ceremony. However, until a Congressional decision finally returned the lake and surrounding lands to the Pueblo people once and for all, the sacrality of Blue Lake was threatened by increased forestry in the area, demands for water, and increased public traffic as roads were constructed by the U. Forest Service Hecht Situated in the thin air at 11, feet, Blue Lake is a stunning turquoise color and has been the site of Pueblo religious reverence since time immemorial. The annual August pilgrimage is undertaken by the Pueblo people on foot or horseback, and it takes roughly two days to cover the twenty miles of uphill, dense forest trail. Quirino Romero, a former tribal leader, states: Blue Lake is where the spirit of Indian God is still living today. We go over there to pray, and we go over there to worship. Pueblo religion also considers the lake to be the source of all life, as well as the repository for all deceased souls Keegan The lake and all of its associated meanings are crucial to Pueblo religious life and the survival of the group as a whole. When the Spanish colonizers began to arrive in the area now known as New Mexico in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the Pueblo people had an existing reverence for Blue Lake that included yearly pilgrimages to the site and also recognized the waters and area surrounding the lake as sacred lands. In the arid region of the Southwest, it is no wonder the Pueblo people ascribe so much meaning and veneration to their only source of water. The lake and river have intrinsic meaning to the Pueblo people. In , President Theodore Roosevelt presented a plan to put Blue Lake and the surrounding lands into a designated national forest. Initially, this seemed like a beneficial prospect for the Pueblo people because they believed the designation would prevent settlement and increased use. Nonetheless, in they petitioned to set aside an area known as the Bowl and Blue Lake aside for exclusive use of the Pueblo. In , without consulting the tribe, Roosevelt placed the entire area surrounding Blue Lake into the Taos Forest Reserve, placing the land under the control of the U. Forest Service and legalizing public use and logging in the area. This move initiated a seventy year battle to reclaim Blue Lake and the Bowl for exclusive Pueblo use Hecht Similar to many native religious traditions, the Pueblo people do not understand religion and everyday life to be separate endeavors. Rather, religion and spirituality are embedded in every aspect of life, including nature. For the Pueblo people, Blue Lake is their religion: Religion is the most important thing in our life. In addition, the Pueblo people interpret the land as a living spirit that is in constant interaction with both animals and humans. For instance, during one point of the pilgrimage ceremonies, young initiates of the kiva community will throw their moccasins into Blue Lake. If the moccasin does not immediately sink, the heart of the initiate is interpreted as bad Bodine Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Blue Lake controversy is the way the Pueblo people appealed to the sacrality of the land. During the extensive seventy year battle over Blue Lake, the Pueblo people utilized the dominant vocabulary in this case, Christian dialogue to contextualize their struggle for the land. A quote from Juan de Jesus Romero, a former religious leader of the Pueblo, illustrates the extent of this language appropriation: If our land is not returned to us, if it is turned over to the government for its use, then that is the end of Indian life. Our people will scatter as the people of other nations have scattered. Perhaps the ease with which the Pueblo adopted Christian language results from the long-standing practice of compartmentalization. At Taos Pueblo, these two systems are indigenous religion and Spanish Catholicism and they have co-existed for over four centuries. It is only logical that the Pueblo would adopt dominant Christian language to appeal to a larger community for support of their cause at Blue Lake. The use of dominant Christian terminology greatly contributed to the understanding of the land as sacred by non-native peoples. However, conflict still existed between the Pueblo people and the U. Forest Service, who failed to even understand the largely Christian dialogue surrounding the lake. The Pueblo believe in the sacrality of all

that surround Blue Lake, not simply the water. Trees are considered to be saints, or spirits, by the Native people. In contrast, the U. The Taos Pueblo values the spiritual and sacred nature of the land and the United States government had interest only in the potential material gain of the land. This contrast illustrates the stark differences in Western and Native conceptions of the land. Despite the numerous setbacks, lengthy process, and overall disagreement surrounding the Blue Lake area, Pueblo leaders vigorously pursued the return of their sacred lands. After garbage and litter were found surrounding the lake, and many prayer sticks were found missing or destroyed, the Pueblo sought retribution through the Indian Claims Commission. However, the Commission was only authorized to grant compensation and not to return land, and the Pueblo people did not want or accept compensation. The Pueblo offered to relinquish the claims they had to the majority of land around the city of Taos in exchange for Blue Lake, but Blue Lake remained in government control. In , Congress granted a fifty-year, exclusive special use permit to the tribe, but the victory was short lived when public recreation was again legalized shortly afterward. The lake was stocked with non-native trout, and dynamite fishing was popular. Four new access trails were cut to the lake. By , three bills had been introduced to Congress concerning the return of the land to the Pueblo for its exclusive use. There was vehement opposition from the U. On December 2, the Senate voted to return Blue Lake and the surrounding areas to the Taos Pueblo and the bill was signed into law on December 15 of the same year Keegan A huge celebration ceremony was held at Taos Pueblo upon receiving the news that the precious Blue Lake was finally and officially theirs. As a result of the legislation, other Indian nations have demanded redress for previously and unjustly seized lands. In addition, the use of the dominant Christian language to appeal to a greater community of support largely contributed to the Pueblo success. Clear Light Publishers,

