Reclaiming Querencia: The Quest for Culturally Appropriate, Environmentally Sustainable Economic Development in Norther New Mexico

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ABSTRACT

Over the past 25 years, a new model of community economic development has emerged in the Hispanic villages of northern New Mexico. Its goal is to replace the region's impoverished colonial economy with a bioregional one: a diversified, resilient economy that is both culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable. This new model differs in two important ways from the unsuccessful economic development initiatives that preceded it during the New Deal and War on Poverty. First, it is structured like the hub and spokes of a wheel, with individual business ventures supported by a central nonprofit organization. Second, the hub nonprofit balances the leadership of community members with the business skills of experienced financial managers and fundraisers. This article analyzes the accomplishments and vulnerabilities of the hub-and-spokes community economic development model, and provides detailed case studies of three of the organizations that have developed and implemented it: Ganados del Valle, Taos County Economic Development Corporation, and Tapetes de Lana.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recuerden lo que se va acabando, gocen lo que hay, y luchen por lo que puede ser.
Remember what has happened, enjoy what you have, and fight for what can be.

—RUBÉN O. MARTINEZ

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In 1983, a small group of community leaders in the rural Hispanic village of Los Ojos, New Mexico, founded a nonprofit community development organization called Ganados del Valle (Livestock Growers of the Valley). Its ambitious mission was to revitalize the local economy in a way that sustained the area’s unique culture and ecology.

The prospects of Ganados’s success seemed slim as failed attempts to revitalize this region had marked the past century. During the New Deal era, the federal government invested millions of dollars and thousands of hours in initiatives designed to modernize New Mexico’s Hispanic villages while preserving their traditional culture. In the 1960s-70s, President Johnson’s War on Poverty produced another flurry of activity as Community Action Programs were launched in northern New Mexico to promote economic development projects ranging from apple marketing to wooden furniture and pallet manufacturing.

Yet in spite of all of these well-intentioned efforts, northern New Mexico remained mired in a persistent poverty that jeopardized the long-term survival of its culture and ecology. Each of the projects launched by New Deal and War on Poverty reformers collapsed within a few years, leaving behind “a landscape strewn with failed attempts to preserve, restore, and sustain its rural Hispanic communities.” Such an abysmal track record raised doubts about whether revitalizing the culture, economy, and ecology of Hispanic northern New Mexico were truly attainable—or even compatible—goals.

However, in the 25 years since Ganados was founded, it has come closer than any of the earlier efforts to achieving those goals. Building on the lessons learned from the failed attempts of the past, Ganados designed a new model for community economic development. This model is defined by its hub-and-spokes structure, with multiple, interrelated economic development projects supported by a central nonprofit organization. That hub organization simultaneously facilitates community leadership and provides the business management and fundraising expertise needed to realize the community’s vision.

Applying this new model, Ganados del Valle incubated enterprises rooted in the natural and cultural resources of the valley: Tierra Wools, a

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2. Hispanic/Hispano are the preferred terms for the Spanish speaking population of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. For a more detailed explanation of the etymology of these terms, see LAURA PULIDO, ENVIRONMENTALISM AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE: TWO CHICANO STRUGGLES IN THE SOUTHWEST 221 n.2 (1996).


5. FORREST, supra note 3, at 181.
weaving cooperative; Pastores Lamb, a lamb marketing initiative; Pastores Collections, a sole entrepreneurship that produces wool-filled bedding products; Pastores Feed and General Store, a marketing outlet for regional artists and food producers; and Otra Vuelta, a tire recycling enterprise.

Ganados is not the only organization that has achieved impressive results with the hub-and-spokes model of community economic development. In 1987, the Taos County Economic Development Corporation (TCEDC) was founded with a structure and vision similar to that of Ganados: “[s]upporting [the] food, land and cultures of the peoples of Northern New Mexico.” TCEDC’s success, too, has been remarkable as it has incubated over one hundred small food businesses and helped family farmers earn enough income to stay on their land. Most recently, TCEDC has collaborated with Ganados leaders to launch the Mobile Matanza, a state-inspected portable livestock slaughtering facility that enables small-scale ranchers to affordably slaughter and process the meat they produce, allowing them to serve local and regional markets.

Similarly, in Mora County, one of the poorest counties in the Southwest, Tapetes de Lana has become one of the newest members of this family of hub-and-spokes nonprofit community development organizations. Tapetes got its start by incubating businesses based on the traditional cultural practice of weaving; it now generates employment in Mora and Las Vegas, New Mexico, with initiatives ranging from a wool mill to a rural arts center.

In each of these three instances, the successes have resulted from the presence and nature of the hub nonprofit. That central organization provides individual projects with greater long-term stability and support than they would receive either from a government agency or as stand-alone initiatives—the models typically employed in earlier development efforts. In addition, while most earlier initiatives lacked either community direction or sound business management, these hub nonprofits strive to incorporate both.

However, like the efforts that preceded it, the Ganados hub-and-spokes model has its weaknesses and vulnerabilities as well as its strengths. The greatest of these is the very necessity of the central nonprofit organization: if that hub falls away, many of the businesses it is incubating will falter or fail. This is a serious challenge considering that the lifespan of most nonprofits is less than a generation and that many community-based organizations are undermined by conflict among their members. In addition, there remain some intractable challenges that even this model has not been able to overcome, such as the communities’ lack of ownership and

control over the land they need to sustain traditional land-based cultural and economic practices.

A closer examination of Ganados del Valle, TCEDC, and Tapetes de Lana reveals the potential and vulnerabilities of this new model of fostering culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable community economic development in northern New Mexico. Building on the progress they have made depends on understanding and learning from how their efforts have succeeded and faltered over the past quarter century.

II. BACKGROUND

When you have people living in a place, working the land for hundreds of years, a co-involved relationship develops. You can't really separate the people from the land or the land from the people.

— ERNIE ATENCIO

A. Defining the Goal: A Bioregional Economy

Each of the organizations implementing the hub-and-spokes model seeks to achieve a form of culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable economic development. This goal consists of several interrelated elements.

It begins with economic development. The concept of economic development evolved over the past half-century as scholars defined and compared "developed" versus "underdeveloped" or "developing" regions of the world. An underdeveloped economy is characterized by an overdependence on external capital and markets, an unskilled local labor force (lacking investment in human capital such as education and training), and a lack of control over local natural resources, which are exploited to benefit outside markets rather than to meet local needs. Conversely, a developed economy has attained a certain level of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Such an economy utilizes its natural resources, human resources, and investment capital to produce goods and services for both internal and external markets. The economy is diverse, resilient, and innovative, creating jobs and adapting to changing circumstances.

8. A brief review of the literature can be found in Laura Pulido, Sustainable Development at Ganados del Valle, in CONFRONTING ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM: VOICES FROM THE GRASSROOTS 123, 123-4 (Robert D. Bullard ed., 1993)
11. Id.
An economy may be developed, however, without being environmentally sustainable.\textsuperscript{12} Sustainable economic development was officially defined 20 years ago in \textit{Our Common Future}, a report by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."\textsuperscript{13} A sustainable economy uses its natural, human, and cultural resources to meet the current needs of the community without degrading those resources, thereby ensuring that they are available for the use of future generations. At its best, sustainability goes beyond merely maintaining the current level of environmental quality to enhancing it with productive human activity. When economic activity restores the natural and cultural resource base, rather than depleting it, the economy has become regenerative.\textsuperscript{14}

Finally, when sustainable economic development is culturally appropriate, it grows from and reinforces the values and aspirations of the culture in which it is rooted, rather than those imposed from the outside. Instead of importing a model of development that has worked elsewhere, culturally appropriate economic development looks first to the people of the community, to their skills and the ways in which they have traditionally supported themselves.\textsuperscript{15} It values local knowledge of the natural capital of the region and incorporates that knowledge into modern development strategies. It does not lock communities into an earlier level of development, but builds on traditional cultural practices and seeks to sustain them while advancing the region financially. It produces an economy that is true to the community's vision of itself.

In the context of land-based cultures such as the Hispanic villages of northern New Mexico, culturally appropriate economic development requires an understanding of the communities' cultural ecology, "the way in which a society settles the land and the closely related social organization and technical knowledge employed in exploiting the natural resources to

\textsuperscript{12} In fact, most developed economies today are widely considered to be unsustainable, as they use renewable natural resources faster than those resources can be replaced, rely on nonrenewable resources such as fossil fuels, and produce pollution that jeopardizes the survival of future generations. See \textit{WORLD COMM'N ON ENV'T \& DEV., OUR COMMON FUTURE} 28–29 (1987) (commonly referred to as the "Brundtland Report" after its lead author).

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Id.} at 43.

\textsuperscript{14} "A regenerative economy is a self-reliant economy which can renew itself. It is diversified, resilient, and equitable." Varela, \textit{supra} note 9, at 2. Regenerative economies are capable of indefinitely reproducing not only their economic activities, but also the natural capital on which they are built: "Wherever anthropogenesis produces beneficial results for nonhuman life-forms and their habitats, a local culture can be seen as regenerative." Devon G. Peña, \textit{Los Animalitos: Culture, Ecology, and the Politics of Place in the Upper Rio Grande}, in \textit{CHICANO CULTURE, ECOLOGY, POLITICS} 26, 49 (Devon G. Peña ed., 1998).

\textsuperscript{15} See Peña, \textit{supra} note 14, at 43–45.
gain a livelihood." In northern New Mexico, land-based cultures are shaped and defined by how they use the land, such that "to talk of people is to talk of where they live; to talk of a given area is to talk of the people who reside there or who have resided there in the past; to talk of where people reside is to talk of the natural resources they call their own and from which they draw their sustenance." Culturally appropriate economic development builds on this existing cultural ecology.

A concept that unites the three elements of culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable economic development is bioregionalism. Kirkpatrick Sale, one of the early proponents of bioregionalism, describes it as a self-reliant social, economic, and political system that is shaped by and adapted to its natural setting—including the flora, fauna, geography, geology, and climate. For a community to successfully adapt to its natural setting, it must become environmentally sustainable, using its natural resources to support itself without destroying those resources. For a community to be self-reliant, it must be economically developed, producing most of the goods and services it needs to support itself without requiring constant infusions of resources to stay afloat. Finally, as the members of a community adapt to their surroundings and create an economy based on their local natural resources, they develop the knowledge and practices that become the unique culture of that people.

At the heart of bioregionalism lies a long-term commitment to place: if people intend to remain in a place, then they must live in a way that enables them to do so. This philosophy has a long history in the Hispanic villages of northern New Mexico and is embodied in the Spanish concept of querencia. Querencia describes the inextricable link between the land and its culture: the culture develops through generations of adaptation to the land, and it evolves in a way that sustains the land. Sale describes

17. Id. at 209.
19. Id. at 76-78.
20. Devon G. Peña & Maria Mondragon-Valdés, The "Brown" and the "Green" Revisited: Chicanos and Environmental Politics in the Upper Rio Grande, in THE STRUGGLE FOR ECOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY 312, 317-18 (Daniel Faber ed., 1998). Peña also quotes approvingly Wendell Berry's articulation that "local culture will carry the knowledge of how the place may be well and lovingly used, and also the implicit command to use it only well and lovingly." Id. at 318.
querencia as something deeper than a mere "love of home"; it is "a deep, quiet sense of inner well-being that comes from knowing a particular place of the earth, its diurnal and seasonal patterns, its fruits and scents, its history and its part in your history...where, whenever you return to it, your soul releases an inner sigh of recognition."\textsuperscript{22} Juan Estevan Arellano describes querencia as "that which gives us a sense of place, anchors us to the land, and makes us a unique people."\textsuperscript{23} The land, the culture, and the economy are inherently interdependent.

B. History of Hispanic Northern New Mexico

Despite their deep-rooted history of querencia, the Hispanic villages of northern New Mexico are not currently characterized by the bioregional vision of culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable economic development. Rather, the region is mired in a deep poverty that jeopardizes the survival of its unique culture and ecology. In 2005, over 21 percent of Rio Arriba county residents still lived below the federal poverty line,\textsuperscript{24} with an average weekly wage of $436, compared to the state average of $628.\textsuperscript{25} Along with Taos and Mora counties, the other majority-Hispanic counties in northern New Mexico, Rio Arriba is classified as a "Persistent Poverty County" by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, meaning that at least 20 percent of its residents have been below the federal poverty line in every census since 1960.\textsuperscript{26}

In addition, the region suffers from a legacy of environmental damage. The ecology of northern New Mexico is characterized by high-altitude desert, ranging from about 7,000-13,000 feet in elevation,\textsuperscript{27} with an average annual precipitation of 10 to 20 inches.\textsuperscript{28} The geography is dominated by the Rio Grande valley, flanked by the San Juan Mountains to the west and the Sangre de Cristos to the east.\textsuperscript{29} The vegetation ranges from

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item\textsuperscript{22} Sale, supra note 18, at ix-x.
\item\textsuperscript{23} Arellano, supra note 21, at 35.
\item\textsuperscript{24} U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates: Estimates for New Mexico Counties (2004) http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/county.html (select "New Mexico" and "2005," click continue, then select "Rio Arriba County" and "All ages in poverty").
\item\textsuperscript{25} NM Dep't of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages: Fourth Quarter 2004 1, available at http://www.workforceconnection.state.nm.us/LMI/pdf/qcew4qtr04.pdf.
\item\textsuperscript{27} Robert Julyan, The Mountains of New Mexico 39 (2006).
\item\textsuperscript{28} Id. at 29.
\item\textsuperscript{29} Sargent, supra note 10, at 196.
\end{itemize}
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chamisa scrub and piñon-juniper woodland at the lower elevations to
grasslands, ponderosa, and mixed conifers in the heights.\textsuperscript{30}

Unfortunately, heavy commercial grazing and the logging of
millions of acrefeet of timber during the late nineteenth and early twentieth
centuries wreaked havoc with this fragile natural ecology and have left
lasting damage. Scrub, sagebrush, and weeds dominate many areas where
grasses once grew, and heavy erosion of topsoil is a continuing problem.\textsuperscript{31}
The combination of economic impoverishment and ecological degradation
imperils the region's culture: if traditional cultural practices cannot be
sustained financially or ecologically, there is little to keep them from dying
out entirely.

