

Glorieta owners cited for multiple environmental and zoning violations

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SANTA FE, N.M.—Owners of Glorieta 2.0—the New Mexico conference center formerly owned by LifeWay Christian Resources—face fines and potential criminal charges for development, zoning, littering and public nuisance violations.

Penny Ellis-Green, land use administrator for Santa Fe County’s growth management department, sent a cease-and-desist letter Feb. 22 to homebuilder David Weekley, chairman of the board for Glorieta 2.0, and Jeff Ward, director of finance and administration for the Christian retreat center.

“The unlawful use being allowed on the property presents an immediate risk to the patrons of the facility, the general public and surrounding property,” the letter stated. “You are, therefore, ordered to immediately cease and desist the occupancy and use of the unpermitted structures and unpermitted remodeled structures.”

Unlawful landfill and unpermitted development on Glorieta property

On a Feb. 15 site visit, staff from Ellis-Green’s office and the Santa Fe County fire marshall observed “a large area of land that is being utilized to dispose of solid waste material, which is a public nuisance and may contain hazardous material,” she noted.

The letter termed the dumpsite a “blatant violation” of anti-littering and public nuisance ordinances and said it “endangers the health, life and

safety of the community.” The department gave the camp owners 15 days to remedy the situation.

The site visitors also observed various examples of unpermitted development, including multiple structures used for zip lines, a structure that includes lake slides and diving boards, multiple decks, a remodeled building used as a general store/coffee shop, trails for extreme biking and a skeet-shooting range.

“Your property is currently in violation and requires development permits for all newly constructed structures, renovations of existing structures, grading and the change of use resulting from the addition of new facilities,” the letter said.

Previously, Glorieta 2.0 faced other complaints regarding safety and environmental issues. In December 2014, the [state engineer](#) ordered the camp to cease pumping water into its pond and the overflow into Glorieta Creek.

Zip lines and waterpark temporarily closed

Anthony Scott, executive director of the camp, told the Santa Fe Reporter he is working with the county to remedy the situation, and the camp temporarily has closed its zip line and waterpark activities.

Glorieta 2.0 installed the zip lines, water slides, diving boards and venues for extreme sports after the nonprofit corporation [purchased](#) the 2,400-acre conference center in 2013 for \$1 from LifeWay Christian Resources.

The Baptist Convention of New Mexico earlier had considered buying the property, but after a study of deferred maintenance, environmental issues and other costs, the state convention decided the venture was not viable financially.

Glorieta 2.0 gave [owners of homes](#) built on land leased at the conference center a choice—sell their homes at less than market value, donate the houses as a charitable contribution or accept a 12-year lease, at the end of which the house would become the property of Glorieta 2.0.

That sparked a lawsuit challenging LifeWay's sale of the property. A federal judge dismissed the suit on procedural grounds. The couple who brought the lawsuit—Kirk and Suzie Tompkins of Little Rock, Ark.—[filed a petition](#) Jan. 4 asking the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals for a rehearing.