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Kaitlyn Willett Thoreau, New Mexico City Report Practically all residents pronounce the town's name like " thuh-roo" (similar to " through" or " threw") and definitely not like " thorough" or " throw." Thoreau lies along Interstate 40 and the historic U. S. Route 66. The climate in Thoreau is desert, with sparse vegetation typical of the region. Common plants include pinyon pine and juniper trees, sagebrush, tumbleweeds, and some short, sparse grasses. Summers are relatively mild, due to Thoreau's high elevation and persistently low humidity. Cold, persistent, very high winds are common in spring, usually through much of the month of March. Thoreau supports three public schools in the Gallup-McKinley County Public School District. The public school mascot is the hawk, and the school colors are green and gold. In addition to the Navajo traditional beliefs (medicine men and Native American church) the Saint Bonaventure Catholic mission and several Protestant denominations are also active in Thoreau, including Baptists, Latter Day Saints (Mormons), Church of Christ, Church of God, and some independent congregations. The Native American culture and history is strong in Thoreau. The Navajo Nation operates a Chapter House here, and many Navajo residents speak their native language. Thoreau is a local trading center for artisans including rug weaving, sand painting, silver making, pottery making, and turquoise jewelry making. Anasazi archaeological sites connecting with Chaco Canyon can be found in and around the town. In Thoreau, there are only 73. 7% American Indians, 13. 3% Hispanic, and 12. 9% White. As of the census of 2000, there were 1, 863 people, 532 households, and 405 families. Thoreau is your typical western setting. Hot days, cold nights, and lots of sand. Rattlesnakes and lizards are

commonly found just about everywhere so you have to watch your every step. Though it gets pretty hot, the wind there will knock you down. History is all throughout Thoreau. It is home to the Navajo Indians and once to the Pueblos. The Pueblo Indian ruins are found in Chaco canyon and many are still standing. But how did the Navajo make their way to New Mexico? Starting in the spring of 1864, around 9, 000 Navajo men, women and children were forced on The Long Walk of over 300 miles to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. It was a failure for a combination of reasons. It was designed to supply water, wood, supplies, and livestock for 4, 000—5, 000 people; it had one kind of crop failure after another; other tribes and civilians were able to raid the Navajo; and a small group of Apaches had been moved there. In 1868, a treaty was negotiated that allowed the surviving Navajos to return to a reservation that was a portion of their former nation. I bet almost everyone in here has never in their life heard of Thoreau, New Mexico. But though it is not commonly heard of, it is full of history and culture. To the Navajo Indians to the huge red mountains and cliffs, it is a town worth visiting.