

2009 Scenic Byway Award Winner

# VISITOR EXPERIENCE



## BYWAY KIDS PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

**BYWAY:** Trail of the Mountain Spirits Scenic Byway  
**STATE:** NEW MEXICO

### Cultural Heritage Through Children's Eyes

The Trail of the Mountain Spirits Byway became an outdoor classroom for the Scenic Byway Kids Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument 100th Anniversary Photography Program. San Lorenzo Elementary School fourth- and fifth-grade students received a single-use camera to take photos during a field trip to the monument. They also participated in the Junior Ranger program, which further developed an appreciation and respect for cultural heritage sites and public lands. The students' photography was displayed at key heritage tourism sites across southwest New Mexico, and the Silver City Daily Press printed their images.

The project provided a solid learning opportunity that the school could not have afforded or staffed alone. It also drew the community into the project and educated adults as well as students about the area's cultural heritage sites. It simultaneously helped to convey information about the byway program to citizens.

Partnerships between the byway and several public organizations, businesses and community groups worked to stage this successful learning opportunity. This cooperative approach reinforced the byway's importance among stakeholders. Through the eyes of children, adults could see the byway experience and the area's treasured heritage in new ways.



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