

Welcome Aboard

You are about to take a journey through the spectacular mountains and valleys of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico on an historic narrow gauge railroad line that was built in 1880.

Before the widespread use of gasoline and electric engines, it was steam that powered American industry. Steam engines powered farm machinery and manufacturing and transported minerals, the products of the land, and people. Before good roads connected the small towns of the Rocky Mountains with larger urban centers, it was the railroad, powered by steam locomotives, that moved people and commerce across the tracks that are today the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is 64 miles of what once was the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railway. It has been preserved by the States of Colorado and New Mexico for your appreciation and enjoyment as part of the heritage of the West. It is the finest example of narrow gauge mountain steam railroading in the country. Steam locomotives built for the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railway (D&RGW) in the early part of the twentieth century today take you across a landmark of civil engineering, along a route where once it hauled sheep, lumber, coal, or oil, passengers and mail.

So, relax. Step back into another era. Enjoy your trip.



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Osier, Colorado

ELEVATION 9,637 FEET

Before the railroad built its tracks here, a toll road connecting the Chama Valley with the San Luis Valley ran through this area. The D&RG established a construction camp here in July 1880.

After the line was completed, Osier continued as an important operating facility for coal and water, especially in the winter time, and provided shelter and communications for the crews of trains and snow-removal outfits.

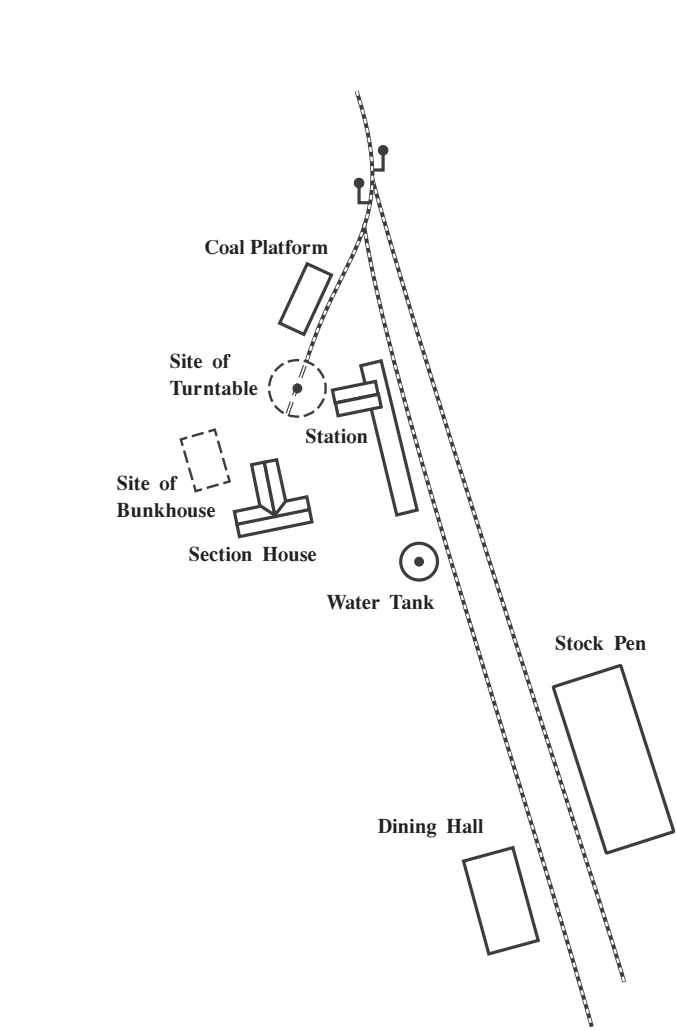
In the early 1880s, Mr. William Jenkins operated a saloon and restaurant on the east side of the tracks. He was also the postmaster and tollgate keeper. The area contained a collection of log buildings and corrals.

Dining Hall. There was nothing in this location during the historic period of the railroad. The C&TSRR Commission built this hall in 1988-89 so that passengers could eat lunch protected from afternoon wind and thunderstorms. In the earlier years passengers were served lunch on the porch of the section house and ate at picnic tables in the fields surrounding the section house.

Stock Pens. After the railroad was completed in 1882, Osier was a camp and small trading center for sheepherders and ranchers. The railroad built these stock pens around 1936 for livestock waiting to be loaded onto the eastbound train to market in Denver.

Water Tank. This tank is like others that can be seen along the line at Chama, Cresco, Los Pinos, and Lava. A locomotive's tender cannot hold enough water to provide steam power for a whole trip. In the early era of the railroad, when locomotives were smaller, watering facilities had to be located every 7-10 miles. The first tower and tank at Osier were built in 1880. The tank was replaced several times during the historic period. The tank you see today was constructed in 2000. Except for stronger foundation supports, it was rebuilt with the same kind of materials and to the same specifications as the original D&RG tank.

