



**NEW MEXICO
ASSOCIATION OF
CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS**
2023 Annual Report

Debbie Hughes
Executive Director



Josh Smith, Vice President; Willard Hall, President; Kandy Hutchins, Sec-Treas.

Current NMACD Board of Directors

President	Willard Hall
Vice President	Josh Smith
Secretary-Treasurer	Kandy Hutchins
Region 1 Chair	Julian Sanchez
Region 2 Chair	Joseph Salazar
Region 3 Chair	Dusty Hunt
Region 4 Chair	Rita Gallegos
Region 5 Chair	Lisa Runyan
Region 6 Chair	vacant
Region 1 Vice Chair	Lynn Montgomery
Region 2 Vice Chair	Horace Leyba
Region 3 Vice Chair	Jim Wood
Region 4 Vice Chair	Eldie Cruz
Region 5 Vice Chair	Kendell Buzard
Region 6 Vice Chair	vacant

NMACD Staff

Executive Director
Executive Assistant
Program Manager
Project Manager
Project Manager
Project Manager
Project Manager
Project Manager
Project Manager
Administrative Coordinator
Administrative Coordinator

Debbie Hughes
Rebecca Dow
Troy Hood
Ken Leiting
Norman Vigil
Kenny Walker
Steve Kadas
Don Ellsworth
Jesse Juen
Donald Griego
Joe Grainey
Linda Hood



Josh with Next Generation Cohorts

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NMACD is very well represented at the National Association of Conservation District meetings. Willard serves as NACD Board Delegate and Kandy is Alternate Board Delegate. Josh serves as the SW Region Chair and was a member of the Next Generation Leadership Group. Josh Smith also represents the SW on the NACD Executive Board.

NMACD WORKED VERY HARD WITH PARTNERS TO PASS THE NEW MEXICO LAND OF ENCHANTMENT LEGACY FUND for 50 million Dollars ON BEHALF OF NEW MEXICO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



The 60-day Legislative session was very successful because NMACD and a large, diverse group of partners worked with the Governor's office, Cabinet members of the state's natural resource agencies, and our Legislative sponsors.

NMACD IS VERY ACTIVE AT THE STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL WORKING WITH CONGRESS ON THE FARM BILL AND OTHER NATIONAL POLICY AND FUNDING ISSUES FOR DISTRICTS IN NEW MEXICO.



Willard & Deb with NRCS



Willard & Kandy



Willard, Rebecca with NRCS

NMACD SUPPORTS SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS PROJECTS THROUGH PUBLIC INFORMATION AND INFORMATION SHARING.

District Supervisor Certification Training:

On-Line Training is found on: nmacd.org under **Education/Training**.

A summary of the Status of District Supervisor Certification Training Status by SWCD follows:

- Summarized below are the number of Supervisors who have and have not taken the training:
 - 113 District Supervisors - Have taken training
 - 167 District Supervisors - Have not taken training
- FY 2023 total Training received (includes District Supervisors and Staff):
 - 17 - November 7, 2022 - Albuquerque - Prior to Annual Mtg.
 - 11 - September 12, 2022 - Clayton
 - 13 - July 26, 2022 - Portales - After Region 5 meeting
 - 1 - On-Line.

Districts are needed to host a training session within their Region or community in mid-February to approximately April 1, 2024. We will be happy to conduct in-person training sessions with help from our partners.

Coordinators - Linda Hood (505-681-9675); Troy Hood (505-280-8102)

NMACD STATE TRAINING PLAN AND SURVEY: Developed draft training plan to support Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Supervisors and

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Employees. We are gathering information from the training surveys to determine who is interested and what kind of training is needed.

NMACD hosted 5 Grant Writing Workshops and 5 Region Meetings across the state.

NMACD CONTINUES TO WORK WITH LOCAL DISTRICTS AND PARTNERS TO IMPROVE INFORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

ENVIROTHON



The New Mexico Envirothon continues to be supported by NMACD. This includes financial support and judges for the contest. Congratulations to the first place winning Scat Cats from Truth or Consequences!!

