Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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| AND/OR COMMON  |  |   |  |              |
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

#### Summary Paragraph

The Prehistoric Adaptations Along the Rio Grande Drainage in Sierra County, New Mexico, Thematic Nomination contains 15 sites and 1 district with 5 sites. The sites are located along the Rio Grande and its major tributaries in Sierra County (Figure 1). The 20 sites represent prehistoric occupation in the Mogollon culture area in Southern New Mexico. Included in the nomination are sites representing the Mimbres subregion and the Jornada subregion that document the temporal continuum from the Late Archaic (pre-A.D. 200) to the terminal Jornada Mogollon phase, the El Paso phase (post A.D. 1250). The sites are all habitation sites.

The sites are all on public land: Bureau of Reclamation, Southwest Region; Bureau of Land Management, Las Cruces District; and State of New Mexico (Table 1).

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#### Previous Investigations

In the 1930s and 1940s, Herbert W. Yeo, an outstanding amateur archaeologist, recorded several sites in the Rio Grande Valley throughout Southern New Mexico, including LA 517, LA 1082, and LA 1119 in this nomination. His notes and collections are currently in the Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico. His notes are brief and his maps sketchy by current standards, but his descriptions of sites that have since been destroyed and his sherd samples from sites that have since been heavily collected by weekend "point hunters" are invaluable.

Only one professional survey has been conducted in the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County. In 1985 the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Division sponsored a reconnaissance survey of the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County (Lekson 1985). For that project, Lekson recorded a total of 236 sites along 60 miles along the river and 40 miles along major tributaries. All of the sites in this nomination were recorded during that survey source and a control

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Several surveys have been conducted in the areas surrounding the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County (see Figure 2). These surveys have contributed some valuable information to understanding the sites along the river within Sierra County; is to one value of parts

(see continuation sheet)

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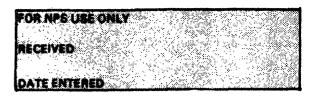
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Table 1. Ownership for sites in Rio Grande Thematic Group Nomination

| Bureau of Land<br>Management          | Bureau of Reclamation  | State Land Office |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| LA 50743 Junt<br>LA 50749<br>LA 50751 | LA 517<br>LA 1082-Bhm<br>LA 1119<br>LA 38755<br>LA 48990/LA 48991/<br>LA 48992/LA 48993/<br>LA 48994<br>LA 48995<br>LA 48996<br>LA 49007<br>LA 49016<br>LA 49028<br>LA 49030<br>LA 49033 | LA 50548          |

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- 1. The New Mexico State Historic Preservation Division sponsored a sample survey of state lands in western Sierra County (Laumbach and Kirkpatrick 1983). This survey showed the continuation of the Mimbres culture east of the traditional Mimbres area and helped define the southern extent of the Cibolan Branch of the Mogollon.
- 2. A sample survey of Bureau of Land Management lands in southeastern Sierra County was sponsored by that agency (Hester 1977). This survey helped define the extent and density of Jornada Mogollon and Mimbres Mogollon sites in the Jornada del Muerto, east of the Rio Grande Valley and significantly east of the homeland of the Mimbres branch of the Mogollon.
- 3. The University of New Mexico Archaeological Field School conducted a survey of the upper reaches of the school a major tributary of the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County (Lekson 1984). The field school surveyed a stratified random sample of the terraces and benches along the creek
- 4.

and Associates 1982). That survey covered an area of the Jornada del Muerto that had not been previously surveyed.

While only Lekson's survey covered lands in the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County, the results of the other surveys help set a context for determining the prehistoric chronology and spatial distribution of the Jornada and Mimbres Mogollon. The results of these surveys helped document and date the existence and extent of the distribution of cultural groups and artifact types. They also help define the significance of the sites within the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County by demonstrating the rarity of the sites and defining the relevant research questions for the survey area.

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Environmental Setting

The sites in this nomination are located along the Rio Grande and its major tributaries in Sierra County. The river valley is a major component of a complex physiographic setting within the county. The setting of the county is defined by four parallel, north-south ranges of mountains. The easternmost, the San Andres, and westernmost, the Black Range, are massive uplifts. Two lines of hills in the center of the county (the Fra Cristobals and Caballos east of the river and the Cuchillo Negro Mountains, the Salado Mountains, the Animas Hills, and the Sibley Moutains west of the river) are much smaller. Three broad plains lie between the four ranges, and the Rio Grande runs through the middle of these.

#### Sierra County

West of the Rio Grande Valley, the Palomas surface (Hawley 1965) slopes gently from the foothills to the river.

The Rio Grande has cut a valley about 2 mi (3 km) wide and 300 to 500 ft (90 to 150 m) deep below the Palomas surface. The river itself drops from about 4410 ft (1345 m) where it enters Sierra County on the north, to 4100 ft (1250 m) where it leaves it. The east side of the river valley hugs the flanks of the the Fra Cristobals on the north and the Caballos on the south. These mountains have peaks of 7400 ft (2250 m), over 3000 ft (900 m) above the nearby river. The mountains are a narrow wall of jagged peaks that separate the once-lush river valley from the dry Jornada del Muerto.

The Jornada del Muerto is an immense <u>bolson</u>, a flat desert stretching almost 40 mi (65 km) from the Fra Cristobals and Caballos to the San Andres Mountains, the fourth north-south range, which has peaks of almost 9000 ft (2700 m).

