

Several centuries ago, Chaco Canyon was the center of a thriving society that flourished in the Four Corners region of New Mexico. The Chacoans built hundreds of great house structures across the region and connected many of these places with miles of roads and other landscape features. This extensive landscape is managed by a variety of federal, state, private, and tribal owners. These places have deep spiritual and cultural importance to nearby Pueblos and tribes that are descendants of the Chacoan people. In addition, the Chaco region holds great potential to further our understanding of ancient Pueblo culture and human-environment interaction in the past.



## Archaeology Southwest

Exploring and protecting the places of our past



PHOTO: ELY RARESHIDE

**WE CANNOT TURN BACK THE CLOCK** on this development, but there is a solution. The BLM can use a tool known as a “master leasing plan” for the Greater Chaco Landscape in order to strike a balance between responsible energy development and the protection of communities and cultural resources. This approach would help ensure that where development does occur, it happens responsibly, and not at the detriment of people, natural resources, or cultural resources.

### YOU CAN HELP

FIND OUT HOW AT

[www.protectgreaterchaco.org](http://www.protectgreaterchaco.org)

For more information, contact Paul Reed at  
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## PROTECTING THE GREATER CHACO LANDSCAPE

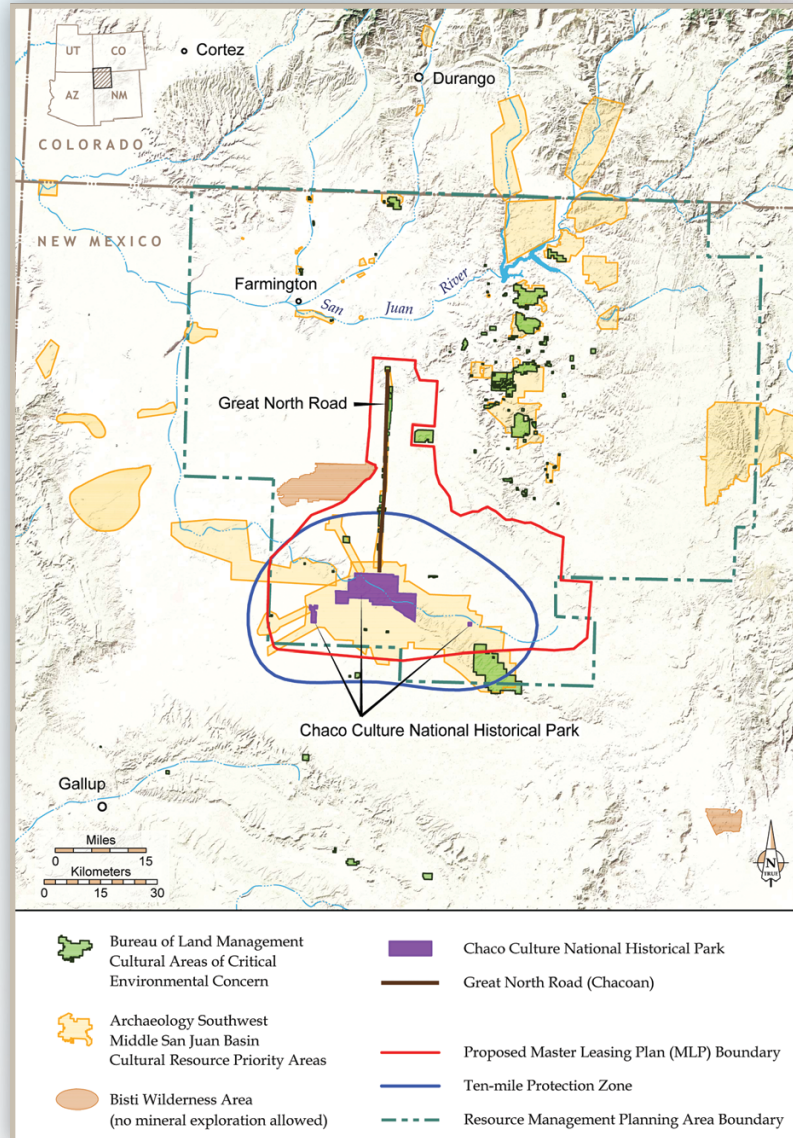


The Greater Chaco Landscape is threatened by oil and gas development. But with your help, we can change course and bring additional protection to Chaco's fragile cultural treasures.



**SITES ASSOCIATED** with Chacoan society are protected within the boundaries of Chaco Culture National Historical Park. The Park and a select group of affiliated sites outside the boundary together are designated a World Heritage Site—one of only 23 in the United States and the only site managed (in part) by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

As a result of decades of oil and gas development, many of the features associated with the Greater Chaco Landscape—the communications and road systems that once linked the canyon to great house sites located as far away as southeast Utah and which are still being identified to this day—have been damaged. Furthermore, the setting of many of the most important sites surrounding Chaco Canyon, which we know is of special importance to Pueblo and tribal members, has been dramatically altered by the construction of nearby oil and gas wells, tanks, and other infrastructure.



*Pierre's great house outlier from the ground (above) and the air (below).*

**THERE HAS BEEN A LACK** of recognition by some agencies and land managers that the landscape surrounding Chaco Canyon is a distinct resource that needs to be managed as such.

A prime example of the encroachment of oil and gas development on fragile resources is Chaco's Great North Road and the site of Pierre's. This area lies about 15 miles north of the Park boundary.

The area around Pierre's was relatively pristine until oil and gas development impacted it. In addition to Pierre's and the Great North Road, there are 2,000 additional sites in close proximity to Chaco that are threatened.



PHOTO: ELY BARESHIDE

*Chaco's irreplaceable landscape has been impacted by oil and gas development for decades, and hundreds of sites have been damaged or destroyed.*