4: 10 Things You Should Know About Taos Pueblo - www.enganchecubano.com

Description. In the mountains of northern New Mexico above Taos Pueblo lies a deep, turquoise lake which was taken away from the Taos Indians, for whom it is a sacred life source and the final resting place of their souls.

Click here to see all your subscription options. In the Rearview Looking back: In part, the bump in donations was due to changes in federal and state tax code. As Dennison leads the story, "No one will ever subdivide 42 acres across the street from the El Prado post office. By giving this land to the trust, landowners keep the property in their names, but give up the right to develop the land, beyond homesites for families. They also get some tax breaks. The federal government had extended its tax break on such donations into That rule said that if an owner donates land to a trust, they can deduct the value of the land up to 50 percent of their adjusted gross income in any year within 16 years of the donation. The Taos Land Trust is still cooking along. This is a parcel of land needed by the pueblo to access its sacred Blue Lake Territory in the Wheeler Peak Wilderness, which had been given back to the tribe in the s. The so-called bottleneck is a sort of buffer zone around the trail that pueblo members use to hike the sacred "Path of Life" to Blue Lake. Under the bill, the lands would be used for traditional purposes only, such as religious ceremonies, hunting, fishing and a source of water, forage for domestic livestock, wood, timber and all other natural resources. The New Mexico delegation at that time was Sens. Pete Dominici and Jeff Bingaman and Rep. Bill Richardson, a Republican and two Democrats, respectively. The bill returning the land was signed by President Bill Clinton in Reporter Jim Kubie writes that the week before, the state Water Quality Commission filed suit against Mayor Rinaldo Garcia and the town council seeking an injunction to prevent more sewage being dumped in what was then called "Taos Creek. Meanwhile, the council met twice that week to speed up the building of new lagoons at the sewage treatment plant, another necessary move to stop the pollution. State officials said the raw sewage problem had existed for the previous six years. From time to time, due to the pipe issue, untreated sewage had been dumped into the creek for that long. It was now October, and things were no better. And, the state Fish and Game Department weighed in, saying that one could no longer find trout in Taos Creek. Instead, chloroform bacteria were growing there.

5: Looking back: 10, 25, 50 years ago | The Taos News

For the people of Taos Pueblo, Blue Lake is a sacred life source and the final resting place of their souls. The story of their struggle to regain this lake is at the same time a story about the effort to retain the spiritual life of this ancient community.

A statement issued by the Taos Pueblo during their fight to regain parts of their homeland proclaimed: No man can think of us without also thinking of this place. We are always joined together. History of the Conflict A deep forested mountain valley cradles a small lake that is the headwaters of Rio Pueblo, which tumbles through the village of the Taos people. Oral tradition holds that the Taos tribe was created out of the sacred waters of Blue Lake. As a place of ritual worship and historic importance the lake is essential to Taos culture, religion, and daily life. This is not religious freedom as it is guaranteed by the Constitution. As growing numbers of white settlers traveled west by railroad, farms and ranches were established in the area and the land was exploited for various natural resources. In the federal government placed Blue Lake and the surrounding watershed under the control of the Forest Service. Our tradition and our religion require people to adapt their lives and activities to our natural surroundings so that men and nature mutually support the life common to both. The idea that man must subdue nature and bend its processes to his purposes is repugnant to our people. The Pueblo offered to relinquish any monies for the territory settled by non-Indians if they could only acquire the title to their precious Blue Lake, but they were given neither compensation nor title. Our people will scatter as the people of other nations have scattered. It is our religion that holds us together. In , after persistent protest by Taos Indians, the Senate Indian Affairs Committee recommended that title be restored. But instead, seven years later, the Department of Agriculture issued a permit of native use rights. After filing suit with the newly established Indian Claims Commission in , it was affirmed that the land was taken unjustly by the U. Two subsequent legislative initiatives failed to return the land to the Taos Pueblo. The Pueblo continued their sustained campaign for return of the lake, and recruited support from other tribes and the non-Indian public. In , Richard Nixon endorsed the bill and the return of Blue Lake to the tribe. After hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, trust title for 48, acres, including Blue Lake, was granted to the Taos Pueblo and exclusive use of 1, acres surrounding the lake was reserved for tribal members. It was the first of two areas of land returned to Native Americans. In both cases, the privacy of the tribe is now respected, information about the places is proprietary, and there are no eco-tours. My grandfathers made this happen. Testimony by native practitioners, determined insistence on religious freedom and justice, and nurturance of public support over 60 years brought about a positive outcome. The Blue Lake case set a model precedent for sacred land disputes:

6: Taos Pueblo - Wikipedia

Hidden in the mountains of northern New Mexico lies Blue Lake, or Ba Whyea, an ancient sacred site for the Taos Pueblo community. After the U.S. government appropriated Blue Lake and the surrounding area and placed it under the control of the Forest Service, the ensuing battles for Blue Lake came to epitomize Native Americans' struggle for religious freedom and protection of sacred land.

Aug 9, The historic Taos Pueblo has built a tourism enterprise centered on traditional practice. As one of the oldest continuously inhabited communities in the country, Taos Pueblo is best known for its iconic, multi-storied adobe complexes built roughly 1,000 years ago. Tens of thousands of visitors annually flock to this tiny, 45-acre community built on either side of a pristine creek that flows from the nearby Blue Lake. Located just one mile from the modern town—and art mecca—of Taos, New Mexico, the ancient part of the pueblo is home to about 100 full-time residents, with about 200 Taos Indians living on the 3,500-acre reservation. It is, at once, a tourist destination and a sacred site; a mix of ancient and modern. Here are 10 things you should know about Taos Pueblo:

1. An adobe wall runs around the original village, built between 1000 and 1500 A.D. Once 10 feet tall, the wall protected residents from enemies. Adobe dwellings, built four or five stories high, were designed as lookout posts so residents could see enemies approaching, said Ilona Spruce, tourism director for Taos Pueblo. The two main structures—one on the north and the other on the south—are called Hlauuma and Hlaukwima, respectively. This means the walls are several feet thick sometimes, and we have to knock down previous layers before packing more on. The pueblo consists of many individual homes, built side-by-side in layers and accessible by ladder. Originally, homes were entered from holes in the ceilings, but Spanish explorers introduced doors that still exist today. In accordance with pueblo traditional laws, Taos Indians who live inside the ancient village do not have running water or electricity. They rely on skylights or kerosene lamps for light, and use outhouses that are hidden from public view. Modern homes are built outside the ancient walls.
2. Spanish explorers stumbled on Taos Pueblo in 1598 as they searched for the fabled Seven Cities of Gold. According to Taos legend, Taos women rubbed mica on pueblo walls to make them shine. They thought there was wealth here. The Spanish forcibly introduced Christianity to the pueblo, Spruce said. Pueblo Indians converted to Christianity or were killed. The Spanish changed the dynamics within the pueblo; they introduced violence. The revolt lasted 12 years, after which the Taos rebuilt the chapel, symbolically accepting Catholicism, Spruce said.
3. Ray Landry The revolt lasted 12 years, after which the Taos rebuilt the chapel, symbolically accepting Catholicism, Spruce said. That chapel was destroyed during the war with Mexico, but its ruins still sit inside the pueblo. Religion at Taos Pueblo still is complicated, however. Taos Indians survived two different attempts at assimilation: We were able to hold on to our land and our traditions. Taos Indians still cook with traditional outdoor ovens. Called horno ovens, these adobe, dome-like structures are heated with coal and can bake as many as 30 loaves of bread at a time. In 1908, Taos Pueblo won a landmark case against the federal government over its sacred Blue Lake. President Theodore Roosevelt snatched 48,000 acres of mountain land, including Blue Lake, in 1906 and designated it as a national forest. Nixon returned all 48,000 acres, including the lake, to the pueblo in 1978.
4. Tourism is the biggest economic driver at Taos Pueblo, introduced in the early 20th century to entice Taos Indians to return to the village, Spruce said. This coincided with the rise of the arts community in the nearby city of Taos. As many as 100,000 people visit on Feast Day alone. Feast Day is an annual celebration held September 30 and open to the public. That is our time to show off our traditions, who we are.