Rainfall varies with altitude, ranging from about 8.5 in. (208 mm) annually in the Rio Grande Valley and the Jornada del Muerto, to over 25 in. (612 mm) along the crest of the Black Range to the west. The three ranges average about 14 in. (343 mm). Over 60% of this rain falls in summer thunderstorms from June to September. As with rainfall, vegetation varies with altitude. The plant communities of the Sierra County correspond to the landscape of the mountain ranges and plains. Surrounding the river valley is Chihuahuan Desertscrub

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vegetation. The Palomas surface is covered by Semidesert Grassland. The Great Basin Grassland is on the eastern slopes of the the smaller mountain ranges west of the river, while Great Basin Conifer Woodland vegetation is found on the hilltops and on the high mountains directly east of the river.

A series of creeks runs from the crest of the Black Range through the foothills and deep canyons in the grassland plains to the Rio Grande. As with most southwestern creeks, they are intermittent; but, where they cut the line of foothills, there is a short length of permanent flow in almost all of these creeks. A second series of springs or seeps occurs where the creeks cross a poorly defined north-south, linear feature or fault in the grassland plains, about 6 mi (10 km) above their confluence with the Rio Grande. At these locations, the deep valleys are well watered.

#### Rio Grande Valley

The Rio Grande valley within Sierra County is about 58 mi (993 km) long. The major tributaries--all from the west--are, from north to south, the Alamosa, Cuchillo Negro, Palomas, Animas, and Tierra Blanca creeks. Smaller, shorter tributaries enter the river from the east; these are mostly dry except during heavy rains.

The major features of the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County are two reservoirs, Elephant Butte and Caballo reservoirs. The lower part of Elephant Butte Lake flooded a barren desert. Tamarisk and occasional cottonwood have grown along the shoreline. To the west beyond that scraggly fringe stretches endless miles of creosotebush on flats with rocky soils, to the east rise the bleak Fra Cristobals. The west winds have created a band of sand dunes along the lower edges of the mountain slopes on the east side of the lakes. Between the two lakes sits the city of Truth or Consequences, below Elephant Butte Dam and above the marshes at the head of Caballo Lake.

Caballo Reservoir covered farms and pastures, and the edges of the valley are greener than those along Elephant Butte. But to the east are the same creosotebush flats, and to the west are a second range of low, barren mountains. The valley below Caballo Dam is farmland. Chile and alfalfa fields fill the valley bottom, and cottonwood bosques fill the uncultivated areas.

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Topographic maps dating before the dam give an idea of the topography of the valley before construction of Elephant Butte Dam in 1916 and subsequent construction of Caballo Dam. From the Sierra-Socorro County line, for the northernmost 10 miles, the valley was open and 1.5 to 2 mi wide. Below that is a 6-mi-long construction (The Narrows of Elephant Butte); the river flowed through a basalt flow. A little over 3 mi (5 km) above Truth or Consequences is a long gorge winding through the northern end of the Caballo Mountain uplift, which is the site of the Elephant Butte Dam. At Truth or Consequences Below Truth or Consequences to the Dona Ana is a third narrows. County line were three additional narrows that broke the valley into segments of broad bottoms. The river was broad and discrete straight.

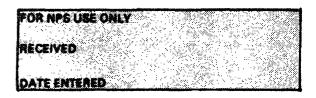
The side canyons are mostly dry, oversized arroyos with broad, sandy bottoms. The scanty underground flow will not support cottonwood and tamarisk, and the vegetation in the bottom repeats the vegetation on the plain through which the canyons have cut. But the Palomas and Animas creeks are different. Fed by springs, both have stretches of permanent flow and gallery forests of cottonwood and oak. Above and below the running streams, the canyons are dry and barren.

Today the lower reaches of all the western tributaries are usually dry, water from springs and runoff seldom reaches the Rio Grande as surface flow. The canyons are all very straight and rather narrow--usually less than 0.5 mi (0.8 km) wide--and are deeply incised into the Palomas surface.

Several of the tributaries are marked by asymmetrical terrace development. For example, the lower reach of Alamosa Creek has well-developed terraces on the southern bank, but only talus slopes from the Palomas surface on the northern bank. On the Animas, the situation is reversed.

Although today the valley is mainly agricultural or flooded, Campbell and Dick-Peddie (1964) have attempted to reconstruct the prehistoric vegetation based on historic records and observed impacts of agricultural and grazing on the fragile desert environment. They suggest that, prior to European settlement, the vegetation in many areas along the river were saltgrass flats, barren except for an occasional cottonwood or Gooding willow. Cottonwood gallery forests probably lined the river itself. The plains into which the river

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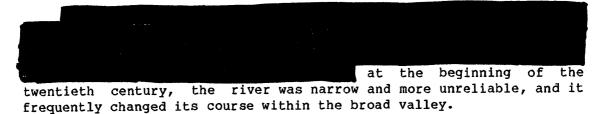


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valley is cut, which now support vast stands of creosotbush, were originally gramma grasslands (Dick-Peddie 1965). Vegetation of the tributary valleys has no doubt changed as much as in the river valley, but the walnut stands noted in early Hispanic maps (e.g., the Miera y Pacheco's 1758 map, reproduced in Kessel 1979, Appendix V) still exist along Animas Creek.

#### Sites in This Nomination



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|          | Table 2. Environmental location for sites in the Rio Grande Thematic Group (continued). |
|----------|---|
| Site No. | Environmental Location  |
| LA 50548 |   |
| LA 50743 |   |
| LA 50749 |   |
| LA 50751 |   |

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### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



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#### Site Descriptions (General)

The sites in this nomination exhibit a wide range of architecture and artifacts that characterize the phases defined for both subregions (Table 3). Architecture ranges from stone windbreaks to 100-room pueblos; artifact assemblages document the continuum from chipped stone scatters predating the advent of ceramics; to early Mogollon plain brown ceramic assemblages; to the finely executed Mimbres decorated wares and El Paso phase assemblages, characterized by ceramics traded from Mexico and southeastern Arizona.