For the 11th time in eleven years, the Scat Cats, Hot Springs High's Envirothon team has taken the state championship. This year the Scat Cats took top 5 honors at this year's NCF-Envirothon competition held in New Brunswick, Canada.



Signing Ceremony for Legacy Funds

COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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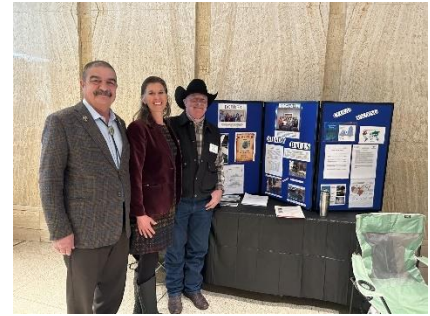
A special thank you to all the SWCDs and RC&D that set up booths in Santa Fe!



Coronado SWCD



Tierra Y Montes



Border SWCD w/Rep.Zamora



Lava SWCD



NM RC&D



Rep. Martin Zamora & Rep. Gail Armstrong



NMACD OPERATIONS

NMACD continues to use the Payday iSolve HCM program to manage Farm Bill, TSP and Vendor bills, payments to SWCDs and for Board members' travel. All bills are paid through Payday, except for those on Credit Card, and Bank Checks. The 1099 reports are generated by Payday. Ken Leiting and Cathy Ellsworth process the Payday Timecards and bills from contractors monthly. Linda Hood processes Farm Bill Bi-Weekly Payroll for employees and develops and submits NMACD monthly invoices to NMDA for reimbursement.

A new system to electronically move information from Payday iSolve to NMACD QuickBooks has been implemented. This allows for more information to be recorded in QuickBooks and provides additional reports. A new accounting firm, Daniel Anderson CPA PC, is helping with bank reconciliation and QuickBooks entries.

The SharePoint software has become the primary filing system for NMACD records. This includes: All NMACD Organization information; billings and payments; personnel and vendor information; grants, contracts, agreements, correspondence, and financial status. The software is part of Microsoft 365, which resides in the cloud. All Program Managers have access to their home internet systems. Backup software is set up to prevent loss of the files.

REPRESENTATION OF SWCDs' NEEDS AND INTERESTS

- NMACD, utilizing the resolution process, represents districts at the state level through policies passed at the state level.
- NMACD board meetings, regional meetings, annual conference, conference calls, web page, social media, newsletters, and email are utilized to communicate activities and attempt to represent district needs and interests.
- NMACD Program Managers coordinate with SWCDs and inform them of current activities regarding funding programs and technical service assistance activities within their individual districts.

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2022 NMACD OUTSTANDING ANNUAL AWARDS



Gerald & Carol Mathis
SW Quay, Land Stewardship



Dr. Leslie Beck
Taos SWCD, Outstanding Friend



Taos SWCD, Outstanding District

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

NMDA 2019 TSP contract completed in 2022; New four-year contract awarded to NMACD on July 1, 2023. Funding amount, \$1,007,734 for Fiscal Year 2024.

NMACD BI-WEEKLY EMPLOYEES

Current staffing plan: 13 employees:

- 11 Team Farm Bill Program Specialists,
- 1 Farm Bill Program Specialist
- 1 Soil Conservationist

Personnel changes: New hires- 4;

No. separations 2 hired by NRCS; 1 retirement, 1 personal (Note: 47 previous NMACD employees employed by NRCS; 7 to SWCDs, FSA, FS, RD, etc.)

Fund Balance June 30 - \$444,793.81 prior to FY24 allowance.

DISTRICT CAPACITY PROGRAM EMPLOYEES

Participating SWCD's - 6

Number of employees - 5

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District Capacity current year budget - \$55,268 (included in above budget estimate)

ON-DEMAND INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTORS

Number of contractors - 31 actives, conservationists.