7: Taos Pueblo and Its Sacred Blue Lake .pdf download by Marcia Keegan - raftgagese

The Taos Pueblo Indians had considered Blue Lake a sacred shrine since time immemorial. It was taken over by Executive Order of President Theodore Roosevelt in and eventually made part of the Carson National Forest, under control of the U.S. Forest Service.

Martin Luther King and Robert F. Kennedy, the violence of the Democratic National Convention, and a growing countercultural youth movement. Against this volatile backdrop, the final stages of a battle for land rights was being fought in northern New Mexico. Cosmologically, Blue Lake was believed to be their place of origin, the spot where their ancestors rose up from the earth. The Indians had been trying to get Blue Lake back ever since. According to a June press release from the Taos Pueblo Council, "When Spanish sovereignty was extended over our land our right to retain ownership of it was recognized by the Spanish kings, who decreed: According to the Indians, it "includes the watershed of the Rio Pueblo de Taos, the river that flows through our village and from which we irrigate much of our farming land. It is the same principle at the Blue Lake, we go over there and talk to our Great Spirit in our own language and talk to Nature and what is going to grow, and ask God Almighty, like anyone else would do. Between and , the Blue Lake claim was the subject of four congressional hearings. But important ground had been gained in the form of political and media support. Moreover, as the sea changes of minority activism swept across the United States, popular consciousness about and sympathy for Native American problems increased. The national statistics on Indian life were shameful: Housing is completely inadequate, and the prisons are crammed with Indian people. The Native Sovereign People have become the most poverty stricken, mistreated, suppressed people in the richest nation in the world, in their own land. One, sponsored by Senator Clinton P. M , was considered a "compromise bill" that would grant the Indians use of 48, acres of the land under question, but would not give them the trust title they sought. Crucially, in early they won support from six key U. These six senators pushed for passage of the bill the Indians favored. After decades of patient, persistent fighting for the return of their land, the Pueblo Indians had grown politically sophisticated, as well as savvy about using the mass media to their advantage. Their quest for support did not stop with Senator McGovern and his colleagues. They mounted a multipronged crusade to press their cause. A national letter-writing campaign was launched to build pressure on Congress. A national Blue Lake support committee was formed that included the Most Rev. Commissioner for Indian Affairs John Collier, among others. Such distinguished groups as the National Council of Churches endorsed the Pueblo claim. The Nixon Administration by then was in support of the Blue Lake claim. The religious freedom issue in particular was a hot-button one and helped the Indians gain public support. Moreover, the Blue Lake watershed had valuable timber and grazing lands. But the most fervent argument against giving Blue Lake title to the Indians was that it would establish what some believed would be a dangerous "precedent that could lead to the loss of tens of thousands of acres of public lands," wrote Jon W. Presently, the only lands granted by the U. Government to Indians [have] been on the basis of treaties, aboriginal claims, and recognition of Spanish land grants. If the Blue Lake bill passes, Indian religion will become a basis for granting Indian tribes title to public land. Tribes all over the country are watching this bill with keen interest Practically all Indian tribes in the state have places of religious significance outside of their reservations How a acre lake, a religious shrine, became expanded to a 48,acre church has not been explained. Senate defeated, by 56 to 21, the compromise bill that would have given the Indians "exclusive use" but not title to the land. The wide voting margins showed how popular the cause had become. President Richard Nixon subsequently signed the bill into law, "with a group of Indian chiefs in full tribal dress as witnesses. On August 14 and 15, , Taos Pueblo celebrated its hard-won victory by welcoming nearly a thousand people onto their ancient grounds to watch dances, feast on buffalo meat, and hear commemorative speeches. Our ancestors came out of Blue Lake, long ago. Blue Lake nourishes everything. It is the source of our wisdom, of our life Paul Bernal Collection, , Collection

8: Taos Blue Lake | Indigenous Religious Traditions

The Pueblo's web site names the reacquisition of the sacred Blue Lake as the most important event in its history due to the spiritual belief that the Taos people originated from the lake. It is believed that their ancestors live there, and the pueblos themselves only ascend the mountain twice a year.