The earliest site included in the nomination, LA 48996, is a complex of stone circles, which appear to be bases for windbreaks or huts. This site may date to the Archaic period. A second nonceramic site has evidence of more formal pithouses (LA 50743). Both of these sites are small, but are significant examples of preceramic The earliest architecture. stages of ceramic occupation are represented by two pithouse sites with plain brown ware: a village (LA 50751) of at least eight pit structures surrounding a possible great kiva and a defensive retreat (LA 48995) atop a high basalt mesa.

Ceramic pithouse villages in both the Mimbres and Jornada areas are characterized by Mimbres Boldface Black-on-white ceramics. Sites representative of this period include two villages (LA 49028 and LA 49030) with great kivas and another very large site (LA 517) with a less well defined settlement plan. The Mimbres Classic phase is represented by three large masonry pueblos (LA 38755, LA 49007, and LA 50749), and one site (LA 50548) with an isolated great kiva with associated pit structures and rooms.

Large adobe and stone masonry pueblos of the El Paso phase are represented by two sites (LA 49033 and LA 49016). A previously undocumented El Paso phase pattern, a series of small room blocks, is present at five sites (LA 48990, LA 48991, LA 48992, LA 48993, and LA 48994) together Finally, two very large multicomponent sites with pithouses, Mimbres and El Paso pueblo structures (LA 1082 and LA 1119) are included.

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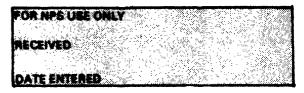
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| Site No. | Site Type               | Features   | Area<br>(in acres) |
|----------|-------------------------|--|--------------------|
| LA 50743 | habitation              | pit structures<br>possible small surface<br>structures                         | 3.4                |
| LA 48996 | habitation              | masonry structures<br>walls  | 0.6                |
| LA 49016 | habitation              | cobble structures (?)<br>adobe pueblo<br>fire-cracked rock hearths             | 1.0                |
| LA 48995 | defensive<br>habitation | pithouses<br>surface structures<br>defensive walls<br>shelters                 | 6.9                |
| LA 50751 | habitation              | pit structures<br>great kiva   | 5.4                |
| LA 49028 | habitation              | pithouse depressions<br>cobble foundations<br>cobble-lined cists<br>great kiva | 6.25               |
| LA 49030 | habitation              | pithouses<br>cobble foundations<br>cobble-lined cists<br>great kiva            | 3.2                |
| LA 577   | habitation              | pit structures   | 14.8               |
| LA 1082  | habitation              | pit structures<br>cobble-masonry roomblocks<br>adobe roomblocks                | 32.45              |

Table 3. Sites type, features, and size (in acres).

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Table 3. Sites type, features, and size (in acres) (continued).

| Site No  | . Site Type    | Features  | Area<br>(in acres) |
|--|----------------|---|--------------------|
| LA 3875  | 5 habitation   | temporary structures<br>tures<br>masonry structures, possibly<br>for temporary use<br>fire-cracked rock | 34.0               |
| KA 4900  | 7 habitation   | masonry roomblocks<br>depressions   | 8.0                |
| LA 5054  | 8 habitation   | masonry rooms<br>great kiva   | 1.3                |
| LA 5074  | 9 habitation   | linear masonry roomblocks<br>cobble masonry units<br>pit structures(?)                                  | 9.25               |
| LA 1119  | habitation     | pit structures<br>masonry roomblocks<br>earthen berms<br>great kiva                                     | 12.0               |
| LA 4903  | 3 habitation   | masonry roomblocks<br>isolated rooms<br>pit structure(?)  | 1.3                |
| LA 4899<br>LA 4899<br>LA 4899<br>LA 4899<br>LA 4899<br>LA 4899 | 1,<br>2,<br>3, | small masonry structures<br>circular cists<br>kiva(?)   | 16.5               |



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|---|---|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|--|
| X PREHISTORIC   | $\mathbf{X}_{-}$ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | COMMUNITY PLANNING      | LANDSCAPE ARCHITEGTURE | RELIGION            |  |  |  |  |
| 1400-1499   | ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC                     | CONSERVATION            | LAW                    | SCIENCE             |  |  |  |  |
| 1500-1599   | AGRICULTURE                             | ECONOMICS               | LITERATURE             | SCULPTURE           |  |  |  |  |
| 1600-1699   | ARCHITECTURE                            | EDUCATION               | MILITARY               | SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |  |  |  |  |
| 1700-1799   | ART                                     | ENGINEERING             | MUSIC                  | THEATER             |  |  |  |  |
| 1800-1899   | COMMERCE                                | EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  | PHILOSOPHY             | TRANSPORTATION      |  |  |  |  |
| 1900-   | COMMUNICATIONS                          | INDUSTRY                | POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | OTHER (SPECIEY)     |  |  |  |  |
|   |   | INVENTION               |                        |                     |  |  |  |  |
|   | z - 1                                   | Rio Granue Drai         |                        | ·                   |  |  |  |  |
| SPECIFIC DATES ca. A.D. 200 to ca.<br>A.D. 1250 BUILDER/ARCHITECT |   |                         |                        |                     |  |  |  |  |
| STATEMENT   | OF SIGNIFICANCE                         |                         |                        | ·                   |  |  |  |  |

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Fifteen sites and one district form the thematic group entitled, Prehistoric Adaptations along the Rio Grande Drainage in Sierra County. The sites are significant because they fit criterion "d" of the criteria for evaluation to the National Register of Historic Places. They can answer a number of research questions concerning prehistoric settlement along the boundary between the Jornada Mogollon and Mimbres Mogollon areas for the period of significance from circa A.D. 200 to circa A.D. 1250. All except two undated sites fit within this time period; those two sites may date slightly earlier but have cultural attributes that are important to the research questions outlined here.