This precarious situation was many generations in the making.
When the Hispanic communities were established in northern New Mexico
from the early sixteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries, they were
economically self-reliant and environmentally sustainable by necessity.\textsuperscript{32}
After claiming the territory during the sixteenth century, the Spanish crown
(and later the Mexican government) settled its new lands by granting tracts
either to individuals or to communities.\textsuperscript{33} The settlement patterns of the
community land grants were structured to maximize the use of the natural
resources without undermining the productivity of the land. Individual
community members owned home sites and small irrigated plots, while the
remainder of the grant, including forests, pastures, and waters, was held in
common by the community.\textsuperscript{34}

The agropastoral\textsuperscript{35} cultural ecology of these high desert com-
munities was based on acequia irrigation of the fertile river valleys and
transhumance, or vertical seasonal livestock grazing, in the upper eleva-
tions.\textsuperscript{36} The animals — primarily sheep and goats, but also some cattle — were
moved up to graze at higher elevations as the weather warmed from spring
to summer and were brought down again in the fall.\textsuperscript{37} This system was

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{30} JULYAN, supra note 27, at 25–29.
\bibitem{31} ROXANNE DUNBAR ORTIZ, ROOTS OF RESISTANCE: LAND TENURE IN NEW MEXICO
\bibitem{32} PETER VAN DRESSER, A LANDSCAPE FOR HUMANS 110–11 (1972). See also G. Emlen
Hall, Community Land Grants and the Forest Service as Watershed Managers: The Example of
Santo Domingo De Cundiyo, in MAKING SUSTAINABILITY OPERATIONAL (FOREST SERVICE
\bibitem{33} Carol Raish, Environmentalism, the Forest Service, and the Hispano Communities of
Northern New Mexico, 13 SOC'Y & NATURAL RES. 489, 492 (2000).
\bibitem{34} Id.
\bibitem{35} The term agropastoral is used to describe a system that combines the agricultural
\bibitem{36} Id. at 186–90.
\bibitem{37} Id.
\end{thebibliography}
sufficient to sustain the communities at a subsistence level, and community elders still recount tales of the thriving forage, providing anecdotal evidence of its ecological sustainability.

Following the U.S. conquest of the territory in 1848, the new sovereign pledged in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to recognize and respect property rights established under antecedent sovereigns. However, the Anglo system of land tenure sought to facilitate alienability and marketability of land; it was geared toward an exchange rather than a subsistence economy. Moreover, honoring all existing property rights would have left the new sovereign bereft of the most valuable lands in the territory—a position many in the U.S. government strongly opposed. Therefore, the federal government set up a process by which citizens of the newly acquired territory had to petition for recognition of their property rights.

As a result, landowners who had held secure title in community land grants under the governments of Spain and Mexico became uncertain claimants in a costly confirmation process run by a hostile foreign sovereign. First under the auspices of the Office of the Surveyor General, and later under the Court of Private Land Claims, many claims submitted for community land grants were rejected or drastically reduced in size.

38. Although the term "subsistence" often carries negative connotations, in this context it simply refers to an economy that is structured to produce goods and services sufficient to support the local community, rather than to produce surplus goods for market. See Ortiz, supra note 31, at 97; Carol Raish, Lessons for Restoration in Traditions of Stewardship: Sustainable Land Management in Northern New Mexico, in RESTORING NATURE: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES 281, 286-87 (Paul H. Gobster & R. Bruce Hill eds., 2000).


40. Ortiz, supra note 31, at 90.

41. Id. at 97. See also Peña, supra note 20, at 319-21; John R. Van Ness, Spanish American vs. Anglo American Land Tenure and the Study of Economic Change in New Mexico, 13 SOC. SCI. J., 45, 46-47 (1976).

42. Malcolm Ebright, New Mexican Land Grants: The Legal Background, in LAND, WATER, AND CULTURE: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON HISPANIC LAND GRANTS 15, 29 (Charles L. Briggs & John R. Van Ness, eds., 1987). As Secretary of State John Clayton put it: "Could it however reasonably be expected that this government, in addition to the treasure and blood expended in prosecuting the war, would engage to pay fifteen millions of dollars for lands, the title to the most valuable part of which had been extinguished?" Id.

43. Raish, supra note 33, at 493.

44. Id.

45. Detailed accounts of the tragic history of New Mexico's community land grants can be found in LAND, WATER, & CULTURE: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON HISPANIC LAND GRANTS, supra note 16; Malcolm Ebright, LAND GRANTS AND LAWSUIT IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO (1994); Victor Westphall, Mercedes Reales: Hispanic Land Grants of the Upper Rio Grande Region (1983); Ruben O. Martinez, Environmental Justice Issues and Chicano/a Land Grants,
Even when a claim succeeded, it was often a temporary and bittersweet victory, as one-third to one-half of the confirmed land went to pay the claimant’s legal fees, and more often than not, the common lands necessary for subsistence grazing were partitioned and sold.46

In 1897 the communities’ position worsened. The U.S. Supreme Court in United States v. Sandoval47 ruled that the common lands of community land grants had belonged to the governments of Spain and Mexico, rather than to the communities themselves, and that the title to these lands had passed to the federal government under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.48 In 1905, the national forest system was established, and over the ensuing 40 years, much of the land that had traditionally been used for transhumance grazing and wood-gathering was placed under the management of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service.49 Ultimately, approximately 80 percent of the community land grant acreage in northern New Mexico was transferred from the communities to federal, state, and private owners.50

Even as the communities were losing access to the land base on which their subsistence economy had historically depended, the market economy that swept into the newly acquired territory with the railroads struck a devastating blow to the region’s ecology. Between 1870 and 1890, U.S. and European livestock corporations tripled the number of sheep in New Mexico from 0.5 million to 1.5 million and increased the number of cattle from 14,000 to 200,000.51 This export-oriented mass production rapidly depleted the natural resource base, degrading the lands and severely reducing their productivity.52 The rich forage of sacaton grass was rapidly denuded and replaced by ring-grass and snake weed, leading to

46. Raish, supra note 33, at 493.
47. 167 U.S. 278 (1897).
48. Id. at 297–98. For analyses of the impact of this decision, see Ebright, supra note 42, at 46–47; Gomez, supra note 45.
49. Varela, supra note 39, at 229; Hall, supra note 32, at 93–94.
50. ORTIZ, supra note 31, at 93. See also Raish, supra note 33, at 493.
51. ORTIZ, supra note 31, at 100.
52. Raish, supra note 33, at 495.
severe erosion of the topsoil. Heavy logging only added to this degradation, and the erosion silted up the rivers, impairing irrigation.

This process followed the classic colonial pattern by which self-sufficient societies have been transformed into dependent societies around the world: a modern, consumption-based economy co-opts the land base of a subsistence economy and consumes its resources to the extent that the subsistence society can no longer support itself with its traditional practices. In the end, the loss of their subsistence economy, as well as the imposition of property taxes, forced the Hispanic villagers to pursue wage labor outside their communities. Although they clung fiercely to what remained of their land and their agropastoral culture, many of the villagers undertook part-time work as seasonal or migrant laborers, or commuted to urban centers for employment.

The situation has changed little over the past century. Although the cultural attachment remains strong, very few residents of northern New Mexico's Hispanic villages are currently able to make a living off the land. The remaining small-scale ranchers supplement their operations with outside income and view their animals as assets that can be sold to cover expenses in hard times or used as the ultimate food security. Grazing now occurs primarily on Forest Service lands and is therefore subject to all the vagaries of shifting federal policy. In an effort to improve the range that was degraded during the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Forest Service has repeatedly cut the number of livestock allowed on its lands, making it more difficult to keep traditional ranching operations alive. In addition, to ease its administrative burdens, the agency has instituted policies that favor permit consolidation and fewer, larger, commercial-scale ranches rather than smaller, more numerous

53. FORREST, supra note 3, at 19.
54. ORTIZ, supra note 31, at 106; Varela, supra note 39, at 229.
55. FORREST, supra note 3, at 17, 204-05 n.1; VAN DRESSER, supra note 32, at 32.
56. Although the Mexican government had also imposed taxes, they were levied on what the land produced, rather than on the value of the land itself. Email from Maria Varela, Founder, Ganados del Valle, to Kristina G. Fisher (July 19, 2007) (on file with author).
57. ORTIZ, supra note 31, at 110; FORREST, supra note 3, at 29-30.
58. FORREST, supra note 3, at 30; Varela, supra note 39, at 230.
59. FORREST, supra note 3, at 10-11.
60. Varela, supra note 39, at 230.
61. PULIDO, supra note 2, at 130.
63. Raish, supra note 33, at 497.
64. Id.
65. Id. at 494.
66. Id. at 495.
Poverty remains the rule rather than the exception in northern New Mexico's Hispanic villages, and the region's land is now at risk from a new generation of exploitative activities—high-intensity tourism and recreation that carry the threat of air pollution, water pollution, and further loss of agricultural lands and wildlife habitat.

C. Failed Attempts to Rescue the Region

The plight of Hispanic northern New Mexico has not gone unnoticed. Over the past century, two major waves of ambitious, federally-funded reform efforts have sought to save the villages and their bucolic landscape.

The first wave arrived in New Mexico with the New Deal. The Great Depression had hit the region hard, drying up much of the wage labor the villagers depended on to support their families. A handful of "action programs" had been initiated by Progressives to alleviate poverty during the 1920s, and during the 1930s to 1940s, the trickle of reformers became a flood as the immensity of the region's economic desperation became apparent. One factor that drew the reformers to this region in particular was the sense that mainstream America was losing its traditional values of family and cooperation and northern New Mexico's tight-knit Hispanic communities were a refuge where these values still held sway.

The New Deal reformers sought to accomplish two potentially contradictory goals: modernizing the region's economy while preserving its "desirable" cultural aspects. Anglo values, rather than the interests of the villagers, shaped and defined the aspects of Hispanic culture to be preserved. Federal programs paid the villagers to improve their roads, public buildings, and agricultural systems, while federal instructors taught English, home economics, and "traditional" arts and crafts oriented toward the desires of a tourist economy.

For the most part, the New Deal efforts failed. Many of the economic ventures collapsed as soon as the federal funds were withdrawn, and the arts and crafts industries did not evolve into major income

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67. Id. at 496.
68. Varela, supra note 39, at 231.
69. FORRESTER, supra note 3, at 17.
70. Id. at 63.
71. Id. at 79-80.
72. Id. at 33, 61.
73. Id. at 103.
74. Id.
75. Id.
The land remained degraded by its heavy overuse at the hands of corporate loggers and grazers, and despite the federal investment in improvements, northern New Mexico’s small-scale agriculture could not compete commercially with the industrial agriculture that boomed after the end of the Second World War. Ultimately, neither an agropastoral nor an arts and crafts economy was sufficient to support the villages on their greatly reduced land bases. The reforms had raised living standards and expectations temporarily, but the villagers soon found that the only way to sustain that standard of living after the reformers and their federal funds had left was by returning to outside wage labor.

The second wave of reform efforts arrived two decades later with President Johnson’s War on Poverty. While the New Deal programs were prompted by concern about the dire poverty of the region during the Depression, the second wave was driven by a desire to achieve social justice and share the wealth of the nation during a particularly affluent period.

This time around, the reformers worked hard to avoid repeating the mistakes of the New Deal era. Rather than imposing reforms from above, the War on Poverty initiatives attempted to involve the communities directly in developing, conducting, and administering the programs. However, this effort to place control in the hands of the communities was only partially successful, as the federal funds were often filtered through state and local governments, which tended to favor large-scale tourism and recreation-based economic development projects (e.g., building scenic highways and ski areas). Where the tourism and recreation economy has flourished in northern New Mexico, such as the Taos area, the jobs it has created have tended to be low-wage, seasonal, and accompanied by intense land speculation that further undermines the traditional economy and displaces villagers from their homes.