The settlement was built on either side of Rio Pueblo de Taos , also called Rio Pueblo and Red Willow Creek, a small stream that flows through the middle of the pueblo compound. Its headwaters come from the nearby mountains. As of , about people live in the historic complex full-time. The idea that the Spanish Taos is from tao, "cross of the order of San Juan de los Caballeros" from Greek tau , is unlikely. A long drought in the area in the late 13th century may have caused them to move to the Rio Grande, where the water supply was more dependable. However, their reason for migrating is still disputed and there is evidence that a violent struggle took place. Ultimately, archeological clues point to the idea that the Natives may have been forced to leave. Throughout its early years, Taos Pueblo was a central point of trade between the native populations along the Rio Grande and their Plains Tribes neighbors to the northeast. Taos Pueblo hosted a trade fair each fall after the agricultural harvest. Reports from the period indicate that the native people of Taos resisted the building of the church and imposition of the Catholic religion. Throughout the s, cultural tensions grew between the native populations of the Southwest and the increasing Spanish colonial presence. Taos Pueblo was no exception. By , the native people killed the resident priest and destroyed the church. Several years after it was rebuilt, the Pueblo Revolt of began; the Taos destroyed the church and killed two resident priests. Resistance to Catholicism and Spanish culture was still strong. Even so, Spanish religious ideals and agricultural practices subtly worked their way into the Taos community, largely starting during this time of increased cooperation between the two cultural groups. The revolt was suppressed after the rebels took refuge in San Geronimo Mission Church. The American troops bombarded the church, killing or capturing the insurrectionists and destroying the physical structure. Around , a new mission church was constructed near the west gate of the pueblo wall. The ruins of the original church and its s replacement are both still visible inside the pueblo wall today. He was very interested in indigenous societies as he believed they were more closely in touch with archetypes. Old postcard, circa The Pueblo notably involved non-native people in lobbying the federal government for the return of Blue Lake, as they argued that their unrestricted access to the lake and the surrounding region was necessary to ensure their religious freedom. The homes became narrower as they rose, with the roofs of each level providing the floors and terraces for those above. Instead, access to rooms was through square holes in the roof that the people reached by climbing long, wooden ladders. Engelmann Spruce logs or vigas supported roofs that had layers of branches, grass, mud, and plaster covering them. The architecture and the building materials were well suited for the rigors of the environment and the needs of the people in the Taos Valley. Coronado also changed the roof structure, to use 2" to 4" inch aspen saplings branches installed at a right angle to the Engelmann Spruce vigas, then 2" to 3" inches of adobe plaster was applied, topped off with up to half a meter of loose soil about 18" inches thick for insulation and structural strength. Thus indigenous architecture evolved. The north-side Pueblo is said to be one of the most photographed and painted buildings in North America. It is made of adobe walls that are often several feet thick. Its primary purpose was for defense. In case of an attack, outside ladders could easily be pulled up. Homes[edit] The homes in this structure usually consist of two rooms, one of which is for general living and sleeping, and the second of which is for cooking, eating, and storage. Each home is self-contained; there are no passageways between the houses. Taos Indians made little use of furniture in the past, but today they have tables , chairs, and beds. In the pueblo, electricity, running water , and indoor plumbing are prohibited.

9: Taos Pueblo - Place of The Red Willows

Blue Lake and the Rio Pueblo de Taos have long been the life force for the people of Taos Pueblo. In addition to the obvious necessity the Pueblo community has for a consistent supply of water, Blue Lake has even more crucial religious significance to the group.