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These sites are significant because virtually no archaeological excavations have been conducted along the Rio Grande in Sierra County. Of the 20 sites in this nomination, test excavations were conducted at only one site, but the results were never published. What is known archaeologically about sites in the river valley is inferred from nearby areas.

#### Historic Context

The Mogollon culture area has traditionally been divided into two subregions (Figure 3). West of the Rio Grande, the Mogollon culture is termed Mimbres, after the Mimbres River. Along the Mimbres River, from about A.D. 900 to 1150, the Mimbres achieved a local florescence typified by the world-famous Mimbres Black-on-white pottery. The Mimbres culture collapsed about A.D. 1150. East of the Rio Grande, the Jornada Mogollon are so called for the Jornada del Muerto. The Jornada Mogollon evidently lagged behind their Mimbres neighbors culturally, with various changes and advances in the Mimbres appearing only after a lapse of up to a century in the Jornada Mogollon.

The Jornada Mogollon also experienced cultural development. The cultural climax in the Jornada Mogollon came from about A.D. 1200 to 1400 in the El Paso phase.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

| <b>10 GEOGRAPHICAL</b>                  | RTY total acreage:  | 178.25 acı   | ces   |                                       |
|---|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| A L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L |   | BLL  |   | _ <br>                                |
| varies, see                             | individual site desc  | riptions   |   |                                       |
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| LIST ALL STATES AND                     | COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES   | OVERLAPPING S  | STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES  |                                       |
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| In compliance with Executive Or         | TE HISTORIC PRESERVATION<br>YESNO<br>der 11593, I hereby nominate t<br>been allowed 90 days in which<br>luated level of significance is | OFFICER RECOM<br>NON<br>ST<br>his property to the<br>to present the no | ATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIG<br>e National Register, certifying that the<br>comination to the State Review Board | e State                               |
| TITLE                                   |   |  | DATE  |                                       |
| John J.K.                               | S PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN   |  | EGISTER<br>DATE 5/15/8  | 8                                     |
| DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHI               | OLOGY AND HISTORIC PRES   | ERVATION   | DATE  |                                       |
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#### Mimbres Mogollon

The Mimbres Mogollon sequence is best documented from excavation conducted in the Mimbres Valley of southwestern New Mexico by the Mimbres Foundation. The large, Classic phase sites in the valley originally drew the attention of pot hunters because the burials often pots finely executed designs depicting animals, contain with mythology, and aspects of daily village life. Thus, in an attempt to save a number of sites, Steve LeBlanc and the Mimbres Foundation excavated a series of sites in the valley. The Mimbres occupation, however, extends from eastern Arizona along the uplands of the Gila River to the Rio Grande and possibly into the Jornada del Muerto east of the Rio Grande. Research in the Mimbres Mogollon is summarized in Stuart and Gauthier (1981).

The Mimbres sequence began with the Early Pithouse (or Cumbre) phase, as an in-situ development from the San Pedro phase of the Cochise Archaic (Table 4). Dates on the beginning vary. Architecture is pithouses, and the pottery is Alma Plain, a brown ware. Early sites are generally placed on high knolls or mesas, which appear to be defensive. Subsistence was based on hunting and gathering coupled with raising corn, bean, squash, and cotton.

The subsequent phases--the Georgetown, San Francisco, and Three Circle phases -- show progression in pottery, social organinazation, architecture, agriculture, etc., culminating in the Classic Mimbres. The Classic Mimbres begins about A.D. 1000 and ends about A.D. 1150. The population had expanded into secondary drainages throughout the area. Classic Mimbres ceramics, the highly decorated Mimbres Black-on-white are found east across the Rio Grande to the Jornada del Muerto, the Tularosa Basin, and as far as the Sacramento Mountains. This distribution may represent trade or expansion of the population. Architecture developed to masonry surface pueblos, with square to rectangular rooms arranged in linear roomblocks of cobble masonry with adobe mortar. The greatest number of sites are probably field houses located near agricultural fields in valleys with permanent rivers and streams; large sites are more rare. On earlier sites, kivas are large and centrally located Kivas on Classic Mimbres sites were integrated into room blocks, indicated a shift toward smaller family units.

After the end of the Classic Mimbres came the Black Mountain phase, which appears to be a sharp departure from the earlier culture. The appearance of the Black Mountain phase leaves the question about partial or complete population replacement in the Mimbres Valley and adjacent highlands of the Mogollon Mountains and

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#### Table 4. Archaeological chronology for the Central Jornada Mogollon and the Mimbres Mogollon areas (based on archaeological work outside the Rio Grande Valley).

| Central Jornada*                               | Mimbres**                                     |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Early Pithouse phase                           | Cumbre phase                                  |  |  |  |  |  |
| A.D. 1-600                                     | A.D. 200-500                                  |  |  |  |  |  |
| pit structures                                 | circular/oval pit structures                  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Early El Paso brown ware,<br>San Francisco Red | red-slipped ware, brown ware                  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Georgetown phase                              |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | A.D. 550-650                                  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | circular/D-shaped pit<br>structures           |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | San Francisco Red, brown ware                 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | San Francisco phase                           |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | A.D. 650-750                                  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mesilla (Late Pithouse) phase                  | rectangular pit structures                    |  |  |  |  |  |
| A.D. 600-1100                                  | Mogollon R/B, brown ware                      |  |  |  |  |  |
| pit structures                                 |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jornada & Late El Paso Brown                   | Three Circles phase                           |  |  |  |  |  |
| wares, Boldface B/W                            | A.D. 750-1000                                 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | rectangular pit structures                    |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Three Circle R/W, Boldface B/W,<br>brown ware |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Classic Mimbres phase                         |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | A.D. 1000-1150                                |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | cobble masonry pueblos                        |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Classic Mimbres B/W, brown<br>wares           |  |  |  |  |  |