Those initiatives that were more community-directed met with greater success, at least initially. Programs like the Home Education Livelihood Program (HELP) hired community leaders to plan and direct economic development projects that were grounded in the skills, natural

76. Id. at 151.
77. Id.
78. Id. at 175.
79. Id. at 177.
80. Id. at 182–83.
81. Id.
82. Id.
83. Id. at 184.
resources, and perceived needs of the Hispanic villages. Such projects included an apple-marketing cooperative in Velarde, Alcalde, and Chimayó; a business building wooden furniture for the newly created Head Start classes, which served preschoolers from low-income families; and cooperatively managed warm-up feedlots in Ribera and just outside Ghost Ranch, which were designed to increase the villagers’ income from production of animal feed and livestock by providing a consistent market and price for them.

Unfortunately, despite their apparent potential, each of the War on Poverty initiatives floundered and most collapsed after two to three years. The primary cause of these failures was a lack of business management experience on the part of those in charge of the efforts. Although they received start-up funding from the federal government and national foundations, the community project managers lacked the necessary business skills to sustain the effort beyond the initial stages. This lack of experience tripped up even seemingly straightforward ventures. For example, a HELP-supported business in Tierra Amarilla won a contract to manufacture wooden pallets and crates for the Department of Defense; however, because the business managers had not included a “cost-plus” provision in the contract, as the cost of materials rose, the venture was no longer able to earn a profit and quickly folded. Similarly, the apple cooperative was not able to withstand the unpredictable harvests—in which three strong years might be followed by three total losses—or the drop in price every time the Washington apple harvest beat New Mexico’s to the market.

This lack of business management experience also hindered the initiatives’ ability to attract the necessary financial investment from outside interests (beyond one-time grants from the federal government). Several ventures that were backed by community support and strong feasibility studies, such as a camper-trailer manufacturing initiative in Las Vegas, were unable to attract enough investment to get beyond the start-up phase.

The other factor contributing to the failure of the War on Poverty was that, even when projects were headed by experienced business managers, the initiatives often fell prey to divisions and conflicts within the communities or between the communities and the project managers. For

85. See Valdez, supra note 4.
86. Id.
87. Id.
88. Id.
89. Id.
90. Id.
91. Id.
92. Id.
example, when the livestock cooperative brought in outside managers with extensive business experience, the managers were unable to establish good relations with the community members, and the necessary community support to sustain the project evaporated.  

As a result, by the end of the 1970s, the second wave of federal reforms had receded with little to show for its efforts. Only a handful of the projects continued to exist, primarily as small private ventures (for example, a family that had been part of the Head Start furniture project won a long-term sign-building contract from the Forest Service). In its wake, however, the War on Poverty had left a hunger for economic development tailored to New Mexico’s unique situation. Just as the War on Poverty’s emphasis on community leadership had emerged from the failures of the New Deal, the efforts that followed the War on Poverty sought to navigate a course around the pitfalls its struggles had illuminated.

III. A NEW MODEL

If we want the land to be taken care of properly, duty and sentiment are not enough. We must have people living on and from the land who are able and willing to take care of it. We need to implement a different kind of education, philosophy, and economy....We have to understand that we cannot save the land and water apart from the people or the people apart from the land and water. To save either, we must save both; for that we need a strong rural economy.

—JUAN ESTEVAN ARELLANO

A. Ganados del Valle

Just as the second major federal effort to revitalize New Mexico’s villages was reaching its height, a different movement was also emerging. Generations of anger with the Forest Service’s control over what had once been the common lands of the Hispanic land grants was coalescing with the national Chicano activist movement. The most visible face of the movement in New Mexico was Reies López Tijerina, who founded the Alianza Federal de Mercedes (Federal Alliance of Land Grants) with the goal of restoring the common lands to the villages. Tijerina and his

93. Id.
94. Id.
95. Arellano, supra note 21, at 35-36.
96. FORREST, supra note 3, at 189-90.
97. Id.; PULIDO, supra note 2, at 133. Hispanic resistance against incursions into and enclosure of the land grant commons occurred consistently from the time of U.S. occupation of the territory. See, e.g. ROBERT J. ROSENBAUM, MEXICANO RESISTANCE IN THE SOUTHWEST
followers fomented a number of resistance efforts, culminating in the famous raid on the Tierra Amarilla courthouse on June 5, 1967. While Tijerina’s efforts ultimately faded into the background along with the

(1981). However, Tijerina united many separate efforts under the statewide banner of the Alianza. See Varela, supra note 56.

98. For more on Tijerina and the Alianza, see PATRICIA BELL BLAWS, TIJERINA AND THE LAND GRANTS (1971); RICHARD GARDNER, Grito! Reies Tijerina and the New Mexico Land Grant War of 1967 (1970); PETER NABOKOV, Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid (1969); REIES LÓPEZ TIJERINA, They Called Me "King Tiger": My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights (José Angel Gutierrez ed. & trans. 2000).
federal War on Poverty, they, too, planted some seeds that came to fruition in the following years.

In 1981, Maria Varela, a community organizer who had worked with Tijerina on land grant issues and who lived in La Puente, a village located just west of Tierra Amarilla in the Chama valley, began talking with rancher Antonio Manzanares and local math teacher and part-time shepherd Gumercindo Salazar from the neighboring village of Los Ojos about strategies for improving the economic condition of the area. Their vision was to foster sustainable economic development that was authentically rooted in the culture of the Chama valley.

Their efforts were driven in large part by the need to create an alternative to the state’s economic development plan for the area. New Mexico’s economic development department had recently endorsed a proposal to promote a tourism and recreation-based economy in the valley by approving a private ski resort at the headwaters of the Brazos River. Many in the Chama valley villages objected to the proposed development, fearing that it would be environmentally and culturally destructive and would lead to further loss of their land and water. In contrast to the state’s proposal, a survey conducted by the University of New Mexico’s Design Planning and Assistance Center found that the villagers desired to enhance the job opportunities and economic development of the valley through sustainable use of the cultural and natural resources.

Varela, Manzanares, and Salazar set out to revive the small family sheep flocks that had once supported the region’s traditional land-based cultural economy. Discussions with the remaining local sheep growers revealed two primary challenges: heavy losses from predators and low sale prices for the lamb and wool they produced. To address these problems, the group brought in two trained livestock guard dogs from the New England Farm Center in Amherst, Massachusetts, which reduced the sheep losses from 45 percent to 12 percent in the first summer. In addition, they tapped into a cooperative network of sheep growers in the Pacific Northwest, which conducted phone auctions for the animals and won the

100. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 199.
101. PULIDO, supra note 2, at 142–43.
102. See Varela, supra note 56.
103. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 199.
104. Id. at 200; Nancy Plevin, Time Looms Heavy, SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN, July 9, 1995, at A1.
105. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 200.
Ganados growers 7.5 cents more per pound than they would have received in the local livestock auctions.106

Following this initial success, in 1983 Varela, Manzanares, Salazar, and five other community members took their economic development efforts to the next level. Rather than working on one discrete project at a time, they decided to create an organization that could foster and support multiple projects. They incorporated Ganados del Valle as a nonprofit community economic development corporation whose mission was to incubate and spin off locally owned businesses so as to nurture culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable economic development in the Chama valley.107 Initial funding for the organization came from local and national foundations, church groups, and individual contributors, as many community members were wary of relying on federal funding.108

The Ganados del Valle economic development model was structured like a wheel, with the nonprofit serving as the hub at the center, providing support to the spokes—the individual economic development initiatives. Ganados grounded its work in four fundamental principles: (1) investing in human capital and empowering people to do work that they love; (2) utilizing and sustaining the natural and cultural resources of the community; (3) changing economic and social structures to increase opportunity and reduce dependency; and (4) providing financial support for research, development, and market testing, as well as an internal loan fund that would tailor loans to each business’s needs.109 Ganados sought to achieve the combination of elements that had eluded the earlier economic development efforts, bringing together community leadership and sound financial management. In all of its efforts, Ganados emphasized the importance of investing in human capital by bringing in consultants and instructors to develop its entrepreneurs’ skills in business management as well as in the traditional cultural practices on which their businesses were based.110 The hope was that the nonprofit organization at the heart of the model could provide the long-term financial support, business expertise, and training that the War on Poverty efforts had lacked.

Ganados’s goals were as ambitious as those of its predecessors: to preserve and reinvigorate traditional cultural skills (such as sheep growing and weaving), to increase job opportunities and the resiliency of the local economy, and, ultimately, to sustain and restore the land-based cultural

106. Id.
107. Id.; Interview with María Varela, Founder, Ganados del Valle, in Albuquerque, N.M. (Mar. 23, 2007).
108. See Varela supra note 107.
109. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 207-12; Varela, supra note 9, at 3-4.
110. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 207-08.
To achieve these goals, Ganados supported ventures that formed a vertically-integrated business model based on the sheep growing that had historically played such a central role in the economy and cultural ecology of the region. Ganados worked to strengthen the valley’s existing sheep growing operations in several ways. First, it established a program to reintroduce the Churro, a hardy breed of Iberian sheep that had been brought to New Mexico by the early Spanish settlers but had been driven nearly to extinction during the industrialization of wool production in the mid-twentieth century. With the assistance of Dr. Lyle McNeal, a sheep specialist from Utah State University and founder of the Navajo-Churro Sheep Project, Ganados reestablished a breeding flock of Churros, which produced both high-quality wool and distinctly flavorful meat.

In addition, Ganados established a revolving loan fund and the Partido Project to help existing sheep growers build their flocks and new growers get started. The Partido Project resurrected the longstanding cultural practice of sheep sharing. Ganados would loan a sheep grower 10 ewes for five years. During that time, the grower’s flock would increase to about 40 head, and the grower would return one lamb each year to Ganados. At the end of the five years, the sheep grower would return 10 ewes of the same age and quality as the original ones to be loaned out to someone else. Ganados also ran a ram bank, loaning out Churro or Karakul rams so that growers did not have to purchase their own.

Ganados also initiated the Pastores Lamb cooperative to develop unique Churro lamb products and market them to homes, restaurants, and natural food markets. Pastores Lamb would purchase lamb from its member growers at the national commodity lamb price, which was higher than auction prices. After several years of successful research and development, Ganados founder Antonio Manzanares spun off Shepherd’s Lamb as a separate family-owned business. Shepherd’s Lamb remains the largest, most successful lamb producer in the area.

111. See Varela, supra note 107.
113. PULIDO, supra note 2, at 165.
114. Varela, supra note 107.
115. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 203–04.
116. Varela, supra note 107.
117. Id.
118. See Varela, supra note 56.
119. Id.
Working upwards from the sheep, Ganados also added value by incubating weaving and sewing enterprises that made use of the wool the growers produced. Its first and most successful venture in this area was Tierra Wools, a spinning and weaving cooperative that buys local wool, spins it into yarn, dyes the yarn with natural and commercial dyes, and weaves it into rugs, blankets, and apparel. Tierra Wools got its start when Ganados hired Rachel Brown, a nationally recognized spinner, weaver, and educator from Taos, to evaluate the quality of the local wool and to run a workshop on techniques for spinning the wool into yarn. Brown was intrigued by the weavings several Los Ojos women produced as a hobby and encouraged them to use the local wool in their weavings. At that time, the Rio Grande style of weaving practiced in Los Ojos, like the Churros, had nearly disappeared from the region. Ultimately, Ganados hired Brown to work with Varela to develop a curriculum for teaching spinning, weaving, and marketing of the finished products. This curriculum was later accredited by Northern New Mexico Community College, enabling several Tierra Wools weavers to earn degrees in business or fine arts.

Ganados funded Tierra Wools' research and development as the weavers honed their craft and marketing skills. It extended a line of credit set at the prime rate, below what the business could have received commercially, and structured the payment plan to align with the Tierra Wools sales season, requiring monthly payments from June through October, and nothing the rest of the year. In 1997, Tierra Wools spun off from Ganados as a member-owned limited liability company, Tierra Wools & Los Ojos Handweavers, LLC. It now sells hand-dyed yarn and weavings and runs a weaving school to teach the skills to others.

In addition to Tierra Wools, Ganados incubated a wool-filled bedding enterprise, Pastores Collections, to make use of the excess wool that Tierra Wools could not purchase, as well as wool that was unsuitable for spinning into yarn. Ganados funded the research and development of a design for wool-filled duvets, purchased the sewing equipment, and hired

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120. Ochoa, supra note 99.
121. See id.
122. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 201.
123. Id.
124. Varela, supra note 56.
125. Varela, supra note 107.
127. Interview with Sophia Deyapp, President, Tierra Wools, in Los Ojos, N.M. (May 29, 2007).
128. Interview with Amelia "Molly" Baca, Proprietor, Pastores Collections (June 6, 2007).
RECLAIMING QUERENCIA

Molly Baca and two other women as seamstresses. The women worked out of an empty schoolhouse in Canjilon, a village 22 miles south of Los Ojos. Just as the village weavers received training and assistance to professionalize their weaving skills, sewers for Pastores Collections underwent training to professionalize their sewing of pillows, comforters, mattress tops, and other bedding products. In 2003, Ganados spun the business off to Baca, who purchased the equipment and moved the operation to her Canjilon home.