Section House. Built in 1881, this structure contained dwelling areas for the section foreman and his family, a kitchen, and a dining area for the whole section crew (other crew members lived in a log bunkhouse located to the northwest of the section house). In the years before gasoline powered track speeders, section crews were responsible for maintaining seven miles of track. There were seven section crew settlements between Chama and Antonito. When better equipment enabled crews to cover larger areas some of these settlements were abandoned. Today section houses remain only at Cumbres, Osier, and Sublette. From 1993 to 2003 the Friends of the C&TSR restored the exterior to its historic appearance



and renovated the interior, modernizing the kitchen and restroom facilities. The C&TSR Commission provided funding from a grant from the Colorado Historical Society.

Station. Built in 1881, this housed an office, waiting room, telephone bay, and upstairs sleeping quarters for the station agent. Herders and stockmen taking their livestock to market would board here. When the C&TSR began operations in 1970, it installed a small concession area and restroom facilities in this structure to serve passengers on their lunch stop. The Friends of the C&TSR worked on the depot from 1995 to 2000, removing the 1970s installations, restoring the original exterior appearance, and renovating the interior.

Coal Platform. This is all that remains of an extensive platform for storing and loading coal. The coal on the platform was shoveled into locomotive or rotary plow tenders to refuel them as needed. The platform is located alongside a spur track that once led to a covered turntable (built in 1888 and removed in 1927).

Paint Color. The reddish-brown paint color of the section house, the depot, and water tank replicates the original color of all railroad buildings during the 1881-1915 era of the railroad. At Cumbres Pass the paint colors illustrate the colors of railroad buildings from 1915 to 1945. At Sublette the paint colors illustrate the colors of railroad buildings from 1945 until abandonment in the late 1960s.

Reboarding the Train

Trains operate thru from station to station. If you are riding over the whole 64 miles from one end to the other then you will be on the same train for the entire journey. Those that are riding over only half of the railroad will be changing trains and have different seat assignments. Please check your ticket before reboarding for the seat assignment.

Train crews and docents will assist you if you are confused about your seat assignment or the proper train to board after lunch.

Four long whistle blasts from the locomotive is your signal that the trains will depart Osier in five minutes

Who are the Friends?

This brochure was produced by the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. This group started in 1981 to repair and restore deteriorated cars and buildings. Today, under a contract with the Railroad Commission, the Friends has assumed the responsibility of preserving and restoring all of the railroad's historic assets that are not used in the regular tourist train operation, interpreting the railroad to the public, and providing preservation management for the 64-mile living museum.

The Friends have thousands of members around the world. Their support makes it possible for volunteers to contribute 25,000+ hours of volunteer time to the repair, restoration, and interpretation work at the railroad each year. The Friends have received awards from Colorado and New Mexico state legislatures, the Colorado Historical Society, and the New Mexico Department of Historic Preservation.

Support through membership, volunteerism, and donations make our work possible.

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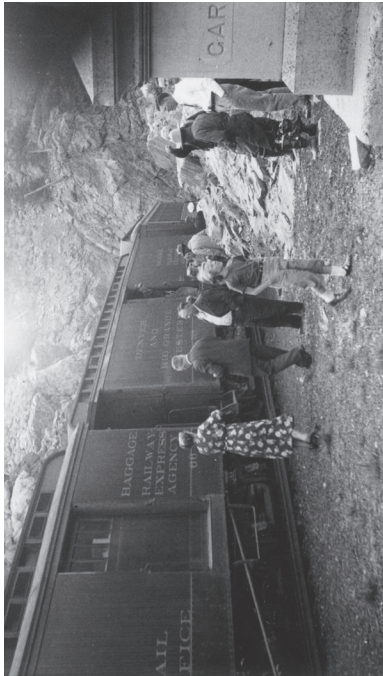
Lunch in Historic Osier

Your lunch stop will be at Osier, Colorado, roughly the halfway point in your journey.

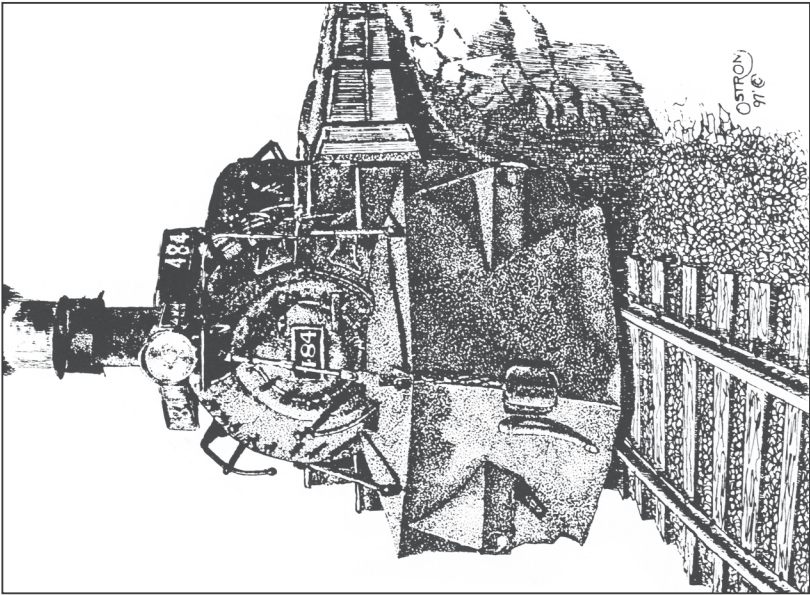
While in Osier, you will be able to enjoy a delicious meal and a stroll around historic Osier.