Table 4. Archaeological chronology for the Central Jornada Mogollon and the Mimbres Mogollon areas (based on archaeological work outside the Rio Grande Valley) (continued).

| Central Jornada*  |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
|   | Mimbres**                                       |  |  |
| Dona Ana phase  |   |  |  |
| A.D. 1100-1200  |   |  |  |
| pit structures, adobe surface<br>structures   |   |  |  |
| Early El Paso Polychrome,<br>Jornada Brown ware, Mimbres                            | Black Mountain phase                            |  |  |
| B/W, Chupadero B/W, White<br>Mt. Red wares  | A.D. 1150-1300                                  |  |  |
| Early El Paso phase   | adobe pueblos<br>Playas Red, El Paso Polychrome |  |  |
| A.D. 1200-1300  | Chupadero B/W, brown wares                      |  |  |
| adobe pueblos   |   |  |  |
| Early El Paso Polychrome,<br>Mimbres B/W, Chupadero B/W,<br>White Mt. Red Wares (?) |   |  |  |
| Late El Paso phase  | Cliff phase                                     |  |  |
| A.D. 1300-1400  | A.D. 1375-1450                                  |  |  |
| adobe pueblos   | adobe pueblos                                   |  |  |
| Late El Paso Polychrome, Gila<br>and Tonto Polychrome                               | Gila and Tonto Polychrome,                      |  |  |

- \* Lehmer 1948; Whalen 1980a, 1980b; Wiseman 1983
- **\*\*** LeBlanc and Whalen 1980

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the Black Range. The Black Mountain phase is characterized by large villages located at lower elevations where soils are generally good for agriculture (alluvial catchments). Pueblos are typically puddled adobe, enclosing plazas but lacking kivas. The Black Mountain phase probably peaks about A.D. 1250-1275, but may continue after the collapse of Casas Grandes (Stuart and Gauthier 1981:208).

The Cliff phase of the Salado, or the terminal phase in southeastern New Mexico, is less well known and not relevant to the sites in this nomination, except the Salado ceramics, such as Tularosa Black-on-white and Gila Polychrome from sites along the Gila and Salt drainages in Arizona, are found in sites in Southern New Mexico.

#### Jornada Mogollon

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The Jornada Mogollon occupation is widespread but not well documented. Of interest here is mainly the lowland adaptation, occurring in the Jornada del Muerto, the Rio Grande Valley, and the Tularosa Basin. The lowland phenomenon was defined by Donald Lehmer (1948). Upland adaptations occur in the Sacramento Mountains.

The Jornada Mogollon differs from the Mimbres Mogollon in a number of ways; the most readily identifiable is the ceramics. The Jornada Mogollon sequence developed from plain brown ceramics similar to Alma Plain in the Mimbres area. The later types are bichromes, with the addition of black or red paint, and polychromes, with both black and red. Dating of surface sites, in the absence of good chronological dates from throughout the Jornada Mogollon area, often depends on rim form and rim paint on the brown sherds.

The distribution of the Jornada Mogollon is best documented by surveys in Dona Ana County for seismic exploration (Duran 1982; Hilley 1982; Taylor and Brethauer 1980; etc.); from block surveys on Fort Bliss, in Southern New Mexico but north of El Paso (Carmichael 1983; Whalen 1977, 1978); and from cultural resource management surveys and limited excavations (Laumbach and Kirkpatrick 1986). As a result, good chronological data is lacking for much of the area (Wiseman 1983), but sites often have datable tradewares from adjacent areas (see Table 4).

The Early Pithouse phase has not been extensively documented throughout the Jornada Mogollon.

The earliest well-documented phase of the lowland Jornada Mogolion is the Mesilla, characterized by pithouses, plain brown ware

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ceramics, and Western Mogollon trade wares such as Alma Plain and Mimbres white ware. Small, apparently agricultural sites in the southern Tularosa Basin during this phase occur near playas on the desert floor. Other sites, which occur within sand dune fields, apparently resulted from gathering mesquite and hunting rabbits.

The Dona Ana phase is postulated as intermediate, although few sites date to that period. Its artifacts and architecture are transitional from the Mesilla phase to the El Paso phase.

The El Paso phase exhibits more consolidated social organization, linear adobe-walled surface structures in or expressed in enclosed-plaza clusters. Sites are often placed close to the mountains, such as along the east side of the Franklins in the southern Tularosa Basin, on alluvial fans to catch mountain run-off in order to water agricultural fields. In addition to El Paso Polychrome ceramics, such sites usually yield a wealth of tradewares, including Three Rivers Red-on-terracotta, Chupadero Black-on-white, and Lincoln the northern Tularosa Basin and Sacramento Black-on-red from Mountains; St. John's, Gila, and Tonto Polychrome from eastern Arizona; and Playas Red Incised and other Casas Grandes wares from the Other trade wares from the south often include copper bells south. and shell beads.

The El Paso phase may be part of a larger phenomenon, called the "Casas Grandes Phenomenon," involving the Black Mountain/Animas phase in southernwestern New Mexico and many others throughout northern Chihuahua (Schaafsma 1979). With the Casas Grandes site as possibly the center, this phenomenon shows strong ties to Classic civilizations in the Mexican Highlands.