Along with its sheep-centered enterprises, Ganados also fostered a business based on a less traditional resource that had become plentiful in the valley: used tires. Robert Archuleta founded Otra Vuelta (Another Turn) under the Ganados umbrella in 1993. The business collects tires from landfills and tire shops and converts them into door mats, truck- and trailer-bed mats, and flowerpots. Otra Vuelta sells about 500–600 mats each year, reusing 7,000 tires that would otherwise go to waste.

Finally, in 1988 Ganados purchased and renovated a historic building on the Los Ojos main street and opened the Pastores Feed and General Store. The goal of the store was to provide a local retail outlet and marketing training for small-scale artisans and farmers. It carried products such as baked goods, eggs, jams, quilts, and woodcarvings, and it was designed to serve locals as well as visitors, keeping more local dollars circulating in the valley. The store also marketed lamb meat from Pastores Lamb, providing a community outlet for the less expensive cuts. Although the store was able to fund most of its operating costs from the revenues it brought in, Ganados subsidized the salary of the store manager and the training programs. In 2000, the store marketed goods from over 150 people in the Chama valley, but it has struggled over the past few years.

129. Id.
131. Baca, supra note 128.
132. Duin, supra note 130.
133. Interview with Robert Archuleta, Proprietor, Otra Vuelta, in Los Ojos, N.M. (May 29, 2007).
134. Id.
135. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 206.
136. Id.; Varela, supra note 9, at 2.
137. Varela, supra note 56.
138. Id.
years. The store is currently in transition and is no longer open on a regular basis.\footnote{140. Interview with Angie Serrano, Founding Member, Tierra Wools, in Los Ojos, N.M. (May 29, 2007).}

Ganados itself has been relatively inactive since about 2001.\footnote{141. Varela, supra note 107. Varela describes Ganados as currently in a period of "hibernation." The ramifications of this development are discussed infra Part IV.C.} Although it continues to exist and provide passive services (such as leasing Otra Vuelta its workspace\footnote{142. Archuleta, supra note 133.}), it is no longer working to attract reinvestment in the community, fund research and development, or train new entrepreneurs. However, during the years it was active, Ganados brought in close to $2 million in outside investments\footnote{143. Arlene Valdez, Ganados del Valle Today, VOICES FROM THE EARTH 5 (Summer 2001).} and incubated a weaving cooperative, a lamb marketing business, a tire recycling operation, a wool-filled bedding enterprise, and a general store. In so doing, it directly increased the incomes of more than 150 families in the Chama valley.\footnote{144. PULIDO, supra note 2, at 167.}

**B. Taos County Economic Development Corporation**

On the other side of the Tusas Mountains, across the wide expanse of the Taos plain, is another example of this hub-and-spokes model of culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable economic development. Founded 20 years ago by Pati Martinson and Terrie Bad Hand, the Taos County Economic Development Corporation (TCEDC) has brought in over $7 million of reinvestment in the Taos area\footnote{145. NM FOOD AND AGRIC. POL’Y. COUNCIL, GROWING A HEALTHY FOOD SYSTEM: FOOD & AGRICULTURE IN NEW MEXICO 4 (2005).} and fostered business ventures that have created 106 jobs, retained an additional 191,\footnote{146. TAOS COUNTY ECON. DEV. CORP., supra note 6, at 25.} and provided a wide array of opportunities to add value to local natural resources and help families stay on the land. TCEDC serves a more populated area than Ganados del Valle, and one with a higher concentration of financial resources, but it shares the same colonial economy that has developed over the past century and a half in all of northern New Mexico,\footnote{147. For a more detailed explanation of this colonial economy, see infra Part IV.B.} as well as the more recent push for a tourism-based economy designed to serve outside interests.

Like the Ganados founders, Martinson and Bad Hand sought to establish a nonprofit organization that would bring together community vision and financial expertise and would provide the support structure needed to develop culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable
RECLAIMING QUERENCIA

industries. TCEDC was grounded in fundamental principles of community development similar to those espoused by Ganados; it pledged to "obtain community involvement; hire the people you profess to empower; research and identify human and financial resources; remove barriers; act as a community intermediary; maximize public/private partnerships; [and] provide direct services and facilities."\(^ {148} \)

Another similarity between TCEDC and Ganados was its founders' substantial experience working in social justice and community development, as well as their family ties and connections to the community.\(^ {149} \) Martinson and Bad Hand had learned the ropes of soliciting funding from national foundations and the federal government through their work at the Denver Indian Center Development Corporation before they arrived in Taos to launch TCEDC.\(^ {150} \)

At the time TCEDC was first established, the Molycorp mine had just closed and unemployment in the Taos area had soared to around 36 percent.\(^ {151} \) With an initial grant from the Ford Foundation, Martinson and Bad Hand completed a feasibility study on economic development in the area and confirmed that Taoseños desired employment opportunities that would keep their land and cultures intact,\(^ {152} \) the same bioregional vision expressed in the Chama valley planning survey conducted several years earlier.

Martinson and Bad Hand began by negotiating a lease on an abandoned Smith's grocery store for one dollar a year and converting it into a business incubator.\(^ {153} \) They renovated and rented out the building one unit at a time and invested the income they earned in preparing the next unit.\(^ {154} \) Early businesses included artists and woodworkers who had pursued their crafts as hobbies before joining forces with TCEDC. The nonprofit provided not only affordable space, but also business training and other support services to help the small ventures move toward self-sufficiency.\(^ {155} \) After ten years of successes, Martinson and Bad Hand succeeded in raising $2.3 million from foundations and federal appropriations to construct a much larger business park on six acres of donated land.\(^ {156} \)


\(^ {149} \) Interview with Pati Martinson & Terrie Bad Hand, Directors, TCEDC, in Taos, N.M. (May 29, 2007).

\(^ {150} \) Id.

\(^ {151} \) See Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.


\(^ {153} \) Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.

\(^ {154} \) Id.

\(^ {155} \) Id.

\(^ {156} \) Id.
The new building was centered around TCEDC’s most ambitious project to date: the Taos Food Center, a 5,000 square foot commercial kitchen where Taoseños can access the supplies, equipment, services, training, and support they need to start up small-scale food businesses. Martinson and Bad Hand had decided to pursue the Food Center project because the more involved they became in working to sustain and reinvigorate the area’s land-based economy, the more they realized that food was at the heart of it. Just as Ganados built its foundation on sheep growing, TCEDC worked upwards from the fertile soil of the Taos area’s farms and orchards. Converting northern New Mexico’s agricultural produce into value-added foods—such as salsas, jams, tamales, juices, and baked goods—could provide a means for people to hold onto their land and continue traditional cultural practices like acequia irrigation.157 As TCEDC states in its 2005 Community Report: “[I]n this historically agrarian region, the Food Sector represents an appropriate, relevant, and viable economic activity as well as a means to hold on to tradition, culture, and quality of life.”158

To facilitate food-sector job creation, TCEDC’s Food Center provides its clients not only with access to a fully-equipped certified commercial kitchen at only eight dollars an hour, well below the market rate of $30,159 but also extensive training and support services. TCEDC’s Food Sector Opportunity courses provide instruction in the history and culture of food in northern New Mexico; the connection of food preparation to traditional land-based practices; recipe development; microbiology and food safety; Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and state environment department regulations; and basic business and marketing skills.160 Even more important than the training, as Martinson explains, is the way TCEDC fosters “relationships, relationships, relationships”161—the organization recruits state and federal food regulators to teach the classes and brings them into the kitchen for the required initial and annual inspections of each new food business. As a result, the entrepreneur-chefs and the regulators get to know one another. The regulators begin to take an interest in the success of the new businesses, and the entrepreneurs become less

157. Acequias are the traditional community irrigation ditches that serve the Hispanic villages of northern New Mexico. For more information on acequias, see JOSÉ A. RIVERA, ACEQUIA CULTURE: WATER, LAND, & COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTHWEST (1998). A recent study focusing on the Taos area acequias in particular is SYLVIA RODRÍGUEZ, ACEQUIA: WATER SHARING, SANCTITY, AND PLACE (2006).
158. TAOS COUNTY ECON. DEV. CORP., supra note 6, at 3.
159. Interview with Mercedes Rodriguez, IT/Media Specialist, TCEDC, in Taos, N.M. (May 29, 2007).
161. Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
intimidated about the regulatory bureaucracy they have to deal with. In addition, the shared space enables different cooks to join forces to order some ingredients in bulk or even launch joint ventures. All through the process, TCEDC serves as the mediating institution, always available to hold hands, to translate, and to instruct.

The Food Center has been a stunning success, incubating over one hundred small food businesses during the past decade. It currently serves 51 clients, producing over 300 different products that are sold to cafés, specialty stores, and supermarkets such as Whole Foods and Raley’s. TCEDC’s Food Center has had a hand in starting up most of the food businesses that now exist along the main road through Taos. Though the majority of the food produced in the Food Center is marketed locally in Taos, the Food Center’s delivery truck allows producers to sell even highly temperature-sensitive food in Santa Fe and Albuquerque as well. The jobs created through the Food Center have provided many families with enough income to live on, while allowing them to do work they enjoy and take pride in.

Beyond creating new food-based employment opportunities, TCEDC and the Food Center also directly support local farmers. Most of TCEDC’s food producers incorporate locally grown produce into their recipes, particularly organic fruits and vegetables. TCEDC employs two staff members to connect its cooks with local vendors, and many also make their own connections at farmer’s markets throughout the region. This helps provide a market to keep local farmers in business, although TCEDC is still working to recruit more small farmers to the Food Center so that they can add value to their own products and increase the income earned by their families.

In addition to recruiting them for the Food Center, TCEDC has organized a number of outreach and support programs for Taos area farmers. It has offered courses on risk management and business tools for family farmers and run workshops on how to receive USDA organic

162. Id.
163. Rodriguez, supra note 159.
165. Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
167. Rodriguez, supra note 159.
168. Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
169. Rodriguez, supra note 159.
170. Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
171. TAOS COUNTY ECON. DEV. CORP., supra note 6, at 5.
certification for farmland and produce. TCEDC also runs a demonstration greenhouse and community garden at the business park, showcasing affordable water catchment and planting systems that can be employed by local farmers. In the past few years, TCEDC has joined forces with the Taos Land Trust and the Taos Valley Acequia Association in a project called De la Tierra a la Cosecha (From Earth to Harvest), which works with farmers to protect farmland from being lost to residential development by utilizing strategies such as agricultural easements and greenhouses to extend the growing season.

TCEDC’s latest venture is the Mobile Matanza, a 36-foot-long, 14-foot-high mobile livestock slaughtering facility purchased with a grant from the New Mexico Economic Development Department and named for the Hispanic village tradition of coming together to butcher an animal and celebrate the bounty of the harvest. The Matanza was designed and built by ranchers at the San Juan Island Farmer’s Coop, off the coast of Washington State, who face similar obstacles to those in northern New Mexico—though their ranches are isolated by the sea rather than by the mountains.

In both places, ranchers struggle with the problem of a lack of local slaughterhouses. New Mexico has only eight Livestock Board certified slaughterhouse facilities, and few of them are certified to process organic meat. As a result, ranchers must either transport their animals long distances to be slaughtered, an increasingly expensive proposition as gas prices rise, or sell them live, “on the hoof,” for much lower prices. Either way, the lack of livestock slaughtering facilities prevents northern New Mexico’s ranchers from adding value to the meat they produce and threatens the economic viability of ranching. TCEDC, working in collaboration with Maria Varela and several other Ganados members, sought to address this problem by investing in the Mobile Matanza and bringing the slaughterhouse to the ranchers.

The Mobile Matanza is completely self-contained, including a mechanical room with generator, water tank, and water heater; a mechanical room with generator, water tank, and water heater; a
temperature-controlled work area at the back; and a freezer that can hold 10 slaughtered beef cows, 20 hogs, 70 lambs, or eight bison. It is also organically certified so that animals that have been raised organically can be marketed as organic. Staffed by a butcher and a livestock inspector, the Mobile Matanza is designed to serve a 60-100 mile radius across northern New Mexico. Once the meat is slaughtered and frozen, it is brought back to TCEDC’s business park, where a larger cold storage space and “cut and wrap” processing facility is under construction. From there, the meat can be sold at retail or incorporated into food products in the Taos Food Center, adjacent to the processing facility.

Through the Mobile Matanza, the Food Center, and the other small business ventures it has incubated, TCEDC has given hundreds of families the training, tools, and financial support needed to make a living pursuing traditional, sustainable agricultural practices.

C. Tapetes de Lana

The most recent example of this new hub-and-spokes model of nonprofit-facilitated bioregional economic development can be found southeast of Taos, in the Mora valley and the town of Las Vegas, New Mexico.

