

**CABALLO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
ANNUAL REPORT FOR PERIOD OF  
JULY 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**



**Caballo District Building  
3000 HWY 187  
Salem, NM**

The Board of Supervisors of the Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District continues to address the natural resource concerns within the Caballo District. The Board of Supervisors meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 9:00 am at the Caballo SWCD office near Salem, New Mexico. The office of the Caballo District is located next to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District office, along Highway 187 at 3000 Highway 187. The Board of Supervisors is comprised of the following:

Harvey Morrow, Chairman  
Frank Garay, Vice-Chairman  
Samantha Gillis, Secretary-Treasurer  
Casey McGuire, Member  
Dee Wear, Member  
Keith Franzoy, Member  
Ron Garay, Member



Caballo Staff Attended Rio Gro Field Day

Staffing needs of the Caballo District is provided by Chantal Orosco, Business Manager and Susan Downs, Programs Manager. Additional technical assistance is by staff of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Truth or Consequences Field Office, which includes Kristi Wright, District Conservationist and Nicole Chavez, Rangeland Management Specialist.



Percha Diversion Start of Water Season 2025

Irrigation season in the upper hatch valley was extremely short with water being turned into the Percha diversion on June 1, 2025 and running through July 5, 2025 with an allotment of 6 inches. The Rio Grande flowed only until the end of July, leaving producers reliant on groundwater and rainfall.

The District received early monsoon rains sporadically throughout the district. Storms bounced around ranging in amounts of 1 tenth to 2.25 inches. The district continues to deal with long-term drought issues, with predictions of little to no water for the upcoming year, unless the mountains receive heavy snow accumulation.

Small isolated rain showers caused some watershed runoff that would accumulate in several of the District sponsored Flood Control Structures and be of beneficial use to the producers enrolled in the collaborative Interstate Streams Commission Ground Water Conservation Program and the Caballo SWCD Cover Crop Seed Program.



Garfield Flood Control Structure capturing watershed runoff



Watershed Runoff

## **WATERSHEDS**

Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District originally had two functioning Watershed Districts within its boundaries, the Underwood Watershed and the McLead Watershed. The Underwood Watershed is now defunct, Caballo SWCD has taken on the role of sponsor on that structure, which entails keeping stakeholders informed of major events and ensuring that proper maintenance is completed on the structure.

The McLead Watershed District is a struggling watershed district, but continues to work to maintain and keep the flood control structure functioning. McLead Watershed and the Caballo District continue to work with engineers, the Office of the State Engineer and the Dam Safety Bureau to formulate a cohesive plan for repairs needed on the structure after a flood event that overtopped the structure. The structure functioned properly through the event and continues to function well.



McLead Intake Structure in Pooling Area

## **Flood Control Structures**

The Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District is the primary sponsor of sixteen Flood Control Structures. As such, the Board of Supervisors is very conscious of their responsibilities as sponsors and closely monitors flood events and other activities that could affect the viability of their watershed structures. Annual Operation and Maintenance inspections are held in conjunction with certified engineering staff, representatives from Caballo SWCD, and Elephant Butte Irrigation District, who implement the maintenance requirements. Funding for maintenance for most of the structures is funded through Local Improvement Districts administered by EBID. The New Mexico State Engineers Office staff, Dam Safety Bureau staff and staff members of the International Boundaries & Water Commission also participate in the inspection process.

The Office of the State Engineer and the Interstate Streams Commission has been instrumental in funding the purchase of equipment and a Dam Maintenance Crew partnering with Elephant Butte Irrigation District to begin a full-time maintenance program to address maintenance issues that occur with the sponsorship of flood control structures.



Inspection of Flood Control Structures

## District Equipment

Caballo SWCD district equipment is utilized to maintain the flood control structures within its boundaries. The District UTV is used to spray flood control pooling areas, slopes and outlet channels to control noxious and invasive vegetation. The district excavator is used to perform maintenance on flood control channels in partnership with Elephant Butte Irrigation District.



UTV with Spray Equipment



District Excavator

## **District Operations**

The Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors make every effort to ensure they comply with all aspects of the District Act and act fiscally responsible. Budgets and reports are submitted to the Department of Finance & Administration on a timely basis. Supervisors attend training whenever it is available either through NMDA, NMACD, or agriculture organizations and attended such trainings as Dam Safety regulations and State Auditor new audit rules. The Open Meetings Resolution is adopted and reviewed annually. At each District board meeting, supervisors review their annual plan of work and clarify if any action is necessary for that month. Supervisors attended the summer and fall meetings of the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts, Region III Meetings, along with the National Association of Conservation Districts Southwest/Pacific Region meeting. Soil and water conservation districts are responsible for providing comments on issues that impact conservation in New Mexico and the nation.

Awareness of conservation issues that affect natural resources are always of concern to the Caballo District. The district is a voting member of the South-Central New Mexico Storm Water Coalition, voting member of the NM Watershed and Dam Owners Coalition, voting member of the Jornada RC&D Council, member of the Lower Rio Grande Water Alliance, Member of the Lower Rio Grande Ecological/Restoration Subgroup. Working Partnership with the Elephant Butte Irrigation District and Dona Ana County Flood Commission, Bureau of Land Management and NM State Land Office, Interstate Stream Commission as well as partnership with the USDA-NRCS is of the utmost importance to the Caballo District's activities and Caballo reviews their existing Memorandum of Understanding with the NRCS annually. Recognizing the contributions to the conservation of our natural resources by people working the land is an excellent way to foster more of those efforts.

Caballo SWCD has been diligently working on expanding programs and education outreach. In the past year we submitted 12 grants and received 5. Caballo District completed a Healthy Soils Program-Entity Cover Crop Program working with Interstate Streams Commission Ground Water Conservation Program, offered a district cover crop seed program, ordered educational outreach materials from the Office of the State Engineer, partnered with EBID on 3 arroyo channel maintenance, partnered with EBID on treatment of flood control structures and outlet channels as well as drain ditches, completed annual informal dam inspections. Caballo SWCD staff attended SWCD day at the legislature, NMACD Conference, Sierra County Fair, attended Audit training, New Mexico Watershed and Dam Owners Conference, attend the NRCS Local Work Group Meeting and made multiple visits to the local schools to build curriculum for the up coming year and establish an Envirothon Team.