#### Mimbres and Jornada Mogollon Settlements Along the Rio Grande

The cultural affiliations of the sites in this nomination are based on architectural features and ceramic types evident on the surface of the sites (Table 5). The phase dates for each component on each site in this nomination are based on dated ceramic types and architectural features from better-documented sites in the Mimbres and Jornada Mogollon areas. The differences between Mimbres phase Mimbres Mogollon sites and El Paso phase Jornada Mogollon sites area can be

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Table 5. Description of sites included in the Rio Grande Thematic Group Nomination.

| Site No. | Cultural/Temporal Affiliation   | Phase Dates*   |
|----------|---|--|
| LA 50743 | Late Archaic  | pre A.D. 200   |
| LA 48996 | Archaic or Apache   | pre A.D. 200 or<br>post 1700                         |
| LA 49016 | Late Archaic<br>Mimbres/Classic<br>Jornada Mogollon/El Paso                           | pre A.D. 200<br>A.D. 900-1150<br>A.D. 1150-1250      |
| LA 48995 | Mimbres or Jornada Mogollon/<br>Early Pithouse  | A.D. 200-600   |
| LA 50751 | Mimbres or Jornada Mogollon/<br>Early Late Pithouse                                   | A.D. 650-750   |
| LA 49028 | Jornada Mogollon/Late Pithouse<br>or Mimbres/Three Circles                            | A.D. 750-1000  |
| LA 49030 | Jornada Mogollon/Late Pithouse<br>or Mimbres/Three Circles                            | A.D. 750-1000  |
| LA 517   | Jornada Mogollon/Late Pithouse<br>Mimbres/Classic Mimbres                             | A.D. 750-1100<br>A.D. 1000-1150                      |
| LA 1082  | Jornada Mogollon/Late Pithouse<br>Mimbres/Classic Mimbres<br>Jornada Mogollon/El Paso | A.D. 750-1100<br>A.D. 1000-1150<br>A.D. 1200-1300(?) |
| LA 38755 | Mimbres/Classic Mimbres   | A.D. 900-1150  |
| LA 49007 | Mimbres/Classic Mimbres   | A.D. 900-1150  |
| LA 50548 | Mimbres/Classic Mimbres   | A.D. 1000-1150                                       |
| LA 50749 | Mimbres/Classic Mimbres   | A.D. 1000-1150                                       |

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|                    |             |   |      |   |  |

Table 5. Description of sites included in the Rio Grande Thematic Group Nomination (continued).

| Site No.   | Cultural/Temporal Affiliation                       | Phase Dates*                     |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| LA 1119  | Mimbres/Classic Mimbres<br>Jornada Mogollon/El Paso | A.D. 1000-1150<br>A.D. 1000-1250 |
| LA 49033   | Jornada Mogollon/El Paso                            | A.D. 1150-1250(?)                |
| LA 48990/<br>LA 48991/<br>LA 48992<br>LA 48993<br>LA 48994 | Jornada Mogollon/El Paso                            | A.D. 1150-1250(?)                |

\*based on dates obtained from sites outside the area covered by this nomination.

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readily determined from the surface deposits. For the earlier phases, the cultural affiliation of Pithouse phase sites cannot be differentiated by surface manifestations. For the purpose of this nomination, these sites are not differentiated; further research at Early Pithouse sites will help define the boundary between the two cultures, the Mimbres and the Jornada Mogollon, during the earlier phases.

#### Research Questions

Historically and prehistorically, the Rio Grande Valley has been a center of settlement in New Mexico. However, archaeologically the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County has been regarded less as a center than as a periphery, the boundary between two subregions of the Mogollon culture, between the Mimbres to the west and the Jornada to the south and east. The sites in the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County thematic nomination represents both the Mimbres and Jornada Mogollon occupations in Southern New Mexico.

The sites in the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County thematic nomination have the potential to yield significant data to address a number of research questions. The research questions suggested here for these sites include Jornada Mogollon chronology, Mimbres occupation, intercultural interactions, subsistence patterns, pithouse development, kiva functions, and defensive functions (Table 6).

#### 1. Determining a Sequence of Dates for the Jornada Mogollon

The sites in this nomination occur in close proximity and represent both the Mimbres Mogollon and the Jornada Mogollon cultures. The assemblages typical of both areas are found together on multicomponent sites. These situations provide unique opportunities for comparative studies between the groups in the two areas. The Mimbres sequence, for example, is well dated in the Mimbres Valley, while the Jornada area suffers from a serious lack of absolute dates (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980). Cross-dating at sites along the river could be critical to the extending the chronology from the Mimbres area to the Jornada area.

Following the Mimbres occupation, El Paso phase sites can be dated by comparison to El Paso phase sites in southern Dona CONTINUATION SHEET



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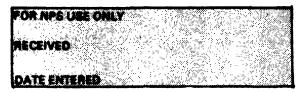
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| Site No.                           | Research Questions (see discussion in text   |
|------------------------------------|--|
| LA 517                             | -clarify the Mimbres/Jornada Mogollon interaction<br>-study the nature of the Mimbres occupation of the<br>Rio Grande Valley<br>-study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites |
|                                    | study subsistence for the kit stande variey sites  |
| LA 1082                            | -determine chronology for the Jornada Mogollon in area   |
|                                    | -clarify the Mimbres/Jornada Mogollon interaction  |
|                                    | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the use of the great kiva   |
| LA 1119                            | -determine chronology for the Jornada Mogollon in area   |
|                                    | -clarify the Mimbres/Jornada Mogollon interaction<br>-study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the use of the great kiva                                      |
| LA 38755                           | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-study the nature of the Mimbres occupation of the<br>Rio Grande Valley  |
| LA 48990,<br>LA 48991,             | -determine chronology for the Jornada Mogollon in area   |
| LA 48992,<br>LA 48993,<br>LA 48994 | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites   |
| LA 48995                           | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the pithouse phenomenon<br>-study the need for defensive sites in the Rio Gra                                       |
|                                    | Valley   |
| LA 48996                           | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites   |
|                                    | -explain the pithouse phenomenon<br>-study the need for defensive sites in the Rio Gra   |