In 1998, Carla Gomez incorporated Tapetes de Lana (Weavings of Wool) as a nonprofit run out of a one-room schoolhouse in Las Vegas. Gomez had spent 18 years as curator of textiles at El Rancho de Las Golondrinas, a Spanish colonial living history museum, as well as teaching weaving at Highlands University in Las Vegas. Unlike Varela, Martinson, and Bad Hand, Gomez had little fundraising or business management experience, although she had been raised in a well-to-do, entrepreneurial Santa Fe family.

Initially, Gomez’s goals were more modest than those of the Ganados and TCEDC founders. She had started the nonprofit when a Las Vegas woman, Rosa Padilla-Gallegos, asked to learn weaving from her, in the hope of earning more money to support her six children than she could

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179. Interview with Gilbert Suazo, Jr., Agriculture & Mobile Matanza Manager, TCEDC, in Taos, N.M. (May 29, 2007); CHRI$MAN, supra note 166.  
180. Suazo, supra note 179.  
181. Schiller, supra note 175.  
182. Suazo, supra note 179.  
184. Id.  
185. Id.
cleaning houses.\(^{186}\) Gomez created Tapetes in order to qualify for state funding to support a weaving apprenticeship program for Padilla-Gallegos and others like her.\(^{187}\) Over the next several years, the organization evolved into the same sort of hub institution as Ganados del Valle and TCEDC, combining community initiative with business management expertise to support the development of culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable enterprises.

Shortly after its incorporation, Tapetes de Lana established a welfare-to-work program serving welfare recipients from the isolated villages of the Mora valley who, under the recently enacted federal “welfare reform” laws, were required to demonstrate that they were pursuing employment or job training in order to keep their benefits.\(^{188}\) At that time, Gomez envisioned Tapetes serving a dual purpose: teaching local people a marketable skill and reviving a traditional cultural practice.\(^{189}\) After graduating from the apprenticeship, the students had the choice of either taking home a spinning wheel and loom to establish a home-based business or continuing to work at the Las Vegas community center where Tapetes had set up its operations.\(^{190}\)

Over the next few years, Gomez garnered grants from national foundations and federal agencies to expand Tapetes’ operations beyond the welfare-to-work program. The organization moved out of the old community center and into a storefront in downtown Las Vegas, where sales of the tapestries soared.\(^{191}\) Later they moved to an even larger gallery and weaving studio in a building Tapetes bought and renovated on the Las Vegas plaza.\(^{192}\) Like Tierra Wools, they began dyeing their own wool with natural dyes.\(^{193}\) By 2003, Tapetes had trained more than 100 weavers, and Gomez was ready to take the organization to the next level. Tapetes opened a 3,500-square-foot weaving studio and store in an old mercantile building in Mora and unveiled its vision for the revitalization of that village.\(^{194}\)

Tapetes de Lana, like Ganados and TCEDC before it, proposed to provide the long-term financial and educational support necessary to


\(^{187}\) Id.


\(^{189}\) Id.

\(^{190}\) Id.


\(^{192}\) Id.


establish a sustainable economy rooted in the culture and traditions of the Mora valley. Like Rio Arriba, Mora is one of the state’s poorest counties, with an unemployment rate of 12 percent and a per capita income of only $12,340 annually in 2005. Tapetes’ plan was to incubate a for-profit wool mill, provide support programs for the local sheep growers supplying the mill, and establish a rural arts center in the heart of Mora.

Tapetes acquired the block-long Hanosh building complex that had once housed a hotel and theater in downtown Mora and began gradually remodeling it with the vision of creating a community art center where students from Mora High School, which lacked an art program, could take classes; a community theater; a pottery studio; and a commercial teaching kitchen where Luna Community College could provide courses in the culinary arts, and food products could be produced for sale. The hotel section of the building would ultimately be renovated as well, with the goal of housing artists and instructing students in traditional Hispanic arts such as tin work, retablo making, and pottery, as well as weaving. Tapetes successfully raised over $1.5 million to invest in the redevelopment project.

Tapetes’ biggest project by far was the state-of-the-art 11,000-square-foot Sangre de Cristo Wool Mill, built from the ground up and designed to supply yarn for the weavers and a steady local market for the valley’s wool producers. Some of the equipment for the mill came from the Taos Wool Mill, whose owners had been preparing to retire and close down their operation, while much of it was acquired and constructed with federal and foundation grants. The mill is the largest in New Mexico and is equipped to wash, card, and spin up to 400 pounds of wool daily. It had its grand opening in September of 2005 and began processing custom orders, although it is still being completed and is not yet running at full capacity. Ten local men worked on the construction and are now employed part-time to operate the mill equipment. When it is fully
operational, the mill is projected to employ 25–30 people in two shifts a day.\footnote{204}

As the mill neared completion, it provided added impetus for a partnership between Tapetes, New Mexico State University's Cooperative Extension Service, and Heifer International\footnote{205} to revive the region's sheep flocks, once as vital to Mora as they were to the Chama valley.\footnote{206} Heifer International is providing a start-up loan of $125,000 to purchase animals, the Extension Service is providing training and support services, and Tapetes is guaranteeing a market for the local wool.\footnote{207} In August of 2006, the Sangre de Cristo Valley Livestock Growers Association was formally organized, bringing together approximately 30 prospective sheep growers, including some who had hoped for years to pursue a career in ranching but never had the resources to make it happen.\footnote{208} The project aims to triple the number of sheep being raised in the Mora valley over the next few years (currently there are only about 200), and provide 12,000 pounds of wool to Tapetes' mill by 2009.\footnote{209} Ultimately, the hope is that this initiative will provide a substantial addition to the incomes of dozens of families.\footnote{210}

Tapetes is also branching out beyond sheep, supporting the development of an alpaca yarn to make use of some of the wool produced by New Mexico's 42 alpaca farms.\footnote{211} Already the organization sells specialty yarns that are 50-percent wool and 50-percent alpaca fibers.\footnote{212} They are also interested in experimenting with the processing of specialty yarns from silk to buffalo to angora rabbit.\footnote{213}

Although Tapetes de Lana has yet to achieve the level of success reached by Ganados del Valle and TCEDC, the results from its first 10 years of operation are extremely encouraging. By uniting the vision of local community members with access to financial resources and training, Tapetes de Lana has begun to establish the support system necessary to develop the Mora valley's economy in a culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable way.

\footnote{204. Sharpe, supra note 196.}
\footnote{205. Heifer International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting global poverty and hunger by helping low-income communities acquire livestock. See Heifer Int'l., http://www.heifer.org/ (last visited Nov. 30, 2008).}
\footnote{206. Robinson-Avila, supra note 201.}
\footnote{207. Id.}
\footnote{208. Id.}
\footnote{209. Id.}
\footnote{210. Id.}
\footnote{211. New Mexico Alpaca Breeders, Members, http://www.newmexicoalpacabreeders.org/membersmap.htm (last visited Nov. 30, 2008).}
\footnote{213. See NAT'L. RURAL FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE, supra note 186.}
IV. EVALUATION OF THE HUB-AND-SPOKES MODEL

A. Success of the New Model

Although each has had its fair share of difficulties, Ganados del Valle, TCEDC, and Tapetes de Lana have come closer than either the New Deal efforts or the War on Poverty initiatives to creating lasting employment opportunities that breathe new life into this economically depressed region while promoting traditional cultural practices and enhancing environmental sustainability.

First, each nonprofit organization has succeeded in creating employment opportunities that have outlasted those created by earlier attempts to develop the region. In total, the businesses incubated by Ganados continue to provide approximately 18 full-time and 12 part-time jobs in the Chama valley. Tierra Wools alone has generated over $5 million in total revenues since it began operations214 and it continues to bring in approximately $300,000 each year.215 Perhaps most significantly, the Ganados businesses have increased the incomes of their participants enough to allow many of them to remain in the valley rather than moving to the region’s cities for work.216 Similarly, TCEDC has launched over 100 small food businesses, including several that are profitable enough to become their proprietors’ sole source of income,217 and has created or retained more than 325 jobs in the Taos area.218 The organization provides training, business development, and other services to over 1,360 community members each year.219 Meanwhile, over the past 10 years Tapetes de Lana has employed 70 community members,220 and the Sangre de Cristo Wool Mill is projected to net over $235,000 each year when it is fully operational.221

The hub nonprofits have created human capital as well as jobs. Each of them not only incubates businesses but also invests in human resources, training people in the arts of weaving, cooking, or sheep

215. Deyapp, supra note 127.
216. See Duin, supra note 130; Serrano, supra note 140.
217. See Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
218. TAOS COUNTY ECON. DEV. CORP., supra note 6, at 25.
219. Id.
220. Robinson-Avila, supra note 201. At this point, most of the jobs created by Tapetes are part-time and seasonal, not the steady employment opportunities it hopes to secure once the mill is fully operational. Gomez, supra note 202.
growing, as well as in business management. The central role of education is illustrated by the weaving schools run by Tierra Wools and Tapetes, and the farming and food sector development classes organized by TCEDC. This human capital adds the sought-after quality of resiliency to the economy—even though some of the incubated enterprises may fail, the people who have worked in them will have gained the skills and knowledge needed to pursue other productive ventures rather than menial employment.

In addition to their direct economic impact, both Ganados and Tapetes have helped stimulate a revitalization of the downtown sections of their villages. Los Ojos’s fresh start began in 1983 when Ganados purchased an empty century-old adobe building on the main street of the village to house the fledgling Tierra Wools. Pastores Feed & General Store opened a few doors down in 1990, and Otra Vuelta followed in 1993. These enterprises drew customers to Los Ojos’s long-quiet main street, inspiring other businesses to follow. As Cindy Friday, the former Marketing Manager for Tierra Wools described it, “When we first started here, there was not a single thing on Main Street that was open for business except for Tierra Wools. Nothing was here. Everything had gone out of business. Then after us came Pastores Feed & General Store; then the gentleman across the way started his printing press and art gallery. Now we even have Mary Ann’s cafecito. And several people have shown an interest in buying the building across the street and opening a business.”

Similarly, the investment of resources in the Sangre de Cristo Wool Mill and the Mora Rural Arts Center are beginning to infuse fresh life into Mora, increasing the traffic from both visitors and locals. The Hanosh building complex occupies an entire downtown block in the heart of Mora, which was abandoned and decaying before Tapetes de Lana acquired it and

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222. Since Taos is a much more urban location than Los Ojos or Mora, TCEDC’s equivalent is its business park, which houses both its Food Center and an array of small businesses and organizations that are compatible with its mission, including a school, a youth center, an art studio, and nonprofits working with domestic violence survivors and immigrant women. TAOS COUNTY ECON. DEV. CORP., supra note 6, at 13–19.

223. SARGENT, supra note 10, at 201.

224. Id. at 197.

225. Duin, supra note 130.

226. Ochoa, supra note 99. While Tierra Wools, Otra Vuelta, and the gallery remain open today, the downtown revitalization has faced a setback with the dormancy of the Pastores General Store, discussed further infra Part IV.C.

227. Holt, supra note 193. As Ben Sanchez, director of La Jicarita Enterprise Community, puts it, “When I see cars parked and people working and development happening on the main street in Mora, I know individual families are saving themselves here at home. We are alive and vibrant. We are alive and well.” Id.
RECLAIMING QUERENCIA

began its renovations. The weaving studio and gallery are already attracting substantial foot traffic, and the commercial kitchen, arts center, and theater are underway. These new enterprises will continue to draw people to downtown and serve as a springboard for additional business development.

The second goal of the model is to foster development that is environmentally sustainable. Almost all of the businesses incubated by these three nonprofits emphasize environmental awareness, minimize or eliminate pollution, and strive to be regenerative wherever possible. They use local resources without degrading them and seek creative ways to use traditional cultural practices to restore environmental health.

Ganados del Valle built an economy that is rooted in the soil of the Chama valley, where the sheep—many of which are now organically certified—are raised with few external inputs other than organic alfalfa and hay purchased for winter feed, usually from nearby Alamosa, Colorado. Shepherd's Lamb and the other Pastores sheep growers employ a modified version of the traditional transhumance grazing methods: in the late spring, the lambing takes place on Forest Service range near Tres Piedras. After lambing, shepherds on horseback move the flock up to its summer range, the Ganados Forest Service lease in the Tusas Mountains above Canjilon. There the sheep are herded to higher elevations as the summer warms and brought down again as the weather cools in the fall. In October, the sheep are moved down off the mountain and transported by truck to their fall range, usually a rented pasture in the vicinity of Los Ojos, where they graze until the pasture goes dormant in mid to late November. The location of the spring and fall ranges varies somewhat depending on what is available in any given year; Manzanares has had to move his flock as far as Roswell, 300 miles to the southeast, to find fall forage available for lease.

These careful grazing methods are modeled on the sustainable practices employed by past generations of herders in the valley—indeed, one of the first steps Ganados took in its sheep growing initiative was to hire Martín Romero, who had worked as a shepherd in the Chama valley his entire life, to supervise the flocks and mentor the participating sheep.

