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Property: Mount Taylor TCP
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Present and Original Physical Appearance of Property

Summary

Mount Taylor is visible from much of central New Mexico. At 3,445 meters (11,301 feet) above mean sea level, it is one of the highest peaks in the State. In 1849, a U.S. Army topographical engineer named the peak for President Zachary Taylor. "The peak is part of the rim around a five square mile volcanic crater, exposed by millions of years of erosion, that rises above a vast pedestal of Cretaceous era sandstone mesas capped by layers of cooled lava" (Anyon, R. 2001:11). Mount Taylor and the plateau around it form a very small group of mountains named the San Mateo. For the most part it is located in Cibola County just east of Grants, New Mexico, northwest of the Laguna Pueblo Grant, and immediately north of Acoma Pueblo. This mountain is the centerpiece of the Mount Taylor Cultural Property, the nominated TCP. The TCP contains hundreds of contributing properties, many of which have been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in previous surveys. (**Benedict, C. & Hudson, E. 2008, Attachment 5 to this Application; Wase, C. et al. 2000, Attachment 6 to this Application**)(See, also the attached CD for summaries of known archaeological sites and their present NRHP status, as determined by the New Mexico State Historical Preservation Officer [SHPO] and the Keeper of the NRHP). There are over 1,000 archaeological sites within the exterior boundary of the TCP, and there are dozens of shrines located across the mountain. Traditional use areas for collection of medicinal plants and foodstuffs, livestock grazing, and ceremonial activities cover the entire TCP. The noncontributing properties consist of lands within the exterior boundaries of the TCP that the Nominating Tribes can no longer access because these parcels are held as private property. These properties are excluded from the TCP (See Attachment A to Continuation Pages for 3: List of Excluded Non-Contributing Properties). While part of the larger landscape, and used by Tribes in the past, these parcels are not specifically used by the Tribes for on-going cultural activities.

Narrative Description

When the summit of Mount Taylor is covered in snow, it is a jewel in the desert, a place of moisture, promising water and the flora and fauna that rely on that moisture to exist in the desert. The mountain feeds three watersheds – the East San Jose, Arroyo Chico, and the Rio Puerco. Most of the streams are ephemeral, being fed by melting snowpack and summer storms during the rainy season. There are numerous springs. While the amount of perennial flow is very modest in comparison to many watersheds in New Mexico, the water from the Mountain provides a significant portion of the flows of the Rio San Jose, the largest river in the area. This mountain is the centerpiece of the Mount Taylor Cultural Landscape.

To the Pueblos of Acoma, Laguna, Zuni, the Hopi Tribe and the Navajo Nation (hereafter referred to as "Nominating Tribes") the summit of the mountain is just one part of a much larger place. Zuni Pueblo describes *Dewankwi Kyabachu Yalanne* as an extremely large area approximately 25 miles in diameter. For Acoma Pueblo, *Kaweshtima* consists of the summit, the mesas, down the canyons to the foot of the mesas. For the Navajo Nation, *Tsoodzil* encompasses the summit and surrounding mesas, extending out to certain geologic features. The Hopi Tribe's concept of the Mountain includes the summit, the mesas and canyons and the area of lava known as El Malpais. For Laguna Pueblo, *Tse pina* is much larger, extending to include several villages on the Pueblo itself. The Mount Taylor Cultural Property is a Landscape that consists of the common elements of the Nominating Tribes' cultural understandings of Mount Taylor: at a minimum, the summit, the mesas and the canyons, the area just inside its guardians, a number of volcanic necks surrounding the mountain.

**APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
NEW MEXICO STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES**

**FORM A
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The significant features of the Mount Taylor Cultural Property are not the same for each Nominating Tribe. This is discussed in greater detail in **Section 12**. What is consistent is that the entire area is so important to the survival of the Nominating Tribes, physically and culturally, that the entire area is considered to be, for lack of a better word, sacred. “Sacred” generally confers a religious connotation to what it is referencing as opposed to a secular connotation, but the Nominating Tribes do not use the word in the same context. As noted by Benedict and Hudson, “[a]ctivities ... that might commonly be described by a Euroamerican as “traditional” or “cultural” or “ceremonial” are pervasive in these tribal communities and in their ways of living and thinking, and are seen by the tribes themselves as inseparable from their daily activities” (2008 :31-32). (See, also, National Register Bulletin 38 [Parker and King 1998:15].). **See Continuation Sheet 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4 for extent of contributing properties.**