Due to the determination of the Native American community, it appears to have successfully resisted the pressures of modern society. Name In the Taos language, the pueblo is referred to as "the village. The name Taos in English was borrowed from Spanish Taos. The once popular explanation that the Spanish Taos came from tao "cross of the order of San Juan de los Cabelleros" from Greek tau is unlikely. They have traditionally subsisted on agriculture. Located in the valley of a small tributary of the Rio Grande , Taos Pueblo is an exceptionally well-preserved pueblo in the northernmost reaches of Pueblo territory. It comprises a group of dwelling places and ceremonial centers representative of a culture largely derived from the traditions of the prehistoric Anasazi tribes. Most archeologists believe that the Taos Indians, along with other Pueblo Indians who eventually settled along the Rio Grande , had migrated from the Four Corners region, whose ancient dwellings had been inhabited by the Anasazi. The cultures there went into an irreversible decline, and in the late 13th century major sites like Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon were abandoned, perhaps due to major climatic changes including a long drought. It is believed that Taos appeared before , following the disappearance of the Anasazi tribes from the Four Corners region. The communities of the Anasazi were characterized by common social and religious structures. Their traditional agricultural practices perfected during the classical period, and a systematic use of irrigation, were used. Taos Pueblo, illustration Taos Pueblo was first visited by Europeans in Rebuilt on three separate occasions, the mission was officially abandoned in A response to Spanish mistreatment of the Native peoples , this regional uprising drove the Spanish out of New Mexico until The Pueblo endured a siege by U. The re-acquisition of the sacred Blue Lake is considered the most important event in its history due to the spiritual belief that the Taos natives originated from the lake itself. The return of this land capped a long history of struggle. Exceptional among these is Taos, in the fact that it has retained the original layout and distinctive style of architecture virtually intact. This provides an illustration of the traditional way of life and community characteristics of its ancient inhabitants. The village today appears at first glance to conform with the description given in by Fray Francisco Atanasio Dominguez. However, numerous modifications can be observed. During the nineteenth century a new church was built on the west of the north plaza. The original form and outline of the adobe dwellings remain, but details have been changed. Exterior doors are now common, as are windows which were once small and sparse. Ovens were traditionally located only outdoors, but fireplaces have been added inside the living quarters. The north-side Pueblo is said to be one of the most photographed and painted buildings in the Western Hemisphere. It is the largest multi-storied Pueblo structure still existing. It is made of adobe walls that are often several feet thick. Its primary purpose was for defense. Up to as late as , access to the rooms on lower floors was by ladders on the outside to the roof, and then down an inside ladder. In case of an attack, outside ladders could easily be pulled up. The homes in this structure usually consist of two rooms, one of which is for general living and sleeping, and the second of which is for cooking, eating, and storage. Each home is self-contained; there are no passageways between the houses. Taos Indians made little use of furniture in the past, but today they have tables, chairs , and beds. In the Pueblo, electricity , running water, and indoor plumbing are prohibited. The pueblo wall completely encloses the village except at the entrance as a symbol of the village boundaries. Now rather short, the wall was once much taller for protection against surrounding tribes. The river running through the pueblo serves as the primary source for drinking and cooking water for village residents. In the winter, the river never completely freezes although it does form a heavy layer of ice. Because the river water moves so swiftly, the ice can be broken to obtain the fresh water beneath. Site management The Taos tribe, who is deeply conscious of its heritage, administers Taos Pueblo. The material expression of that heritage is evident in the buildings of the settlement. Maintenance and restoration work is carried out by a special team, all tribal members, who share scrupulous commitment to the use of traditional materials and techniques. While Taos

Pueblo remains a traditional settlement, only about people reside within the enclosure. Many tribal members return only seasonally for ceremonial functions, while residing nearby in modern dwellings. While the tourist trade is an important economic base, the tribe fears the possibility of that becoming the central focus of the site. As a sovereign nation within the United States, preserving the ancient traditions in the face of advancement of "modernization" is a prime concern. Modern community Ancient apartment-style dwellings at the Taos Pueblo. Taos Pueblo dwellings have changed little in 1, years. Approximately people live full time within the Pueblo walls. The two main structures Hlauuma, or north house and Hlaukwima, or south house are of similar age, more than years old. They are believed to be the oldest continuously inhabited communities in the country. Approximately 1, Taos Indians live on Taos Pueblo lands. Many who own apartments within the Pueblo live in summer homes near their fields, and in more modern homes outside the old walls but still within Pueblo land. Tradition dictates that neither electricity nor running water be allowed within the Pueblo walls. Civil and business issues within the village and relations with the non-Native world are overseen by the governor. The war chief deals with the protection of the mountains and tribal lands outside the Pueblo walls. There is an education committee comprised of Pueblo members who oversee the education of students and monitor a scholarship program for those wishing higher education. Children also attend public schools in the nearby city of Taos. Three religions are represented in the Pueblo: Christianity, the Native religion, and the Native American Church. Most of the Indians are Roman Catholic. Saint Jerome, or San Geronimo, is the patron saint of the pueblo. Each primary family lives in a separate dwelling so when a couple gets married, they move to their own home. With relatives nearby, everyone is available to help care for the children. The elderly teach the young the values and traditions that have been handed down, which protects the integrity of the Taos culture.

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