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230. Gerard, supra note 112.
232. Gerard, supra note 112.
233. Id.
234. Id.
235. Id.
Romero demonstrated exactly how to move the sheep to keep the range healthy. Despite the environmental stigma that has come to be attached to grazing, research has shown that properly managed sheep grazing can aerate and enrich the soil and reduce undesirable vegetation, because sheep prefer to graze weeds. Proponents of holistic resource management, a grazing system that manages livestock to replicate the grazing patterns of the large ungulates that once populated the desert ecosystem (e.g., bison, deer, pronghorns), report some success in using grazing to restore denuded desert landscapes.

An environmental ethic pervades the weaving operations as well as the sheep growing. Weavers at Tierra Wools start with organic wool from the certified Shepherd's Lamb flock, as well as natural wool from other growers. That wool is then washed with natural detergents and washing soda. By contrast, conventional wool processing involves sulfuric acid, alkali, and oven drying rather than air drying, methods that are cheaper and faster but carry a much higher environmental cost. After the wool is washed and spun, the yarn is dyed under the supervision of Tierra Wools' natural dyer, Lupe Valdez. Some of the yarn is dyed with regular commercial dyes, but much of it is dyed with natural dyes drawn from locally collected plants, including chamisa, yerba de negrita, and cota, or non-native sources like walnut husks, cochineal beetles, and indigo. Like the Tierra Wools weavers, Molly Baca at Pastores Collections creates her bedding products out of local organic materials. She uses locally grown organic wool and New Mexico-grown organic cotton for her all-organic comforters, and local wool not yet certified as organic for the rest.

Otra Vuelta's entire business plan was based on solving a pervasive environmental problem: making use of the ever-increasing supply of used tires littering the landscape around the Chama valley. Using very low-impact methods, Robert Archuleta and his employees slice the tires into strips on a small, custom-built machine, punch holes in the strips, and use

237. Varela, supra note 107.
238. Pulido, supra note 2, at 146–53.
241. Gerard, supra note 112.
242. Id.
243. Id.
244. Baca, supra note 128.
galvanized steel wire to weave them into mats. The colorful beads that serve as spacers between the tire strips are created from recycled plastic bottles by a Connecticut company. Turning waste into input for new, useful products is a core strategy of environmental sustainability, and the fact that Otra Vuelta does so while producing very little additional waste makes it a real environmental success story.

TCEDC's food businesses promote sustainability by using primarily organic ingredients and working with locally grown meats and produce as much as possible. TCEDC helps connect its entrepreneurs with local farmers and assists those farmers when they seek organic certification. This strategy yields a number of economic benefits, from reducing the use of toxic pesticides to sustaining the acequia-based cultural ecology, which expands riparian habitat, controls erosion, and recharges the aquifer.

Tapetes de Lana was the only one of the three organizations that came into being without an explicit environmental focus. However, its activities reflect a similar ethic of environmental awareness. Like Ganados, it is striving to restore the traditional cultural ecology of the valley and promote ecologically beneficial grazing practices. The Sangre de Cristo wool mill utilizes passive solar heating and collects rainwater to wash the wool. It was designed to be "hand operated," labor intensive but energy efficient. In addition, like Tierra Wools, Tapetes de Lana's weavers use natural dyes to prepare the wool they use, and Tapetes, too, is working to increase its use of locally grown wools from its sheep growing project and New Mexico alpaca breeders.

Finally, all three of these organizations support traditional cultural practices that the members of their communities desire to sustain. With the exception of Otra Vuelta, every business incubated by these organizations is rooted in traditional land-based cultural practices—growing sheep for meat and wool, weaving and sewing, farming and cooking, and traditional arts. Beyond the choice of enterprises, the organizations also sought to revitalize the communal, cooperative structures that traditionally sustained the communities. This is why Tierra Wools was structured as a cooperative while it operated under the Ganados umbrella, though the

245. Archuleta, supra note 133.
246. See Rodriguez, supra note 159.
247. RIVERA, supra note 157, at 201.
248. Sharpe, supra note 196.
weavers were free to utilize any business form of their choice when they spun off on their own.\textsuperscript{252}

Ganados, Tapetes, and TCEDC have also very explicitly and deliberately pursued their economic activities as means to protect the cultural practices that the communities value, not merely to increase the incomes of the participants. As a former manager of Tierra Wools put it: "We weave so we can raise sheep. We weave so that the pasture lands, the acequias, the village, the church, and the family endure—to nurture a way of life that is so important to all of us."\textsuperscript{253} The same holds true for the Mora sheep growers and the Taos acequia farmers supported by Tapetes and TCEDC.

Although the communities care deeply about keeping these traditional practices alive, and have done so by continuing them as hobbies over the past century, a much more promising long-term strategy is to find ways to make them economically viable again. Doing so continues the "long tradition of tough, resilient, and resourceful adaptation and accommodation to changing circumstances"\textsuperscript{254} that has made the culture what it is. By adapting traditional cultural practices to meet the needs of the present, Ganados del Valle, TCEDC, and Tapetes de Lana honor the past while remaining true to this culture of resilient adaptation.

B. Understanding the Success

There are two essential differences between the Ganados model and the less successful economic development efforts that preceded it in the 1930s and the 1960s to 1970s: the organization of the efforts around hub nonprofits and the balance of community leadership and financial expertise within those hubs.

The first difference is the hub-and-spokes structure of the new model. While the earlier efforts were either centered around a government entity or were discrete, stand-alone projects, the Ganados model is built around a nonprofit organization that serves as a hub to organize the long-term financial investment and training efforts necessary to support numerous interrelated economic development projects.

The importance of this central hub organization can be seen not only in the failures of the stand-alone projects of previous eras,\textsuperscript{255} but also

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{252} Varela, supra note 107.
\item \textsuperscript{254} FORREST, supra note 3, at 31. See also Laura Pulido, Ecological Legitimacy and Cultural Essentialism: Hispanic Grazing in the Southwest, in THE STRUGGLE FOR ECOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY 293, 305 (Daniel Faber ed., 1998).
\item \textsuperscript{255} One such example is the apple marketing cooperative discussed supra Part II.C.
\end{itemize}
in the struggles of contemporary community economic development initiatives that lack such a support structure. One such initiative was the Madera Forest Products Association, founded in 1988 as a worker-owned cooperative designed to harvest and retail forest products from the Vallecitos Sustained Yield Unit (VSYU) of the Carson National Forest.\(^{256}\) The VSYU was established in 1944 with the explicit purpose of providing sustainable forest employment for the land-based communities that had lost their common lands to the national forests.\(^ {257}\) In starting up, Madera's founders faced the same challenges as the Ganados businesses: the need for investment in equipment, training, and marketing for new value-added timber products.\(^ {258}\) They received some initial funding to establish a woodyard and a high-volume wood-splitter, but changes in Forest Service policies and lawsuits by the environmental group Forest Guardians\(^ {259}\) shut down much of the forestry in the area in the early 1990s and rendered those early investments valueless.\(^ {260}\)

Shifting its strategy, Madera attempted to expand into a new value-added construction product, which would use a Borax solution and solar-powered kiln dryer to prepare the wood for use in construction rather than the chemical and energy intensive conventional wood treatment methods.\(^ {261}\) This product was based on research by the forestry lab in Madison, Wisconsin, and was targeted for New Mexico's burgeoning green-building industry.\(^ {262}\) However, the small group of community loggers organizing the initiative was unable to acquire more than a handful of $5,000 to $10,000 grants. This level of funding was insufficient to transform their research and development into a full-fledged enterprise.\(^ {263}\) Madera's experience shows how even the most promising community economic development plans may fail without the presence of a central hub institution to leverage

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257. Id. at 5.
258. Id. at 7.
261. Varela, supra note 107.
262. Id.
263. Id.
funding and provide a support network through the crucial early stages of business development.

The War on Poverty projects that were not stand-alone ventures were generally initiatives of a government agency rather than a nonprofit organization. However, nonprofit organizations provide significantly more long-term stability than government agencies, which may withdraw their support or vanish altogether with a change in political administrations. In addition, nonprofits are better positioned to access diverse funding sources, drawing from both local and national foundations as well as government grants—as, indeed, Ganados de Valle, TCEDC, and Tapetes de Lana have all succeeded in doing.

The second crucial difference between the hub-and-spokes model and the unsuccessful economic development efforts that preceded it is the nature of the hub nonprofit, which deliberately balances the leadership and direction of community members with the business skills of experienced financial managers and fundraisers. One of the fundamental weaknesses that undermined the War on Poverty initiatives was that, although they were much more sensitive to the needs of the community than the New Deal efforts had been, they failed to bridge the gap between the vision of the community and the financial and fundraising expertise needed to make that vision a reality. The Ganados model organizations have each sought to become an institution that is simultaneously true to its community and a successful business manager and educator.

There are two aspects to the financial management provided by the Ganados model nonprofits. The first is raising funds from local and national foundations, government entities, and private investors and distributing those funds to individual startup ventures in the form of seed money, services, and training. The second is serving as a repository of business expertise, providing business management training to the projects they incubate.

Raising funds from outside investors is a necessary element of economic development in northern New Mexico because over the past century, the region has been marked by a colonial economy, meaning an economy that is structured to extract the value of local labor and natural resources for use by outside colonizing interests. The inevitable result of

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264. See FORREST, supra note 3, at 182, 187.
265. One recent example of this phenomenon is that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has substantially reduced the funds available for rural development initiatives under the George W. Bush administration relative to the level provided under the Clinton administration. Telephone Interview with Maria Varela, Founder, Ganados del Valle. (Dec. 31, 2007).
266. FORREST, supra note 3, at 172-73.
267. See Valdez, supra note 4.
268. ORTIZ, supra note 31, at 94.
a colonial economy is the underdevelopment of the local, internal economy and the impoverishment of the people. After so much has been drained away, some reinvestment of capital from the outside is required to achieve self-sufficiency again.\textsuperscript{269} This outside investment is necessary to support the research and development of sustainable industries that build on the communities' social and natural capital, the marketing research to make them profitable, and the education and training programs to help community members acquire the skills they need to succeed in the new ventures.

However, leveraging this reinvestment means persuading regional and national foundations to invest in the community's economic development efforts. A difficulty inherent in this process is that these funders view the world from the perspective of the dominant society's law, science, and policy.\textsuperscript{270} They tend not to engage with the community on its own terms; instead, the views and values of the community must be translated into the foundation language of social science analysis and quantifiable outcomes. This challenge has become even more difficult in recent years as foundations have increasingly sought rapid returns on their investments, wanting to see measurable results within a few years and hesitant to fund community development projects that may take many years to come to fruition.\textsuperscript{271}

While the War on Poverty efforts were able to raise federal and foundation dollars, the funding they brought in was generally short lived. Because many of those initiatives were stand-alone projects funded by one-time grants, most of them were not able to achieve the sound financial footing they needed to become self-reliant before the funds were gone.\textsuperscript{272} By contrast, a nonprofit hub organization incubating multiple projects can leverage funds from many sources and channel them to its various initiatives as long as they are needed—which is often longer than the one to three years of support the War on Poverty initiatives typically received. For example, it took more than a decade for Tierra Wools, Ganados's most successful venture, to become a completely self-sustaining business and for its weaver-owners to become comfortable in their new role as financial managers.

Moreover, the Ganados model organizations have been considerably more effective than the War on Poverty initiatives at providing financial training to the business ventures they incubate. While the War on Poverty reformers understood that financial training was crucial, it was

\textsuperscript{269} Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
\textsuperscript{270} PuLIDO, supra note 2, at 179, 184.
\textsuperscript{271} Varela, supra note 107.
\textsuperscript{272} See Valdez, supra note 4.
often neglected in the execution of the projects.\footnote{273} By contrast, the Ganados model organizations have made business training a core component of the support they provide, from TCE\DJ C’s food and farming sector classes to Ganados’s lamb and wool marketing training.

The commendable financial grounding of the Ganados organizations is due in large part to the nature of their leadership. Women with experience raising funds to support social justice and community development initiatives founded both Ganados del Valle and TCE\DJ C. María Varela spent five years in the Deep South working for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) before accepting Reies Tijerina’s invitation to come work for the Alianza in New Mexico in 1967.\footnote{274} By the time she and the other Los Ojos leaders founded Ganados, she had also helped launch a small agricultural cooperative and a medical clinic serving the Chama valley.\footnote{275} Similarly, Pati Martinson and Terrie Bad Hand founded TCE\DJ C after several years co-managing the Denver Indian Center Development Corporation.\footnote{276}

The experience Varela, Martinson, and Bad Hand had in networking, raising funds from both national foundations and government entities, and publicizing social justice issues proved invaluable in getting their economic development projects off the ground. Each new initiative—Tierra Wools, Otra Vuelta, TCE\DJ C’s business park, the Mobile Matanza—required substantial initial investments, and the organizations’ leaders had the skills and background to successfully solicit them from the state and federal governments and national foundations.\footnote{277}

Carla Gomez, founder of Tapetes de Lana, had less experience than the Ganados and TCE\DJ C leaders when she began. Although she came from an entrepreneurial family and had spent many years working at a nonprofit, she had never written grants or managed a nonprofit before launching Tapetes.\footnote{278} As a result of this financial inexperience, Tapetes has had a much harder time raising start-up funds than Ganados or TCE\DJ C. The mill and rural arts center have both taken longer to start up than initially planned and have progressed in fits and starts as funding became available.\footnote{279}

Although financial and fundraising expertise is a necessary element of the hub-and-spokes model, it is not sufficient. The hub nonprofit must

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\begin{itemize}
  \item \footnote{273}{\textit{Id.}}
  \item \footnote{274}{Jackson, \textit{supra} note 236.}
  \item \footnote{275}{\textit{Id.}}
  \item \footnote{276}{Martinson & Bad Hand, \textit{supra} note 149.}
  \item \footnote{277}{Varela, \textit{supra} note 107; Michael Ryan, \textit{The Village That Came Back to Life}, HOUSTON CHRONICLE, May 3, 1992.}
  \item \footnote{278}{Gomez, \textit{supra} note 202.}
  \item \footnote{279}{\textit{Id.}}
\end{itemize}
combine those skills with the ability to accurately articulate the desires of community members without alienating them. Ganados, Tapetes, and TCEDC have generally sought to do this by focusing on economic development projects that emerge from the communities’ deeply rooted self-identification.