Number of archaeology contractors - 11 who processed approximately 16 surveys

TSP Program Coordinators - 3

FY 24 On-Demand Contractors Estimated cost: \$150,000

SOIL HEALTH ACTIVITIES

- **NMDA Healthy Soil Program** - Provide support and recommendations to managers.
- **NRCS Technical Assistance** - Provided client assistance as requested by NRCS FO.
- **NRCS Programs Support** - Provided support for the following FOs: Clayton, Cuba, Hernandez, Santa Fe, Los Lunas, Roswell, Alamogordo.
- **Quivira Coalition** - Provided SH webinar presentation and consultation to Quivira employees.
- **NRCS Soil Health Technical Assistance and Programs** - Assisted SWCDs and land users as requested: Lea SWCD, East Rio Arriba SWCD, SW Quay SWCD.

NMSU

- **Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education** - SH presentation, Santa Fe 3/30/23.
- **NM Carbon Management Workshop** - SH presentation, Albuquerque, 7/23/23.
- **Soil Health (SH) Assistance** - Provided technical and program information to Land users, SWCDs, partners through one-on-one technical assistance, field day demonstrations and webinars.

NM DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

- **Healthy Soil Program** - Provided consultation and support to program managers.



Willard & Eugene in North Dakota



Debbie received USF&W Partners Award with Gwen Kolb

COORDINATION OF "RESTORE NM" PROGRAM WITH BLM

Pecos District Office

One project that was completed this past year is the reclamation of caliche pits and old roads and well pads. The Carlsbad SWCD currently has four construction companies reclaiming these pits and approximately 228 acres have been reclaimed. In addition to this work, 288 acres were seeded or reseeded.

The second project for the Pecos District is the treatment of mesquite/creosote. This past spring 2,733 acres of creosote were treated in Eddy County. Conditions improved in the county and 1,034 acres of mesquite were treated.

Albuquerque District

One project for this district is the tree stands exams in the North Sandoval County. Approximately 603 plots were examined, starting in August 2022. A contract was let to Kurt Sweringen. This contract was issued by NMACD TSP, Joe Grainey, and a pre-work conference was scheduled for August 4, 2022.

Another project for the Rio Puerco Field Office was the treatment of 1,585 acres of juniper. This project was awarded to a contractor by the Cuba SWCD.

Another project with the Albuquerque District is a cut stump project to treat salt cedar and Russian Olive in the Rio Salado Watershed. The Cuba SWCD was unable to get any contractors to bid on this project and after consultation with the SWCD and the BLM, Rio Puerco Field Office, the project was cancelled. NMACD then made a request in Grants Solutions to de-obligate these funds and from the task agreement.

Farmington District

One project that was completed for the Farmington Field Office is the treatment of 9,000 acres of sage brush. The San Juan SWCD, with assistance from the Cuba SWCD an RFP for potential contractors was issued for this project. A contractor was awarded the contract, and the project was completed in October/November 2022.

The San Juan SWCD also issued a contract for the maintenance of fifteen sediment ponds in the Farmington Field Office, BLM. Work was started on this project in July 2022 but was put on hold due to all the rain the Four Corners received in July and August. An extension was granted for this project until July 31, 2023, and a total of 15 ponds were maintained.

In the Taos Field Office, NMACD contracted a tree stand exam and an avian survey on 265 acres. This project was completed in July 2023.

Currently NMACD and associated SWCDs have completed all task agreements from FY 2022. The master agreement between NMACD and the BLM will expire on September 30, 2023, and NMACD has decided not to request a renewal of this agreement.

NM STATE LAND OFFICE (SLO)

NMACD completed its 2023 agreement with NM State Land Office. NM SLO has requested NMACD to continue work for them (up to \$60,000) to assist in gathering historical project treatment data, site evaluation and monitoring, outreach for RCPP project work and planned RCPP's with local SWCD's in the future.

- **Chupadera Mesa Vegetative Assessment Project** - NMACD is assisting the State Land Office (SLO) to assess grass cover, invasive brush (Juniper) and historic brush treatments.



