

Public Comment for Upcoming Commission Meeting

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Comments:

Regarding: 2591 Wildlife Feeding Ordinance

As a taxpaying American citizen of Sandoval County and a community member of Placitas, NM I am writing in STRONG OPPOSITION to the proposed "ordinance to ban feeding of certain wildlife", hereby referred to as 'Ordinance X'.

It is my opinion that Ordinance X is the following:

- Cruel and inhumane. There is no evidence to support the claims contained therein.
- Vague and poorly written. An ordinance such as this leaves the door open for a cascade of laws that can eventually be leveraged to infringe on all manner of personal rights.
- A blatant example of government overreach. Rules such as those outlined in the ordinance are better suited to bylaws enforced by a Home Owners Association (HOA). To seize an entire county is preposterous.
- An infringement on the personal freedom and rights of American Citizens to live a life in peace. One should be safe to labor about their property, as long as no harm befalls humans or animals. As civilized human beings, we should find a way to live as a community, respect our environment, and come to civil agreements in personal disputes with our neighbors.

I have stated my opinion. Now I'd like to address the facts:

- Ordinance X fails to provide evidence to the claim that feeding animals leads to their appearance on any public road or highway. It is a fact that animals (both domesticated and wild) wander onto roads. Moreover, I have seen many drivers swerve wildly to avoid tumbleweeds. People are killed by walking on (or near) roads. So why are "Certain Wildlife", as listed in the ordinance, being targeted? Where is the evidence that feeding an animal causes them to walk along a road?
- Ordinance X fails to provide facts and figures regarding the cause of collisions on any roadway in Sandoval County. Was speed a factor? Was driving impairment, i.e. driving under the influence of medication/alcohol/chemicals, a factor? Was reckless driving a factor? Were time of day and low visibility a factor? The question is then, what is the main cause of collisions and how can that be better addressed?
- In Placitas, visibility is low at night. Can that better be addressed?
- Also in Placitas, the speed limit is either too high and/or not enforced. Can that be better addressed?

The declaration in Ordinance X that feeding wildlife is a crime and the proposed fees, fines, and rules outlined in the ordinance are unsubstantiated and unsound. In my opinion, the ordinance exemplifies a "slippery slope" conclusion and it is a gross example of an outmoded mentality akin to Manifest Destiny.

The wildlife, horses included, have been here much longer than residents and roads. Placitas is an area that is known to have wildlife. Why then would someone choose to live here and then try to remove that which makes it special? There are plenty of communities in New Mexico that are devoid of wildlife where people can live and thrive. Natural environments are shrinking, we need to work together to maintain our natural world.

This is the environment and landscape we chose to live in, can't we as evolved human beings figure out a way to live in harmony with it, rather than adversity? Aren't we more civilized than a dictator invading territory and then subjecting the inhabitants to its rule?

I choose to live a life in balance with my surroundings. There is a better way to address this issue. I am confident that the community of Placitas can come up with a humane alternative. We must find a way to coexist with our environment, or we shall lose it forever.