One of the defining characteristics of northern New Mexico’s Hispanic villages is that their inhabitants continue to identify with the land-based vocations of ranching and farming, in spite of the fact that it is rarely possible for them to pursue those activities as sole—or even primary—occupations today. This strong self-identification has been consistent since the agropastoral subsistence economy began its decline over a century ago; the need to pursue wage labor did not alter the early twentieth century Hispanics’ self-identification as rancheros. The land, and the necessity of working it cooperatively with other members of the community, was what originally held the family and the community together, creating the close-knit social structures that continue to characterize New Mexico’s villages. This connection with the land brings a sense of security, satisfaction, and connection to culture that wage labor has been unable to replace. The hub nonprofits’ emphasis on land-based economic development initiatives that are consistent with this self-identification have helped them establish and retain the support of the communities they serve.

Ganados itself went one step further, building not only on the land uses that defined the cultural ecology of the valley, but also on the oppositional consciousness of the community that had developed in response to the long history of betrayals by the federal government. From the beginning, Ganados has struggled to secure access to grazing land for its members—a problem that exists in large part because of the loss of the Tierra Amarilla land grant’s common lands. Although Ganados sought to secure grazing rights on nearby state wildlife preserves, where limited grazing was often permitted, they were consistently rebuffed by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF). In August of 1989 the situation reached a crisis point. Ganados was four years into a seven-year breeding cycle necessary to bring back the Churros, which were being grazed on land leased from the Jicarilla Apaches. However, when a legal dispute arose between the Tribe and the

280. Pulido, supra note 2, at 137, 175.
281. Forrest, supra note 3, at 30, 197.
282. Atencio, supra note 139, at 24-25.
283. Id.
284. Gonzales, supra note 45, at 295. See also Pulido, supra note 254, at 300.
285. Jackson, supra note 236; Pulido, supra note 8, at 131.
286. Jackson, supra note 236.
287. Varela, supra note 39, at 233-34.
NMDGF, the Ganados members were asked to remove their sheep from the land. \(^{288}\) The only other land the growers had access to were the pastures where they were growing feed for the winter; if the flocks consumed this feed during the summer, the growers would be forced to sell the animals and start over from scratch the following year since they could not afford to buy the necessary winter feed. \(^{289}\) Instead, the group undertook a well-publicized act of civil disobedience, driving the flock of approximately 2,000 Churros onto the Humphries Wildlife Management Area on the western edge of what had once been the Tierra Amarilla land grant. \(^{290}\) The action had the desired effect of spurring the political branch into action, and within five days, the Governor's office had located alternate rangeland for Ganados to use. \(^{291}\) Positioning the organization as voicing the grievances of the community members against the vilified government further solidified community support behind Ganados's efforts.

By contrast, Tapetes de Lana's early struggles in developing the Sangre de Cristo Wool Mill demonstrate how tenuous that bond between the community and the catalyzing organization can be. Although most Mora residents approved of the weaving enterprise, many were concerned about the impact the large new mill would have on the village—and potentially on its water supply. \(^{292}\) In response to the concerns, the Mora planning and zoning department withdrew its approval for the mill, and Gomez had to regroup and regain sufficient community support before Tapetes could proceed with the project. \(^{293}\) If the community believes that its vision is no longer controlling, the necessary support and participation for the project can rapidly disappear. This was what ultimately defeated the warm-up feedlot project launched during the War on Poverty, \(^{294}\) and the difficulty of maintaining that balance between sound business management and community direction illuminates some of the challenges that remain.

C. Tempering the Success: Vulnerabilities of the New Model

As news spread about the remarkable success of Ganados del Valle in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the group received inquiries and visitors from Spain, Guatemala, China, Korea, and Japan. \(^{295}\) Heifer International

\(^{288}\) Id.

\(^{289}\) Id.

\(^{290}\) PULIDO, supra note 2, at 176; James N. Baker, A Land Battle in New Mexico, NEWSWEEK, Sept. 18, 1989, at 27.

\(^{291}\) Id.

\(^{292}\) Sanchez, supra note 183.

\(^{293}\) Id.

\(^{294}\) Described supra Part II.C.

\(^{295}\) Varela, supra note 107.
was intrigued by the similarity between the Ganados Partido Project and its own international efforts, in which it loans livestock to low-income farmers in exchange for payments of some of the future offspring. There was a great deal of interest in how other communities in northern New Mexico—and other underdeveloped regions around the world—might be able replicate the model and move closer to the goal of a culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable, bioregional economy.

However, in evaluating the hub-and-spokes community development model, it is equally important to understand the challenges it has not been able to overcome and the areas in which the organizations employing the model have fallen short of their ambitious goals. To date, five main vulnerabilities of the hub-and-spokes model have become apparent: (1) the need for long-term support from the hub nonprofit organization, (2) the difficulty of managing conflict within both the community and the hub organization, (3) the challenge of diversifying the niche marketing of the spoke projects, (4) the failure to resolve the communities' continuing lack of control over their land base, and (5) the obstacle of public policies that undermine community development efforts.

The first and most basic concern is that for this model to succeed, the nonprofit hub organization must make a very long-term commitment to supporting the community development effort. This is a serious challenge because many nonprofits do not last more than 20 to 25 years; if one of these nonprofits closes its doors before the local economy has sufficiently developed, the effort will likely stagnate. The Ganados founders understood the long-term nature of the need, stating in 1991 that it would likely take “two or three generations” for the community to truly regain control over its own destiny and replace its colonial economy with a more bioregional one.

The current state of Ganados provides the clearest example of this vulnerability. Not long before its twentieth anniversary, the organization entered a period of dormancy. Maria Varela had left the group in 1997 to take a teaching position at Colorado College, and the new executive director the group hired from outside the community lasted only about a year before being replaced by a member of the organization. Since that time, Ganados has not been able to regain its original balance of community focus

296. Id.
297. Id.
298. Jackson, supra note 236.
299. The new director was Douglas Spence, an Ohio native who had worked for 25 years on grassroots projects in Guatemala. Ray Rivera, Chama Valley Wool Cooperative Names Director, SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN, May 20, 1998 at B1.
300. Arlene Valdez, who had been a part of Ganados since 1996, took the helm in 1999. See Valdez, supra note 143.
and financial expertise. The disruption in leadership was compounded by the fact that it coincided with a larger shift in national foundation priorities away from rural development efforts tailored to their unique cultural ecosystems and toward more generic, easily replicable models, making fundraising for community development even more difficult.\textsuperscript{301}

In the absence of Ganados's active leadership, the revitalization of the Chama valley villages has faltered. The Pastores Feed and General Store, which opened in 1990,\textsuperscript{302} was not sufficiently well-established to sustain itself without ongoing support from Ganados (which paid for its training programs and the salary of the store manager\textsuperscript{303}). If Ganados were still active today, it would likely be able to fund the experimentation needed to determine how the business could become a profitable asset to the community rather than another closed storefront.

Ganados's work to reestablish sheep growing in the valley has also suffered a serious setback. Ganados was responsible for organizing and facilitating the Pastores Lamb sheep growers' cooperative, which had over a dozen members who participated in the Partido Project and the effort to bring back the Churros.\textsuperscript{304} However, not long after the Churros were reestablished, the annual federal wool incentive ended, and many growers were unable to earn enough money from raising sheep to make it worthwhile for them to continue.\textsuperscript{305} This problem was exacerbated by the fact that Tierra Wools provided the only market for Churro wool, and some years the weavers could not afford to buy all that the farmers produced.\textsuperscript{306}

Many of the sheep growers whose enterprises were fostered by Ganados have since left the business.\textsuperscript{307} The largest sheep operation remaining in Los Ojos is Shepherd's Lamb, Manzanares's sole entrepreneurship. While Shepherd's Lamb has developed an excellent reputation for its high-quality meats, and Antonio Manzanares was named 2007 Organic Farmer of the Year by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, he and his family struggle to earn enough from the lamb operation to support their family.\textsuperscript{308} His wife Molly currently works part-time as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) to supplement the family's income from the sheep operation.\textsuperscript{309}

\textsuperscript{301} Varela, supra note 265. The events of September 11, 2001, also contributed to the redirection of foundation priorities away from rural communities. \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{302} Sargent, supra note 10, at 206.
\textsuperscript{303} Varela, supra note 56.
\textsuperscript{304} Jackson, supra note 236; Varela, supra note 107.
\textsuperscript{305} Deyapp, supra note 127.
\textsuperscript{306} Id.
\textsuperscript{307} Id.
\textsuperscript{308} Summar, supra note 231.
\textsuperscript{309} Id.
The businesses that are continuing to do well are those that had developed enough to stand on their own before Ganados went dormant: Tierra Wools and Otra Vuelta, both of which had spun off by the mid-1990s, and the wool-bedding venture Pastores Collections, which required little capital investment and provides only supplemental income to its owner. However, even these success stories have been tempered by the loss of the hub organization; both Otra Vuelta and Tierra Wools would benefit from additional support to expand their operations and the weaving school, but they have so far been unable to acquire the funding on their own.

Closely related to the need for the long-term support of the hub nonprofit is the difficulty of protecting it from being torn apart by internecine power struggles, both within the organization and within the community. This, again, was one of the reasons why several of the War on Poverty efforts fell apart; the interests and agendas of the people involved in a given initiative came into conflict, the community was divided, and the initiative lost support and fell apart. It also contributed to Ganados’s current difficulties, as conflict surrounding the spin-off of Tierra Wools divided the community and impaired Ganados’s credibility among some of the villagers. The same sort of conflict has appeared as a cloud on the horizon of Tapetes’ efforts, visible in the initially divided community response to the wool mill, and could threaten its long-term viability.

Along with the struggle to keep the nonprofit hub organization intact and operating for the long term, a third major challenge to this model is the necessity of diversifying the niche marketing strategies of the spoke businesses. On the positive side, niche marketing is part of the reason why these businesses have managed to achieve profitability where earlier attempts failed; the labor intensive, high quality meat from Shepherd’s Lamb and hand-crafted weavings from Tierra Wools and Tapetes de Lana were never intended to be price-competitive with their lower-quality, mass-produced counterparts.

As a result, almost all of the enterprises serve a high-end niche market of customers who are willing to pay more for artisanal and organic products. However, the risk for businesses targeting such a market is that demand tends to be more sensitive to economic fluctuations, which increases the businesses’ vulnerability to an economic downturn. The intricate weavings of Tierra Wools and Tapetes de Lana, the organic foods of TCEDC’s entrepreneurs, and the traditional crafts produced by the

310. See Archuleta, supra note 133; Deyapp, supra note 127.
311. See Valdez, supra note 4.
313. Sanchez, supra note 183.
314. FORREST, supra note 3, at 199.
Artisans of the Mora rural arts center are all essentially luxury goods, which buyers can forgo if money is tight.

The best strategy for increasing the reliability of a niche business is to diversify the markets that it serves. This is something Ganados, TCEDC, and Tapetes are all acutely aware of and have worked to achieve. Pastores Collections sells its wool-filled comforters locally at the annual Taos Wool Festival and nationally over the internet (although its online sales are sporadic);\textsuperscript{315} Tierra Wools serves a national and even international customer base;\textsuperscript{316} and Otra Vuelta has sold its mats from Portland to San Antonio.\textsuperscript{317} In addition, Ganados attempted to expand its local reach with the Pastores Feed \& General Store, which stocked an assortment of foods and locally desired goods. Similarly, Tapetes aims to ensure that at least some of the yarn produced by the mill is competitively priced so that community members can afford to buy it.\textsuperscript{318}

TCEDC has had the greatest success in diversifying the markets its businesses serve. While many of the food ventures it has incubated serve a higher-end clientele frequenting upscale grocery stores, a number also place their products in supermarkets like Raley's and Smith's,\textsuperscript{319} where they target middle-income shoppers purchasing staple foods, not luxuries. TCEDC also encourages its businesses to take advantage of harvest opportunities when there are large quantities of certain fruits or vegetables available to be processed at a lower cost—this has been most successful with fresh juice and cider at apple harvest time.\textsuperscript{320} More such diversification efforts by all three organizations are needed to shore up the long-term stability of their economic development projects.