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Table 6. Research questions for sites in the Rio Grande Thematic Nomination (continued).

| Site No. | Research Questions (see discussion in text)  |
|----------|--|
| LA 49007 | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-study the nature of the Mimbres occupation of the<br>Rio Grande Valley  |
| LA 49016 | -determine chronology for the Jornada Mogollon in the<br>area<br>-clarify the Mimbres/Jornada Mogollon interaction<br>-study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites |
| LA 49028 | -clarify the Mimbres/Jornada Mogollon interaction<br>-study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the pithouse phenomenon                              |
| LA 49030 | -clarify the Mimbres/Jornada Mogollon interaction<br>-study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the use of the great kiva                            |
| LA 49033 | -determine chronology for the Jornada Mogollon in the<br>area<br>-study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites  |
| LA 50548 | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the use of the great kiva<br>-study the nature of the Mimbres occupation of the<br>Rio Grande Valley      |
| LA 50743 | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the pithouse phenomenon   |
| LA 50749 | -study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-study the nature of the Mimbres occupation of the<br>Rio Grande Valley  |

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Table 6. Research questions for sites in the Rio Grande Thematic Nomination (continued).

| Site No. | Research Questions (see discussion in text)   |
|----------|---|
| LA 50751 | -determine chronology for the Jornada Mogollon in the<br>area<br>-study subsistence for the Rio Grande Valley sites<br>-explain the pithouse phenomenon<br>-explain the use of the great kiva |

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Ana County and western Texas, as well to Casas Grandes in Northern Mexico. Extensive work at Casas Grandes has provided a well-dated ceramic sequence (DiPeso 1974). Those ceramics appear in El Paso phase sites throughout Southern New Mexico.

2. Determining the Nature of the Mimbres Settlement in the Rio Grande Valley.

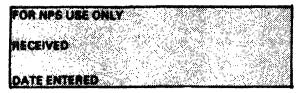
The Mimbres settlements in the Mimbres Valley have long dominated the archaeology of the Mogollon culture area of southwestern New Mexico, largely because of the huge collections of spectacular pottery they have produced. Recent research suggests that the Mimbres Valley was simply one part of a larger regional system, which included sites along the Rio Grande Valley. The dynamics of this regional system are almost completely unknown. Relative dating of Mimbres sites within and outside the Mimbres Valley, the settlement system they represent, and administrative relationships of these sites are unknown. Thus sites with apparently purely Mimbres occupations, which were evidently not directly influenced by Jornada Mogollon occupation of the valley, will indicate the nature of the settlement in this area and how it differs from the Mimbres settlements in the Mimbres Valley and contemporary Jornada Mogollon sites in the Rio Grande Valley.

#### 3. Clarifying Mimbres/Jornada Mogollon Interaction

The Rio Grande represents a boundary between the Mimbres and the Jornada Mogollon. This boundary runs along the largest river in southern New Mexico and has an abundance of archaeological remains. Research on sites along the boundary could clarify the nature of the interaction between the two areas. For example, the Early Pithouse phase may belong to either the Mimbres or the Jornada Mogollon (Lekson 1984) or may be exclusively Mimbres (Laumbach 1982). The affiliation of Late Pithouse phase sites is also unknown. More research is needed to define the cultural affiliation of these earliest Mogollon phases.

After the Mimbres collapsed (around A.D. 1130), sites with ceramics and architecture resembling the El Paso phase are

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found throughout the Mimbres area (Schaafsma 1979). This shift in cultural emphasis may be related to developments outside both the Mimbres and Jornada areas; specifically, the rise of Casas Grandes, a major trade center about 260 km south of Sierra County Similarly, interaction between both the Mimbres and Jornada areas and the poorly known County may be clarified by data contained in the sites nominated here.

For much of both sequences, the Jornada seems to be on the receiving end of developments that appeared first in the Mimbres area. Absolute dates from such sites as LA 49028 and LA 49030 may help determine the nature of the cultural interaction. Surficially, these sites have similar material culture, and they date to the same time period. Data from these sites will help determine the cultural affiliation of the inhabitants of the sites, thus clarifying the interaction between the two cultures.

Significant research potential of this series of sites comes largely from their Potentially, the sites can provide data to study questions about the cultural dynamics Contrasting sites of the two cultural traditions, may effectively inform us about different adaptations in the respective heartlands of the Mimbres and Jornada Mogollon areas.

4. <u>Study Subsistance</u> (Both Agricultural Adaptation and Resource Procurement) in the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County

These sites can potentially yield data, such as burned macro- and microfossils, and types of artifacts to address several specific questions: Were Jornada and Mimbres Mogollon uses of resources in the valley similar agriculture and other subsistence activities? Were El Paso and Mimbres riverine phase use of the environment substantially different than the subsistence bases of these two phases in their respective "heartlands" (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980)? Were Mimbres and Jornada Mogollon adaptation to the riverine substantially different from that environment of contemporaneous Anasazi developments immediately to the

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north? Those Anasazi developments evidently survived into the protohistoric Piro Puebloan groups, while the Rio Grande in Sierra County appears to have been abandoned following the El Paso phase. Differing adaptations and agricultural strategies may explain these very different records of success and failure.