Work on Chupadera Mesa with State Land Office

REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (RCPP)

- **The Restore NM RCPP:** The agreement was finalized in May 2022 as a result of signing the Restore NM Renewal supplemental agreement.
- **Restore NM Renewal RCPP:** The supplemental agreement which renewed the agreement was signed May 2022. The agreement has \$4,000,000 of financial assistance and \$880,000 technical assistance for ranchers. I am currently coordinating with NRCS to publicly announce the program.
- Final monitoring completed on the **Canadian River RCPP 2017** on effects of brush control with chemical treatment. Three-year results following treatment ranged from 38% root kill on juniper-covered areas treated electrostatically to 96% control on electrostatic treatment without juniper present. Conventional control on monitored ranch showed 74% overall root kill on monitored area. **Ute Creek SWCD's** project report for NRCS should be completed this fall.

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- With final approval of the Prairie Grassland RCPP on Lesser Prairie Chicken habitat, Kenny Walker, Jesse Juen, and Steve Kadas will work on strategies for outreach activities for this project. Partner contacts will also be conducted to prepare for the first application announcement.

USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

- **RCPP – Restore NM:** Managed the NMACD Restore RCPP program by working with NRCS FO and partners to promote and deliver the program.
- **Field Office (FO) Assistance** - Assisted clients in Tucumcari, Albuquerque and Hernandez.

NM ACEQUIA ASSOCIATION

- Provided EWP Technical and program support in organizing the Black Fire EWP project. Coordinating with NRCS to develop project cost estimations and a possible acequia project.



Mesquite Spraying for the Canadian River RCPP

NATIONAL FISH & WILDLIFE FOUNDATION (NFWF)

Pecos River watershed conservation RCPP Technical Assistance, southeast NM - \$37,750. The NRCS completed advertisement, ranking and evaluation and implementation of the projects. NMACD provided project inspection of the projects in 2023. The account will be closed and finalized in October and unspent funds returned to NFWF.

FORESTRY COORDINATION

- EWP - GRANT SWCD Project: Provide EWP Technical and program support in organizing the Black Fire EWP project. Also provided EWP assistance to the NM Acequia Association.
- Hermits Peak and Cow Calf Fire Restoration - Provided fire damage assessment surveys as part of a NMACD USFS contract.
- Joe Grainey worked with Don Ellsworth, Ken Leiting, Eddie Williams in the development of a solution for conducting assessments to pipeline and fence line caused by Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon wildfires.
- Thirteen amendments were issued to NMACD contractor's agreements. The amendments were specific to NMDFA-EWP work as identified in the agreement between the State of New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) and New Mexico Association of Conversation Districts (NMACD).

ACEQUIA REVITALIZATION ON HISTORIC IRRIGATED LANDS

Norman Vigil

2015, 2016, 2018 RCPP Agreement

2022 Congresso de las Acequias

2015 RCPP Agreement – Completed

2014/2015 RCPP Agreement

Area of Participation - Statewide

Awarded – \$1,189,000

Expended – \$1,189,000

Applications received – 71

Initial Partner Contribution - \$9,595,480

Final Partner Contribution - \$11,757,772

Core Partners –

Interstate Stream Commission

New Mexico Acequia Association

New Mexico Department of Agriculture

Socorro SWCD, East Rio Arriba SWCD, Upper Chama SWCD, Tierra Y Montes SWCD,

Taos SWCD

13 acequia projects completed

Acequia de San Ysidro at San Ysidro (Jemez)

Lincoln Ditch at Lincoln

Acequia de Barranco de Jacona at Nambe

Acequia de la Joya at Nambe

San Rafael del Guique at El Guique

West Puerto del Luna at Santa Rossa

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Northside Acequia de Madre at Villanueva
Acequia de los Frequez at Chimayo
Tecolotito at Anton Chico

2016 RCPP Agreement - Completed

Area of Participation - Statewide

Awarded - \$3,000,000

Expended - \$2,998,000 (8-31-2020)