The menu has something for everyone. Gluten-free and vegetarian options are available. The buffet is all you can eat and served cafeteria style with entrees, including vegetarian options, and dessert. Drinks include lemonade, iced tea, and coffee.

Trains will depart approximately one hour after your arrival in Osier.



A Trip Map of the CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD



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Historical Overview of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is America's longest and highest narrow gauge railroad. It is also one of our country's best preserved railroad museums, designated a National Historic Landmark, as well as a State Registered Historic Site and National Civil Engineering Historic Landmark.

The line on which you are riding today is a remnant of the Denver & Rio Grand Railway (later to be known as the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, or the "Rio Grande"). Narrow gauge (3 feet between the rails) was chosen instead of the more common standard gauge (4 ft. 8½ in.), so that the railroad could make tighter turns in the mountains and thereby reduce construction costs. Wishing to tap the booming mining districts in southwestern Colorado, the railroad headed west from Antonito in 1880. Crews surveyed, graded roadbed, and laid track through spectacular Toltec Gorge, over 10,015-foot Cumbres Pass, and down the 4 percent grade into Chama, where they arrived on December 31, 1880.

The coming of the railroad was a critical factor in the opening up of northern New Mexico and southwestern Colorado. The railroad was instrumental in developing the natural resources of the region, hauling ore, timber, cattle and sheep. The Rio Grande also carried passengers to and from the region. It even carried a first class parlor car on its daily passenger trains until ending passenger service in 1951.

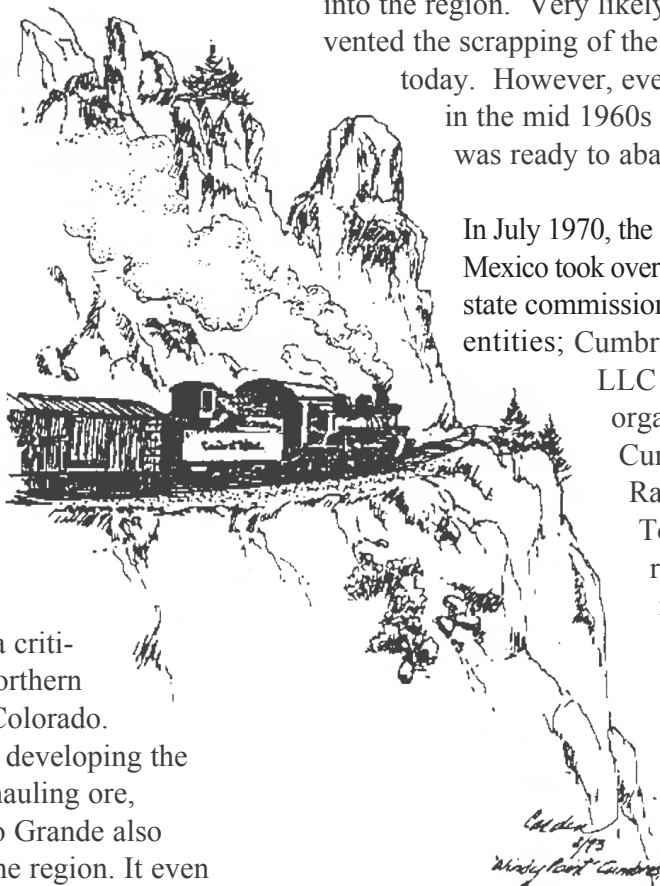
The railroad had its ups and downs over the years. In 1893 the Silver Purchase Act was repealed and the federal government stopped purchasing silver. This brought a calamitous decline in the railroad's

