



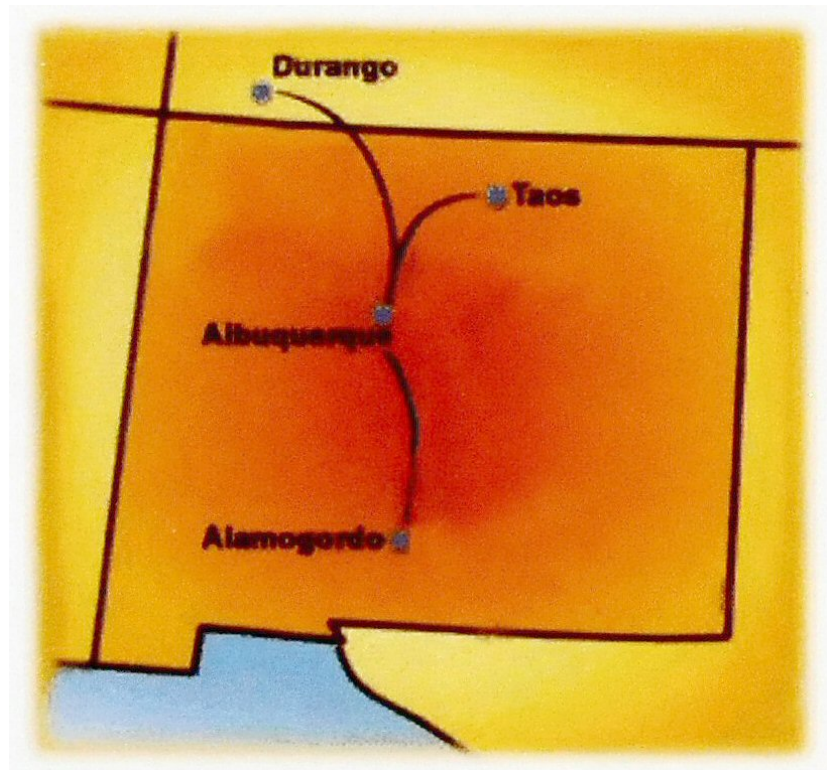
Rio Grande Air

Rio Grande Air was based in Taos, New Mexico and began operations in 1998 as “Edelweiss Air”, an air freight carrier. The carrier had planned to begin commuter flights between Albuquerque and Taos on May 25, 1995 but this service was delayed for nearly four years. Commuter airline passenger operations did begin on March 1, 1999 with three daily flights between Albuquerque and Taos using a single engine Cessna 207. By the end of that month the carrier had introduced the 9-seat Cessna 208B Grand Caravan and began service to Los Alamos as a stop on its flights between Albuquerque and Taos. Service to Durango, Colorado began the following year while the flights to Los Alamos were discontinued. In 2001 the carrier began serving Farmington, Santa Fe, and Ruidoso from Albuquerque however all three new cities were discontinued later that same year. Essential Air Service (EAS) subsidies were awarded to Rio Grande Air for service from Albuquerque to Alamogordo, New Mexico after the withdrawal of service by Mesa Airlines on the route. This service began on May 27, 2002. The carrier also started a code-share relationship with Great Plains Airlines in which all Rio Grande Air flights began using the “ZO” code for Great Plains. The Durango flights were dropped by the end of 2002 and the carrier continued service to Alamogordo and Taos from Albuquerque. In early 2004 Rio Grande Air announced that a new, pressurized, 13-seat Beech 1300 aircraft would be obtained and would significantly reduce the flying time on all flights however the financing for these aircraft fell through and the carrier was shut down on June 23, 2004. Its partner, Great Plains Airlines, also shut down earlier that year.

Rio Grande Air reached a total of eleven departures each day from its Albuquerque hub on the July 1, 2001 schedule.



Rio Grande Air Cessna 208B Grand Caravan at the Albuquerque Sunport.



Rio Grande Air route map from 2002.