While the need for a broad-based marketing strategy and a stable, long-term organizational commitment are significant challenges to the long-term success of the hub-and-spokes model, there are also more serious systemic problems that even the most successful implementation of this model may not be able to resolve. The first and most fundamental is the underlying issue of land insecurity.\textsuperscript{321} The core group of Ganados founders understood from the beginning of their work that ownership and control of

\begin{itemize}
\item 315. Baca, supra note 128. Because the comforters contain only natural and organic materials, they have also been marketed specifically to chemically-sensitive buyers. Duin, supra note 130.
\item 316. Deyapp, supra note 127.
\item 317. Archuleta, supra note 133.
\item 318. Gomez, supra note 202.
\item 319. Rodriguez, supra note 159.
\item 320. Id.
\item 321. PULIDO, supra note 2, at 187. This is a problem that Tapetes de Lana has not yet had to face, since it is only in the initial stages of fostering the shepherd's association. The 30 shepherds currently involved all have access to enough land to begin small livestock operations. Gomez, supra note 202.
\end{itemize}
the land was absolutely essential to the reestablishment of a land-based economy. Unlike the earlier federal efforts that had danced around the issue, Ganados emphasized and expressed "the glaringly obvious fact that rural communities, by definition, must depend on the land for their subsistence. When these communities have no control over matters concerning the use of that land, they are relegated to a permanent, and humiliating, dependence." 323

After a century and a half of disenfranchisement of the Hispanic villages, the distribution of land ownership in Rio Arriba county, where Los Ojos is situated, is approximately 53-percent federal (primarily Forest Service), 28-percent private, 17-percent Jicarilla Apache, and two-percent state. 324 In 1991, after their confrontation on the Humphries Wildlife Management Area, Ganados held out hope that even with the escalating prices of real estate in the Chama valley, they could raise the funds necessary to acquire a ranch large enough to sustain the Pastores flocks, perhaps 10,000 acres. 325 However, to date neither the organization nor Manzanares have been able to acquire any significant quantity of land. 326

The closest Ganados has come to land security is a 10-year renewable grazing permit in the Carson National Forest above Canjilon. This permit was secured in 1997 as part of the settlement of a lawsuit that arose out of a $100,000 donation made by Firestone heir Ray Graham III to the Sierra Club Foundation in 1970. 327 The donation was restricted to use in purchasing grazing land for Tierra Amarilla livestock growers. 328 Although this was 13 years before Ganados del Valle was formally incorporated, many of its leaders, including Varela, were pursuing similar goals in an earlier iteration of the effort called Cooperativa Agricola de Tierra Amarilla. 329 Graham assumed that his funds had gone to benefit La Cooperativa; instead, however, the Sierra Club had diverted the money to purchase its expensive headquarters in San Francisco. 330

After all the media attention around Ganados's occupation of the Humphries Wildlife Management Area, Graham discovered that no land

322. Forrest, supra note 3, at 191.
323. Id. at 196–97.
324. Pulido, supra note 2, at 139.
325. Jackson, supra note 236.
326. Varela, supra note 107.
327. Ray Ring & Mary Frei, In the Heart of the New West, the Sheep Win One, HIGH COUNTRY NEWS, Oct. 16, 1995.
329. Peña, supra note 20, at 325.
330. Id. at 327.
had ever been purchased for the villagers. In 1990, Graham sued the Sierra Club over its mismanagement of the funds, and in 1992, the New Mexico Attorney General filed a separate suit on behalf of Ganados, seeking an accounting of the funds. The lawsuit dragged on until September of 1995, when a settlement was reached the day before trial was scheduled to begin. The Sierra Club paid $900,000, and after attorney's fees and other expenses, Ganados received $400,000.

With the soaring real estate values of the Chama valley driving grazing land up above $1,000 an acre at the time of the settlement, the money was insufficient for Ganados to buy a large enough tract of land on which to sustainably graze its growers' flocks. Instead, the group used $75,000 of the funds to buy a permit to graze the sheep on a Forest Service parcel above Canjilon, which Manzanares and the remaining Pastores sheep growers now use during the summer months. The permit is renewable every 10 years but is subject to the vagaries of unpredictable Forest Service policies, such as reductions in the number of animals Ganados is allowed to run on the land.

Ganados has had little luck securing leases on private land to supplement the Forest Service permit. More and more of the grazing lands are being developed, and the large landholders that remain prefer to lease their land for cattle rather than sheep since cattle bring in a higher price — usually $10 per Animal Unit Month, as compared to $5 for sheep. Ganados sheep growers can generally acquire leases on private land only when a cattle lease falls through, and they never know if that will happen until the last minute.

One way to resolve the longstanding problem of land tenure is through creative arrangements like community agricultural land trusts. An agricultural trust is similar to a land trust that purchases easements for conservation purposes. However, rather than purchasing conservation easements that limit all human use of the land, an agricultural land trust purchases easements that prevent any non-agricultural use — or any use that

331. Id.
333. Ring, supra note 327.
334. Id.; Varela, supra note 107.
335. Varela, supra note 107.
336. Id.
337. Id.
338. Ring, supra note 327.
339. Varela, supra note 107.
340. Id.
negatively affects the land's future agricultural viability. The land trust itself is a nonprofit entity that raises money to purchase the easements, paying landowners the difference between the value of the land as used for agriculture and the value of the land as used for its "highest and best use," generally residential or commercial development. The landowner benefits not only from the one-time payment, but also from the permanent reduction in property taxes that occurs because the land's value is reduced once it can no longer be developed. State-supported agricultural land trusts have been established in fourteen states to date and have protected over 400,000 acres of farmland. Ganados has approached local landowners in an effort to arrange agricultural easements, but so far without success.

One of the obstacles to protecting farmland in this way is the frustrating lack of understanding and communication between environmental interest groups and organizations like Ganados that seek to preserve land-based cultures. The Santa Fe Conservation Trust, for example, has expressed interest in purchasing or accepting donations of conservation easements from Hispanic landholders in northern New Mexico, but it has not shown the same enthusiasm for acquiring agricultural easements that would allow the continued use of these lands for grazing and growing while shielding them from development.

This failure emerges in part from the different philosophies embraced by each culture: environmentalists, predominantly urban and Anglo, tend to draw a sharp line between culture and nature and desire to set aside and protect nature from human activity. This is the essence of a conventional conservation easement. By contrast, traditionally land-based cultures like those of the Hispanic villages tend toward a less dualistic view, seeing the land as intrinsically linked to the human community's social, economic, and cultural existence. A number of environmental justice scholars and activists have noted that the conventional environmental emphasis on land preservation rather than land use avoids addressing

343. Id.
344. Id.
345. Id. at 86.
346. Varela, supra note 107.
348. Pulido, supra note 254, at 304. Pulido notes that these differences may be caused less by distinctions in static "cultures" and more by each group's place in the capitalist system. Id.
349. Id.
fundamental questions about socioeconomic inequalities and the long-term sustainability of our consumption-based lifestyle.  

Fortunately, in the last few years some environmental organizations have begun to move toward a more thoughtful and holistic understanding of social and ecological interactions that sees a place for humans on the land, and TCEDC is taking advantage of this shift. One of its major disappointments is that it has not been able to do more to help local farmers retain their lands in the face of soaring property values. Between 1995–2005, the Taos area lost 29 percent of its farms. The De la Tierra a la Cosecha initiative, launched in 2005 by TCEDC in conjunction with the Taos Land Trust and the Taos Valley Acequia Association, seeks to rectify that. The groups are seeking to increase the use of agricultural conservation easements and provide more education and assistance to farmers. In 2005, the Taos Land Trust purchased its first agricultural easement with the help of a grant from the USDA’s Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program, and it has received donations of several others.

The major constraint on the success of this strategy is the very limited funding available to the private groups, like the Taos Land Trust, that are seeking to purchase agricultural easements. Where agricultural land trusts have been most successful, state and local governments have been actively involved in funding the acquisition of such easements. This fact highlights the final major challenge faced by the Ganados model: In general, public policies are not designed to support culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable community economic development.

New Mexico is not among the 14 states that have enacted programs to appropriate funds for the purchase of agricultural easements. Legislation has been introduced several times in the past few years to establish such a fund, but none has succeeded. This lack of political

350. PULIDO, supra note 2, at 147, 185.
351. See, e.g., Courtney White, A New Environmentalism, in FORGING A WEST THAT WORKS: AN INVITATION TO THE RADICAL CENTER 53 (2003).
352. Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
354. Id.
357. AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST, supra note 342, at 86.
support for funding agricultural easements leaves the task up to private land trusts and nonprofit organizations like Ganados and TCEDC, and while the nonprofits’ small size is an advantage in maintaining good relations with their communities, it also limits their ability to raise the enormous amounts of money needed to acquire or preserve the land base. This is one arena in which good public policies are necessary but lacking.

An even more significant policy problem is the uneven playing field on which locally grown businesses must compete with their out-of-state counterparts. Substantial economic incentives are offered to large businesses that seek to relocate to New Mexico, including subsidies for worker training; tax exemptions for land, property; and equipment; and industry-specific assistance. By contrast, the small local businesses these nonprofits incubate receive only minimal assistance, despite the fact that the employment they generate enriches the human capital of their communities, protects the culture, and is far more environmentally sustainable than the larger out-of-state industries the political system favors.

In the final analysis, while Ganados del Valle, TCEDC, and Tapetes de Lana have made impressive progress in moving their communities closer to culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable economic development, the long-term success of the hub-and-spokes model will likely depend on how well the hub organizations are able to achieve that handful of elusive goals—to outlast the usual lifespan of a nonprofit, to stave off destructive internal conflict, to diversify the markets their business ventures serve, to secure greater control over the community’s land base, and to reform counterproductive public policies.

V. CONCLUSION

They are at home in a place where they live and work and raise their families. This place provides them with the resources needed for survival, and, in turn, they feel a responsibility to care for that place. This is their querencia. It goes beyond the boundaries of legal ownership, beyond the promise of monetary return. It is part of them and they are part of it.

—Alice M. McSweeney

Since its inception, bioregionalism has been an extraordinarily ambitious, even utopian goal. Yet while it is true that the idealized economy, perfectly suited to its culture and ecological setting, self-sufficient

359. Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
360. Pulido, supra note 8, at 138.
361. McSweeney, supra note 21, at 113.
and regenerative, may only exist in the writings of scholars, it is certainly possible to develop an economy that comes much closer to that vision than the colonial economy that has characterized northern New Mexico over the past century. Indeed, with their long history of sustainable self-sufficiency and land-based culture, the Hispanic villages of northern New Mexico may be uniquely well-suited to the effort.

In the conclusion to her definitive analysis of the failed economic development efforts of the New Deal and the War on Poverty, Suzanne Forrest writes that achieving the sort of economic development desired by the villagers of northern New Mexico would require “consistent, patient...tenacious dedication” in supporting the research, marketing, technical assistance, and training needed to launch culturally appropriate ventures, as well as the ability to both empower the community’s entrepreneurs and link their initiatives to regional and national markets.

Fittingly enough, it is exactly those qualities that Ganados del Valle, TCEDC, and Tapetes de Lana have displayed in their promising efforts to foster culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable economic development over the past 25 years. While only time will reveal how long-lasting their impact truly is, they have already outlasted the failed efforts of the past. They have succeeded in creating new businesses and scores of jobs in ways that support traditional cultural practices of their communities and protect and restore the natural environment on which those communities have traditionally relied.

The key to their success appears to be the hub-and-spokes model that builds economic development projects around the central leadership of a nonprofit organization that combines community leadership with financial expertise. As TCEDC’s Terrie Bad Hand says, such organizations are crucial because government’s not going to do it, individuals aren’t going to do it, and you have to have that kind of not-for-profit NGO to really take on—everything. You take on the risk, you take on the hassles, you take on the changing of laws....You really have to have a nonprofit or an NGO that can make relationships and partnerships. And Ganados was able to do that, and we were able to do that....That’s just the only way it happens. You can’t do it by yourself. No matter how wonderful people are, you really have to get all this infrastructure.

362. See, e.g., Arellano, supra note 21; SALE, supra note 18.
363. FORREST, supra note 3, at 198.
364. See id. at 198–99.
365. Martinson & Bad Hand, supra note 149.
Whether this model will be as enduring and transformative as its creators envision will depend on the ability of the hub nonprofits to overcome the very serious challenges that remain, including the intractable lack of land security, the need to reform state and federal public policies, and the difficulty of building an organization that can survive for the multiple generations that are needed and can overcome the community conflicts that have contributed to the downfall of past efforts.

In the face of these continuing challenges, the accomplishments of Ganados del Valle, TCEDC, and Tapetes de Lana stand as tantalizing reasons to believe that a model of land-based economic development suited to northern New Mexico's unique ecology and culture can succeed, and that it is both necessary and possible to reclaim querencia.