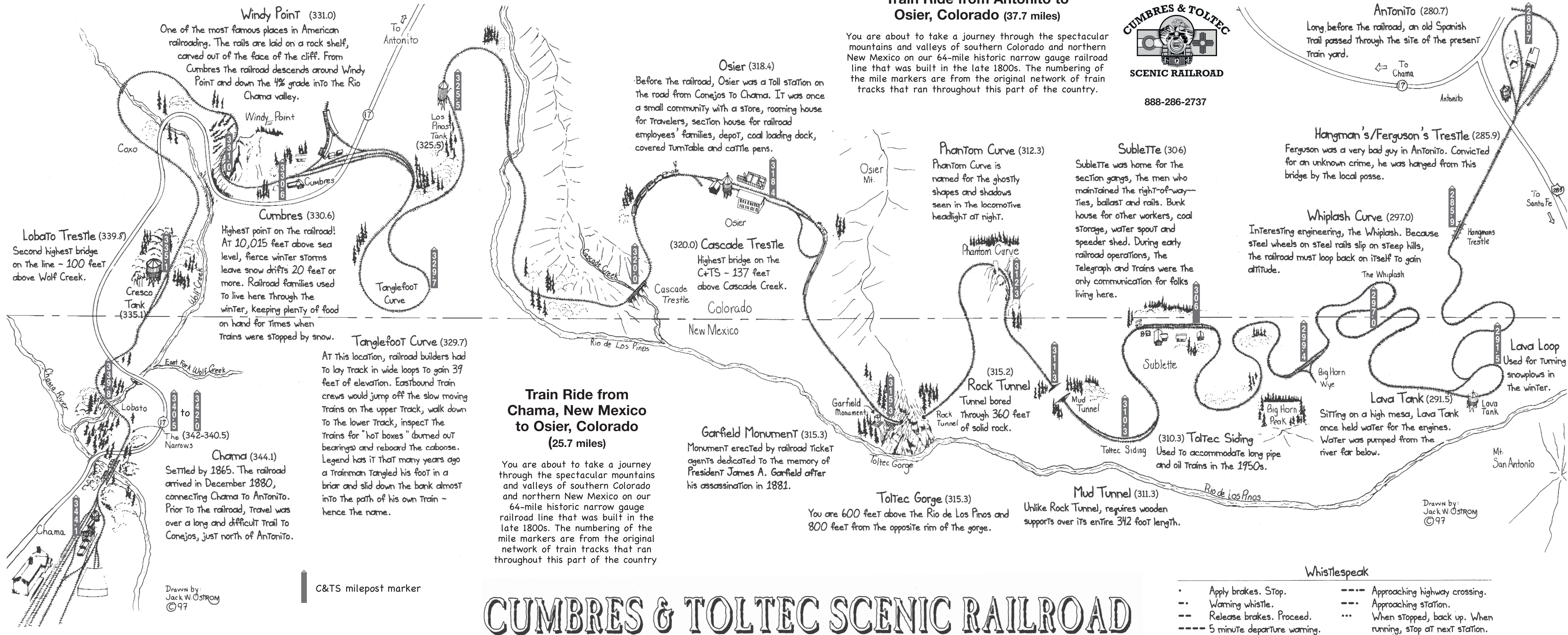
revenues. Subsequent economic booms and busts affected the railroad as well. Good times in the 1920s resulted in the purchase of "modern" engines (still in use today) and the rehabilitation of many freight cars. Except for a brief respite during World War II, the Rio Grande narrow gauge never recovered from the Great Depression, and most of the narrow gauge lines in the Rocky Mountains were scrapped during the 1950s.

The discovery of oil and gas in the Four Corners area of Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah in the early 1950s led to a revival of the San Juan Extension, and it was used to transport equipment into the region. Very likely this single factor prevented the scrapping of the line you are riding today. However, even that traffic died out in the mid 1960s and the Rio Grande was ready to abandon this line by 1967.

In July 1970, the states of Colorado and New Mexico took over administration through a bi-state commission, which contracts with two entities; Cumbres Toltec Operating, LLC and the non-profit organization Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. Cumbres Toltec Operating, LLC is responsible for operating regular tourist trains and maintaining the rolling stock and facilities it uses. The Friends is responsible for preserving, restoring, and interpreting the historic cars and structures.

You are invited to tour the Antonito and Chama railroad yards and the railroad settlement at Cumbres Pass. Walking tour brochures published by the Friends are available in the Chama yard at no charge.





JOIN THE FRIENDS TODAY

Become a member of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad to help preserve and maintain America's premier historic railroad. All members receive our quarterly publication, the C&TS Dispatch, discounts at the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, invitations to special events, and exclusive volunteer opportunities.



By joining the Friends, you'll be part of a community dedicated to preserving America's railroading heritage. The support of members, volunteers, and donors will help make it possible for future generations to experience the thrill of a historic steam train ride through the beautiful mountains of New Mexico and Colorado.

**Join.
Volunteer.
Support.**



The Friends is a non-profit tax exempt corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions and donations are deductible to the fullest extent of the law. IRS #85-0363487. Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. 4421 McLeod Rd. NE Suite F • Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109 (505) 880-1311 www.friendsofcumbrestoltec.org