Applications received - 94

Initial Partner Contribution commitment –\$15,172,700

Core Partners-

Interstate Stream Commission

New Mexico Acequia Association

New Mexico Department of Agriculture

East Rio Arriba SWCD, Upper Chama SWCD, Tierra Y Montes SWCD, Taos SWCD

20 Projects completed

Storm at Hondo

Acequia de Barranco Alto at Nambe

Questa Citizens Ditch at Quests

Chili Y Cuchilla at Chili

Acequia Nueva at Nambe

Archibeque at Cuba

Acequia de Rainsville at Rainsville

Torreon at Torreon

Manzano at Manzano

Storm- mod. #1 at Hondo

Acequia de Ojo Sarco at Ojo Sarco

Tecolotito at Tecolotito

Acequia de los Duranes at Ojo Caliente

Acequia de Los Ortiz at Nambe

Tierra Azul at Abiquiu

El Guicu Ditch at La Cienega

Farmington-Terrell Ditch at Farmington

Acequia Martinez Medio at Santa Cruz

Heredia Ditch at Mimbres

La Cueva Ditch at La Madera

2018 RCPP Agreement

Area of Participation - Statewide

Awarded – 2,907,614

Expended – \$1,439,753.21FA & TA

Financial Assistance – expended \$1,076,932.05 of \$2.2 mil

Technical Assistance – expended \$362,821.16 of \$581,500.00

Applications received – 87

Initial Partner Contribution commitment –\$11,983,326

Core Partners-

Interstate Stream Commission

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New Mexico Acequia Association
New Mexico Department of Agriculture
East Rio Arriba SWCD, Upper Chama SWCD, Tierra Y Montes SWCD, Taos SWCD
New Mexico Acequia Commission

10 projects completed

Acequia de la Canova at Velarde –
Heredia Ditch at Mimbres -Second phase
Acequia del La Joya at Socorro– Completed (ACOE & ISC)
Heredia Ditch at Mimbres – completed, second phase
Acequia del Llano – Canjilon
Acequia del Brazito – Canjilon
Acequia de Rio Chama – Rio Chama/Medanales
Luna Community Ditch at Luna
Abeyta-Trujillo, Abiquiu – completed phase one under usfws
Acequia de Santa Cruz – Completed, designed through RCPP, funded by ISC & Capital Outlay

*Women in Agriculture Leadership Conference (WALC) Planning Committee
for Conference held in May at Albuquerque Sheraton Uptown*



Second New Mexico Leopold Conservation Award

Sid & Cheryl Goodloe were selected as the recipient of the 2nd New Mexico Leopold Conservation Award,[®] and they were presented with the \$10,000 award at the NMACD Annual Meeting in Albuquerque, November 8, 2022.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the prestigious award recognizes farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners who inspire others with their dedication to land, water, and wildlife habitat management on private, working lands.

Sand County Foundation and national sponsor American Farmland Trust present the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 23 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. In New Mexico, the award is presented with New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts, Quivira Coalition, and NRCS.



NMACD DUES SUPPORT

PLATINUM LEVEL

Lea SWCD

DIAMOND LEVEL

Carlsbad SWCD
Central Curry SWCD
East Torrance SWCD
Lava SWCD
Otero SWCD
Tierra Y Montes SWCD

GOLD LEVEL DISTRICT SUPPORT TO NMACD

Border SWCD
Caballo SWCD
Canadian River SWCD
Carrizozo SWCD
Central Valley SWCD
Ciudad SWCD
Colfax SWCD
Coronado SWCD
Cuba SWCD
Deming SWCD
DeBaca SWCD
Dona Ana SWCD
East Rio Arriba SWCD
Edgewood SWCD
Grant SWCD
Guadalupe SWCD
Hidalgo SWCD

Lava SWCD
Mesa SWCD
Mora WM SWCD
Northeastern SWCD
Penasco SWCD
Roosevelt SWCD
San Francisco SWCD
San Juan SWCD
Sierra SWCD
Socorro SWCD
SW Quay SWCD
Taos SWCD
Upper Chama SWCD
Ute Creek SWCD
Valencia SWCD
Western Mora SWCD