

SALT PLAYAS

Nominated ACEC: Salt Playas ACEC

Nominated by: New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

Size: 58,100 acres

Cultural Value

Relevance

Historically, playas attracted Native Americans during wet periods in the past, as evidenced by the large number of sites surrounding the salt playas. Shells from freshwater clams, brought from the nearby Pecos River, have been found on the edges of the playas. Salt playas were also prime hunting sites due to the freshwater springs found along the edges. Fish from the springs may also have served as a food source.

Importance

- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.

Fish or Wildlife Resource

Relevance

Salt playas are important to local plant and animal communities. They serve as essential stops for migratory shore birds and as water recharge areas which accumulate rain and snow. Most of the salt playas contain water year-round and many have a spring system associated with them. They provide specialized habitat for invertebrates, vertebrates, and birds.

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