

# 1905 Eastern New Mexico Prairie Grassland



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This initiative is to increase suitable and occupied habitat to meet critical habitat needs of Lesser Prairie-chicken. Habitat improvements will occur through chemical and physical destruction of Mesquite patches across five priority areas identified using a mesquite density model and a study by scientists at New Mexico State University.

**Environmental:** LPC priority areas will be treated to maximize restoration or creation of LEK areas, brood rearing and foraging areas. Mesquite and associated woody species density will be significantly reduced in treatment areas which will have benefits for grassland nesting birds and other wildlife species. Prairie grassland habitats are listed as threatened in this area. This proposal offers the opportunity to make more suitable habitat adjacent to occupied habitats. Research demonstrates LPC will not travel far to establish new lek areas. This treatment addresses that issue.

**Economic:** LPC have wavered on the cusp of listing under the endangered species act for a decade. Agricultural and oil and gas interests would be adversely affected if formal listing were to occur. These same interests have cooperated for a decade to expand habitat for LPC. These partners see healthy populations as a buffer against listing and the hardship that would cause. This proposal offers the opportunity to make more suitable habitat in the midst of occupied habitats. LPC will not travel far to establish new lek areas.

**Social:** LPC existence and viewing are celebrated each year in this area during the prairie chicken festival. Hundreds of people travel to Milnesand, NM to participate and appreciate these iconic grassland birds. Any expanded opportunity

to view LPC on the lek will resonate across the bird watching world as viewing the mating dance is considered a rare and important event in that community. Additionally keeping the LPC from being listed will allow local agricultural and energy economies to continue to grow without the regulatory encumbrance caused by listing.



**Lead Partner Organization:**  
 NM Association of Conservation Districts

**Other Partners:**  
 Bureau of Land Management, NM State Land Office, NM Game and Fish

**Start Date:** 7/29/22

**End Date:** 12/31/27

**Resource Concerns:**  
 Degraded Plant Condition, Fire Management, Soil Quality Limitations, Terrestrial Habitat

**Activity Types:**  
 Land Management

**Eligible Practices:**  
 Woody Residue Treatment (384)  
 Brush Management (314) other facilitating practices may be used.

**Financial Assistance Available:** \$1,500,000

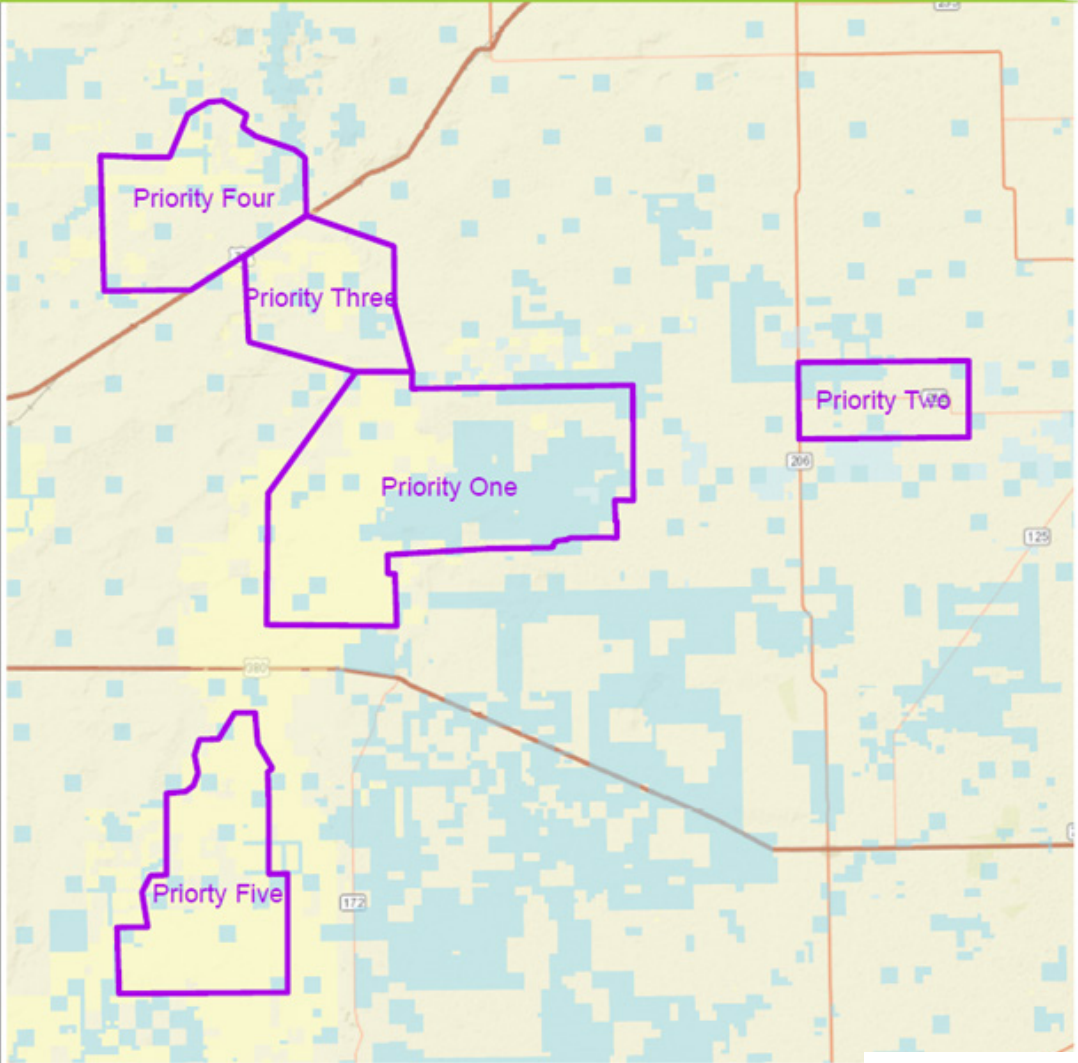
**Deadlines:**  
 November 18, 2022

**Ranking Deadline:**  
 March 10, 2023

**100% Obligations:**  
 June 2, 2023

# NRCS - New Mexico

## Lesser Prairie Chicken Planning Areas 2020



0 5 10 20 Miles  
Path: C:\data\geodata\_update\LPC\_Planning\_Area.mxd  
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New Mexico  
**Natural Resources Conservation Service**

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