The characteristics of the valley itself (such as the hydrologic characteristics) and the resources available, may have influenced the apparently minor aboriginal utilization of this reach of the Rio Grande, compared to the extensive historic and protohistoric settlement along the river from just

Did hydrologic characteristics of the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County limit aboriginal agricultural use? There is no evidence of any protohistoric use of the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County, compared to the Piro area in Socorro County.

Data from the sites in this nomination can be used to study such questions about subsistence in the valley, and to determine changes in the subsistence through time. For example, in the Mimbres Valley, populations in large villages were apparently supported by farmers living in field houses. This pattern also appears in the El Paso phase, to an extent, but not in the adjacent areas of Southern New Mexico, such as the Cibola branch of the Mogollon or the Piro area.

#### 5. Explain the Pithouse Phenomenon

Along the Rio Grande, the spatial distribution of Late Archaic and initial ceramic-period, Early Pithouse phase (A.D. 200? to A.D. 650?) often overlap. Frequently, there appears to be both Late Archaic and Early Pithouse occupations of single sites. There is reason to believe that the transition from Late Archaic to Early Pithouse is represented at many Rio Grande Valley sites; however, most of these sites are in sand dune areas with long histories of use (from Late Archaic through El Paso phase, which dates A.D. 1150 to 1250). It is difficult to unravel the Late Archaic and Early Pithouse transition at these sites; thus there is some question as to whether Late Archaic sites

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inaclude pit structures at all. Data from the earliest sites--LA 50743, LA 49016, and possibly LA 48996--may help explain why preceramic pithouse villages appear along the Rio Grande. In addition to the sites in this nomination, two such sites have been excavated (Nelson 1984; Honea 1965 and Seaman 1983). Preceramic pithouse villages appear to be absent along the Mimbres and in the central Jornada area (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980)?

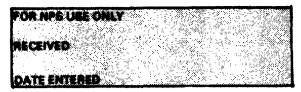
6. <u>Explain Functional and Social Organization Involving the Use</u> of Great Kivas

Great kivas are an important part of Mogollon settlement patterns. Unusally large pithouses, thought to be great kivas, are known from the earliest Mogollon sites. Anyon and LeBlanc (1980) argue that the great kiva form diasppears at the beginning of the Mimbres phase in the Mimbres Valley. Little data are available regarding the actual function of great kivas and whether they were ceremonial centers, economic centers, or the houses of socially elite members of the society. All three have been suggested, but no convincing evidence has been presented for any of these functions. Thus, any great kiva is intrinsically important.

Earlier great kivas have been interpreted as either centrally integrating features for multivillage regions, or as community houses for individual villages. Archaeological evidence from the earliest great kiva on LA 50571 may suggest beginnings for the architectural feature. The great kivas on Three Circle phase sites (LA 49028 and LA 49030) on the Rio Grande, if they are contemporaneous, suggest the latter is a more likely explanation, but if the two sites are sequential, they and their great kivas may in fact have served as regionally integrating facilities. Thus, the two sites together offer an excellent opportunity to address the problem of the function of the Jornada Mogollon great kiva.

Later great kivas of the Mimbres phase in the Rio Grande Valley, such as those on Site LA 50548 and probably Site LA 1199, are significance in that the architectural form is thought to cease prior to this time on Mimbres-phase sites in the Mimbres Valley. These great kivas may represent a

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different social structure or may require a revision of the Mimbres Mogollon sequence.

#### 7. Social Organization and the Need for Defensive Sites.

Two sites in the Rio Grande Valley in Thematic Nomination, sites LA 48995 and LA 48996 are on defensive locations above the Rio Grande Valley. These unique sites along the valley are in similar situations to Mimbres sites in the Mimbres Mogollon area to the west. The sites have the potential to yield comparative data to understand the social organization of the Mimbres occupation and the necessity for such defensive sites.

It is important that the prehistoric archaeological sites of the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra County be preserved for future research because of the information they contain on the Mimbres and Jornada subregions of the Mogollon, on Mimbres-Jornada interaction, and on prehistoric adaptation to the resources in the Rio Grande Valley. Virtually no sites within the river valley in the county have been excavated. The sites in this nomination, then, are a unique resource for archaeological research in the area. All inferences about prehistoric occupation and adaptation to the river and its major tributaries are based on excavations elsewhere and only surface surveys in the area (Laumbach and Kirkpatrick 1983; Lekson 1985).

As a result of development in Southern New Mexico--population increases in the Rio Grande Valley from Texas to Socorro, irrigation and flood control requiring construction of two dams, recreational development, and intensive pot hunting--have virtually destroyed most of the large sites along the river. Sites along the Rio Grande are virtually unknown, compared to sites located away from the river, on public land, that are recorded as a result of cultural resource management requirements. The sites in this nomination are some of the best-preserved Mimbres Mogollon and Jornada Mogollon sites anywhere on the Rio Grande.

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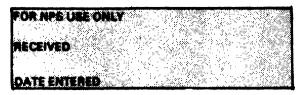
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Initial survey conducted by and initial national register forms completed by:

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Form compiled and produced by:

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Form approved and edited by:

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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| Name<br>State                 | Prehistoric Adaptations along the<br>Sierra County, NEW MEXICO | e Rio Grande Drainage, Sierra County, NM TR |
| Nomina                        | ation/Type of Review   | Date/Signature                              |
| 11.                           | Monticello Point Archeological<br>District                     | Attest                                      |
| <sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> 12. | Palomas Narrows North (LS38755)<br>Substant                    |   |
| *13.                          | Palomas Narrows South (LA49007)                                | Keeper John J. Know 12/14/89                |
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